CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:
Many areas of Canadian public policy are of interest to Aboriginal peoples in Canada, for example governance, land, resources, social policy, environment, international relations, economic development, culture, language, and others. This course attempts to build a basis for understanding key debates in such public policy fields by focusing first on historic legacy of contact between Aboriginal peoples and settler populations. Then we turn to some more contemporary developments, including constitutional negotiations, influential court cases, urbanization, comprehensive claims and self-government. The subject matter for this course is extensive. The course outline is designed to provide an overview to selected topics so that you can do further research and thinking on these themes.

COURSE SCHEDULE: The class will meet on Wednesday, 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

COURSE CONTENT AND APPROACH:
The purpose of the class is to examine the major issues on Aboriginal public policy and to consider the best means of bridging the gaps, political and otherwise, between Aboriginal Canadians and Canadians and large. The class consists of a series of regular meetings, based on the discussion of assigned readings, and daily assignments designed to make students consider public policy options and political choices in this vital field. The discussions will focus on the manuscript of a forthcoming book, *Treaty Peoples*, written by Greg Poelzer and Ken Coates. This book is designed as an overview of theoretical and conceptual approaches to Aboriginal affairs in Canada and as a discussion starter on practical means of addressing Indigenous and Canadian needs and expectations. The course is designed to combine an analysis of key policy documents with careful contemplation of viable policy options.

Note that the final schedule is to be determined. The actual schedule will depend on the requirements of the La Ronge project (details below). At least two visits to La Ronge will be required during the semester.

Class One: Course Introduction: Indigenous Cultures, Indigenous Issues and Canadian Policy

Class Assignment: Without doing additional reading or preparation, prepare lists of the following, entirely from your perspective:

1. Five major shortcomings of government policy relating to Indigenous peoples
2. Five major achievements of government policy relating to Indigenous peoples
Class Discussion:  Treaty Peoples: Introduction; Treaty Peoples: Chapter One: Panaceas and Solutions, Competing Visions of First Nations’ Future

Class Two: Aboriginal Issues and Political Priorities

Team Assignment: In groups of 3 or 4 students, each team will prepare a ten-minute presentation on the following theme:

“Assume that you are giving this presentation to newly elected MPs and MLAs in a Western Canadian province. Outline and explain the priority that the team believes the various levels of government have to assign to this subject.” Each of the teams will have ten minutes to present their case, prepared the previous day, to the rest of the class.

Class Discussion:  Treaty Peoples: Chapter Two: Aboriginal Views on the Way Forward

Class Three: Identifying Indigenous Peoples’ Priorities

Assignment (for submission): A new provincial Minister of Aboriginal Affairs has been appointed. She has asked you to prepare a briefing note (one page) that answers the question: “What do Aboriginal people want from government?” Prepare the note based on today’s reading.

Class Discussion:  Treaty Peoples: Chapter Three: Non-Aboriginal Views on the Way Forward

Class Four: Identifying Non-Indigenous Priorities

Assignment (for submission): You are providing a professional development presentation for Government of Canada staff. Prepare a one-page summary/outline that addresses the topic: “The Best Ideas Advanced by Non-Aboriginal Writers About the Future of Indigenous-Newcomer Relations in Canada.”

Class Five: How are Aboriginal People Doing in Canada?

Class Discussion:  Treaty Peoples: Chapter Four: The Missing Indigenous Success Story

Assignment: Read the Indian Act, 1876 (http://www.canadiana.org/view/9_02041/0056) On a single page, identify the five most important elements of this vital piece of legislation and five important amendments to the original Indian Act (the amendments can be found at http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/205/301/ic/cdc/aboriginaldocs/m-stat.htm).

Class Six: International Comparisons and Lessons

Class Discussion:  Treaty Peoples: Chapter Five: Creating Life Chances in Global Perspective

Assignment (for submission): Read the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (available in the dropbox folder). One a single page, identify the core values and assumptions that have united Indigenous peoples around the world.

Class Seven: Steps Toward Reconciliation

Class Discussion (for submission): Treaty Peoples: Chapter Six: Honour and Reconciliation in Canada  and also read Prime Minister Harper’s Apology on Residential Schools (http://www.ctv.ca/CTVNews/QPeriod/20080611/harper_text_080611/)

Class Assignment: Read the Government of Canada’s report, Gathering Strength (1997), in the course dropbox folder or available online. On one page, outline the major contributions and the major shortcomings of this document as an element in reconciliation.

