



Understand the intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples from the lenses of traditional knowledge and rigorous scholarship.



Indigenous Studies

Indigenous studies focuses upon the intellectual and cultural traditions of Indigenous Peoples in the areas of history, language, medicine, health and wellness, creative arts, literature, economy, activism, community and political dynamics, peace building, spirituality, and traditional ecological knowledge.

We have established an interdisciplinary approach in courses to share the varied expertise of our instructors.

Students examine a wide range of topics including: history, health, literature, land claims, environment and self determination.

Our programs honour the knowledge found in academics, but also within Indigenous communities. This is why our instructors range from Elders to Indigenous academics.



The faculty and staff who works within the Indigenous Studies Program are dedicated to educating Indigenous perspectives and issues, as well the success of our students.

Degree options

To apply to Indigenous studies, students must successfully complete a Social Sciences Level I program, including one of Indigenous Studies 1A03, 1AA3, 1B03 or RECONCIL 1A03.

Honours Indigenous Studies B.A. Grade Point Average of at least 5.0 (C) including a grade of at least 5.0 (C) in INDIG ST 1A03, 1AA3, 1B03 or RECONCIL 1A03.

Combined Honours B.A. in Indigenous Studies and another subject Grade Point Average of at least 5.0 (C) including a grade of at least 5.0 (C) in INDIG ST 1A03, 1AA3, 1B03 or RECONCIL 1A03. Satisfaction of admission requirements for the Honours program in the other B.A. subject.

B.A. in Indigenous Studies and another subject Grade Point Average of at least 3.5 and a grade of 4.0 (C-) in three units of INDIGST 1A03, 1AA3, 1B03 or RECONCIL 1A03 and satisfaction of admission requirements for the B.A. program in the other subject.

Minors Indigenous studies

Level I courses

Indigenous Studies 1A03

Introduction to Indigenous Studies

Explore Indigenous Peoples' worldviews from pre-contact to the Indian Act of 1876. Topics include: Indigenous history, philosophy, and issues of representation and colonialism.

Indigenous Studies 1AA3

Introduction to Contemporary Indigenous Studies

Examine the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and mainstream society in the 20th century. Topics include: governmental policy, land claims, economic development and self-determination.

Indigenous Studies 1B03

Reconciling What? Indigenous Relations in Canada

Analyze the sociopolitical and historical relations between Indigenous peoples and Canada in a post-1951 time period. It examines how colonialism, assimilation and social movements are situated in reconciliation. Topics include: aboriginal policy, the Residential School system, and forms of resistance.

Introduction to Indigenous Languages & Cultures: CAYUGA 1Z03, MOHAWK 1Z03, and OJIBWE 1Z03

These courses explore the Cayuga, Mohawk, and Ojibwe languages respectively. It examines their spoken and written forms of language, in the context of Iroquoian cultural traditions, values, beliefs and customs.

Beyond first year

Choose from a variety of courses such as:

- History of Indigenous Peoples' Sovereignty
- Traditional Indigenous Ecological Knowledge
- Contemporary Native Literature in Canada
- Indigenous Peoples' Spirituality
- Haudenosaunee Health, Diet and Traditional Botany
- Indigenous Human Rights

Careers & Experiential Education

- Through Careers & Experiential Education programs, you can participate in paid internships, a tuition-free career planning course, academic placements and job shadowing

Indigenous Community Space

The Indigenous studies program and student support services are in L.R. Wilson Hall. Nearly 20,000 square-feet of space has been dedicated to McMaster University's Indigenous Studies Program and Indigenous students across campus.

Support Services

- An Indigenous student counsellor to assist students with social and academic concerns
- A computer centre and meeting area for students to study, network and socialize
- Indigenous Education Council to support and address current issues in the community
- A resource library specific to Indigenous topics
- Elders and guest lecturers from various Indigenous communities
- Help with student employment and career opportunities
- A liaison between local organizations and Six Nations/ New Credit territories
- Access to the Elders-in-Residence Program, to increase awareness of history, traditions and culture

Potential careers

- Education/Outreach
- Advocacy/Social Services
- Community Development
- Communications
- Administration/Management
- International Development/Affairs
- Law
- Policy/Governance
- Graduate studies
- Humanitarian Efforts

An Indigenous studies degree also provides the foundation for graduate studies in Indigenous studies, medicine, law, MBA programs and education.

"I am passionate about Indigenous ways of knowing and the important dialogues they inform. The diversity of our intellectual and cultural systems offer rich knowledge and insights about our world. I love teaching because it allows me to connect with students and learn about their experiences."

Vanessa Watts



MEET A
FACULTY
MEMBER

MEET A
FELLOW
STUDENT



"I love my program because it integrates Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being into a degree. It respects these Indigenous worldviews as ways of knowing that need to be supported and encouraged in order for us to flourish as individuals, scholars and community members. One day I could be working on my thesis in the library and the next I am sitting in the woods to observe nature for an experiential learning course."

Hannah Martin, Honours Indigenous Studies