



The following is a review written by Patricia Nagle, a University of Waterloo student, who describes their experience of learning about Indigenous history in various history classes throughout their time at Waterloo. In relation to one role Universities must play in reconciliation, Patricia sums it up very well:

[Indigenization] can be done by improving general history courses that explore the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in all areas of Canada. By incorporating this history more thoroughly students may more easily see the impact it has had in their own lives, the Indigenous peoples and Canada as a whole. It may also encourage students to work together in helping our nation prosper.

Deep thanks to Patricia for sharing their experiences!

Review of Indigenous History at the University of Waterloo

Written by Patricia Nagle

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At the University of Waterloo (UW), I have had the opportunity to study Indigenous history for four years. In that time, a course I thoroughly enjoyed and found provided the most information on the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada was **HIST 269: Indigenous Histories in Canada**. This course opened my eyes to the continuous struggle between Indigenous peoples and the Government of Canada. This course incorporated guest speakers discussing the Haldimand Tract and readings by Indigenous authors. These books were *Halfbreed* by Maria Campbell; *Kiss of the Fur Queen* by Tomson Highway; and, *Unsettling Canada: A National Wake-Up Call* by Arthur Manuel. An important aspect of this course were the assignments. The first of which students were asked to research their local Indigenous history. Coming from the London area, I examined the Chippewas of Kettle and Stoney Point. This led me to read about the Ipperwash Crisis and the Huron Tract. This was an important exercise because I was able to connect with the material more easily and understand the impact from a local perspective. For the second assignment, students were asked to research events discussed in one of the books mentioned above. I examined Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* as this had the greatest impact on me. Other topics covered in this class were creation stories, the importance of wampum belts and beading (the class was able to practice this art while Dr. Susan Roy lectured). Overall, this course was the most beneficial because, like the readings, it stemmed from the perspective of those who were directly impacted by the history covered in the course.

While HIST 269 was the most thorough, I learned about the Indigenous history from other courses as well. One such is **PSCI 231: Government and Business**. This class is optional for Arts & Business (ARBUS) students. For the final assignment, students were asked to critique an article. I chose Calvin Helin's *Dances with Dependency* (Ch.10-12). I learned about the struggles from an economic perspective. Helin discussed how the Indigenous peoples were put in their economic position and provided solutions to improve their situation.

HIST 254: Canada Since 1867 and **HIST 256: Murder in Canadian History** were also valuable sources of knowledge regarding the history of the Indigenous peoples and Canada in general. For example, HIST 256 covered important historical events through the perspective of murder. Regarding Indigenous history, Dr. Catherine Briggs covered the deaths of Louis Riel and Thomas Scott as well as Dudley George in the Ipperwash Crisis. This is the class that sparked my interest in Indigenous history, and later why I read Jean Teillet's book, *The North-west is Our Mother: The Story of Louis Riel's People, the Metis Nation*, outside of class. An assigned reading for this course included; *Two Months in the Camp of Big Bear* by Theresa Gowanlock and Theresa Delaney. Students were also instructed to examine a painting of the Frog Lake Massacre. These courses focused on similar events, such as the Red River and North-West Rebellion. After taking HIST 269, I understand there is more that could be incorporated to general Canadian history courses at UW.

Not related to Canadian history, but still relevant is **HIST 258: The United States Since The Civil War Era**. This course briefly covered Indigenous history in relation to Theodore Roosevelt. In this lecture, the class examined Richard White's *Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill*. While I am not as knowledgeable in this area it could be beneficial to students to examine the Indigenous impact from an American perspective more thoroughly.

An area often overlooked in courses is the involvement of Indigenous peoples in the First and Second World Wars. In my third year, I took **HIST 226: Canada in WW2**. It would be beneficial to explore their involvement more thoroughly while still examining the battles and impacts on the home front. I did not take any courses pertaining to World War One, so I cannot speak to how Indigenous people were portrayed in that course.

I would also recommend incorporating Indigenous history in **HIST 109: Ten Days That Shook the World**. This is an introductory history course, taught by a new professor each class, examining different areas of history in each lecture. Indigenous history was not covered in any of the lectures I attended. It would be beneficial to examine Indigenous history in this course because it is typically taken by first year history students and those of various disciplines. This makes it a good class to introduce Indigenous history to incoming students. It is important to note that I took this course in 2017 and Indigenous history could have been introduced over the past three years.

Overall, I have enjoyed studying Indigenous history at UW. The university has given me ample opportunities to examine this history through a variety of courses. However, there is still room for improvement. As you stated, "One of the pressing issues to indigenizing any university...is to educate Canadians in the history, current issues and relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada." This can be done by improving general history courses that explore the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous in all areas of Canada. By incorporating this history more thoroughly students may more easily see the impact it has had in their own lives, the Indigenous peoples and Canada as a whole. It may also encourage students to work together in helping our nation prosper.