Class Eight: Political Relationships

Class Discussion: Treaty Peoples: Chapter Seven: Creating a Common Political Community

Assignment (for submission): Review the websites of at least two of the following organizations: Assembly of First Nations, Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs, Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, and Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Based on your review, identify at least five demands or expectations Aboriginal people have relating to their political presence within the Canadian governance system. Your summary should be one page long.

Class Nice: Economic Relationships

Class Discussion: Treaty Peoples: Chapter Eight: Equality of Economic Opportunity

Class Assignment: Read the document, New Beginnings: How Canada’s Natural Resource Wealth Could Re-Shape Relations with Aboriginal People (available shortly on-line). Working in groups of three, discuss and present your thoughts on how government policy has to adjust to respond to Indigenous legal rights and the changing resource policy environment in Canada.
Class Ten: The Policy Challenge:

Class Assignment Ten: In groups of three or four students, prepare a ten minute presentation on the following question: “Identify the five greatest public policy challenges facing Aboriginal Canadians and/or Aboriginal peoples relationships with other Canadians. Comment on the nation’s ability to address these challenges in a timely fashion.”

Class Eleven: Course Summary and General Discussion

Class Discussion: Treaty Peoples: Conclusion: Reconciliation: Creating a New Canada with Aboriginal People and Treaty Peoples: Postscript: A Somber Prospect and a Real Challenge

Final Examination: The final assignment in this course is a brief 8 to 10 page reflection on the intersection between theoretical/conceptual approaches to the understanding of Aboriginal policies and practical considerations and political imperatives. On the basis of the class discussions, readings and assignments, provide an analysis of how you see these two elements – conceptual and practical approaches – interact in the development of public policy in Canada. In what ways do the theoretical/conceptual approaches advance and/or hinder the development of public policy? This paper is due on 15 December.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Greg Poelzer and Ken Coates, Treaty Peoples: Finding Common Ground with Aboriginal Canadians (manuscript). To be provided by the instructor. Policy documents, as described in the course outline.

Major Project: The students in this class will be working with the Policy Shop (the JSGS student-run policy centre) to assist the Town of La Ronge with policy development issues. As part of the course, we will travel to La Ronge (it is about a 5 hour drive from Saskatoon) to meet with the Mayor, Council members and town officials to discuss policy-related projects. Students will work in teams on community-identified policy matters. The class will return to La Ronge in December to present our findings to the community leadership. Additional details will be provided in the first class.

EVALUATION:

Evaluation in this course is based on three main components:

Class Participation and Contributions: 20/100
Daily Class Assignments: 4 assignments x 5 marks 20/100
La Ronge Project 30/100
Final Examination (Due on 15 December) 30/100

Class Assignments must be handed in during the class.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS:

General Histories of Aboriginal-Newcomer Relations


**Aboriginal Views on Newcomer Relations**


Mills, Antonia, ed. *‘Hang on to These Words’: Johnny David’s Delgamuukw Testimony*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.


**Non-Aboriginal Views on Newcomer Relations**


**Economic and Business Development**


**Aboriginal Self-Government**


**Constitutional and Legal Rights**


Dickson-Gilmore, Jane and Carol La Praie, ‘*Will the Circle be Unbroken?: Aboriginal Communities, Restorative Justice, and the Challenges of Conflict and Change*’. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.


Mills, Antonia, ed. *‘Hang on to These Words’: Johnny David’s Delgamuukw Testimony.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.


**Culture and Language**


Mills, Antonia, ed. *‘Hang on to These Words’: Johnny David’s Delgamuukw Testimony.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.


**Social, Education, and Health**


LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

The regular assignments must be handed in at the start of each class. Anything handed in after the start of class will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Given the compressed time frame for the course, there will be flexibility on the delivery of the final assignment.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:

Students requiring any accommodation should discuss these needs with the instructor. All appropriate requests will be accommodated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT:

Understanding and following the principles of academic integrity and conduct as laid out in the University of Saskatchewan’s Guidelines for Academic Conduct is vital to your success in graduate school (available at http://www.usask.ca/university_council/reports/archives/guide_conduct.shtml). Ensuring that your work is your own and reflects both your own ideas and those of others incorporated in your work is important: ensuring that you acknowledge the ideas, words, and phrases of others that you use is a vital part of the scholarly endeavour. If you have any questions at all about academic integrity in general or about specific issues, contact any faculty member and we can discuss your questions.