Fall, 2016  
Mondays, 2:35 – 5:25 pm  
Room: 1216, Dunton Tower

Instructor: Dr. Allan J. Ryan  
New Sun Chair in Aboriginal Art and Culture  
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Course focus: **Canadian Indigenous Self-Representation in Film, Video and New Media**

Since the early 1990s there has been a proliferation of film making among Indigenous Canadians that seeks to interrogate official histories, counter “Indian” stereotypes, and offer a more balanced and accurate view of contemporary Indigenous experience. Much of this work is highly personalized, made for the Indigenous community itself, or as a form of outreach to the non-Indigenous community. Narratives emerging from oral tradition are given visual voices on screen, while the evolution of Indigenous cultures is given tangible form. Film, video and new media have become important vehicles for documenting diverse languages, traditions, histories and aspirations. In the process, a distinct Indigenous film aesthetic may be emerging. This course will consider the work of several First Nations, Metis and Inuit film directors, screenwriters and producers. National Film Board documentaries, independently produced shorts, experimental videos, and commercial endeavours will be examined. Students are encouraged to approach this course from an interdisciplinary perspective, noting similar themes, issues, concerns, and styles emerging in other Indigenous creative genres such as literature, music, theatre and the “fine arts.”

This course also seeks to respectfully incorporate principles of Indigenous pedagogy that privilege holistic and experiential learning, the construction of safe and sacred spaces, relationality, personal narratives, and writing from the heart.

**Class format:** seminar, film screenings, guest speakers, class presentations and discussion.

**Primary text:**


Additional readings will be available through ARES or posted on the course website. Videos and
DVDs screened in class will be available online or put on reserve in the MacOdrum Library.

**Tentative Grading:**

1) Comparative research paper on Indigenous documentary film making, 10-12 pgs. (Value: 30% of term mark.)
2) Joint leadership in one seminar presentation and discussion. Provide handout for other students. (Value: 20%)
3) Final paper on Indigenous film making, 10-12 pgs. Value: 30%. (Subject to be approved by instructor).
4) Personal reflection: “What will I do with this knowledge?” 2-3 pages. (10%)
5) Class participation: (10% )