

# NATV 2020 The Métis of Canada

## Introduction to the Course

Welcome to the University of Manitoba Distance and Online Education Program. We hope you enjoy the course and find it to be challenging and stimulating.

## Course description

The *University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar* describes this course as follows:

The course deals with the origins of the Métis people and their involvement in the society of Red River before Manitoba's Confederation in 1870. It also looks at the Confederation of Manitoba and the Métis dispersal that occurred after 1870 and the events surrounding the battle of Batoche. It ends with discussion of the implications for the Metis in the 20th and 21st centuries.

## Course goals

Upon completion of this course you should be able to:

- describe the origins of the Métis people;
- describe and discuss the role played by Louis Riel in Métis politics;
- discuss the nature of Métis dispersal and the realities of the "Forgotten Years";
- discuss and appreciate the complexity of Métis society;
- critically examine the issue of Métis land claims based on the historical evidence; and
- critically examine the major historical issues surrounding the Métis and their experiences with the Canadian State and Canadians.

## Course materials

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

### Required readings:

St-Onge, Podruchny, and Macdougall. (Eds.) (2012). *Contours of a people: Metis family, mobility, and history*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma.

### Required video tapes

Videos are available online at <http://www.nfb.ca/>.

*Daughters of the Country: Mistress Madeline* (National Film Board)

[http://www.nfb.ca/film/mistress\\_madeleine/](http://www.nfb.ca/film/mistress_madeleine/)

*Daughters of the country: Places Not Our Own*. (National Film Board)

[http://www.nfb.ca/film/places\\_not\\_our\\_own](http://www.nfb.ca/film/places_not_our_own)

*The above videos are two of four dramas from a series called Daughters of the Country.*

*Note about the series:*

*The four dramas that make up this series re-open the history books to document the evolution of the Métis people. The marriages between Indian women and European fur traders fostered the exchange of customs and technologies. What evolved was a unique community where the social and economic roles of women were crucial to survival. The remarkable and indomitable spirits of these women are captured in the stories. The parts of the series are as follows:*

*Ikwe. In 1770, a young Ojibway woman marries a Scottish fur trader. The union promises prosperity for her tribe, but hardship for Ikwe (57 min.).*

*Mistress Madeleine: In the 1850s, a Métis woman is torn between loyalty to her people and loyalty to her "husband," a Hudson's Bay clerk. Her life is shattered when he returns from England with a legal wife (57 min. 1 sec.).*

*Places Not Our Own: By 1929, the Métis had become a forgotten people, relegated to eking out a living as best they could. Rose L'Espérance is determined that her children will have a better life (57 min. 10 sec.).*

*The Wake: Set in contemporary Alberta, this is the story of a love affair between a Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer and a feisty Métis woman. Their lives are changed by the death of some young Métis on a frozen lake (57 min.).*

## Course overview

This course involves the interdisciplinary study of the Métis people in Canada, their history, and a survey of the major historical issues surrounding the Métis and their experiences with the Canadian State and Canadians.

The course is designed to introduce you to the story of the Métis and their developing relationship with Canada and Canadians. Each unit of the course will introduce a specific topic that will be followed by activities designed to help you understand the importance of the topic in the overall story of the Métis nation. In each unit will state the goals to be achieved and the method(s) to achieve them. Often there is a piece to be read in the manual before any other steps are followed. This is usually followed by a specific reading(s) from one of the texts or the readings package. Questions and important topics are included to guide the reading process. Activities are then provided to complete the learning process and to prepare for the assignment(s).

### Module 1: Birth of a Nation

#### Unit 1: Introduction to the Modern Identity Issue and Its Historical Roots: The Question of Métis Origins.

In this unit the concept of Métis identity and its connection to the origins of the Métis Nation in Canada is introduced.

#### Unit 2: The Métis Nation Is Established 1790-1821.

The previous unit dealt with the origins of the Métis and their development as they moved into Rupert's Land. In this section we deal with the beginnings of Métis nationalism and the economic and political role the Métis played in the development of Red River. The fur-trade wars from 1785 to 1821, also known as the Pemmican Wars, are described to explain Métis national, economic, and political development and the interaction of the people with the fur-trade companies in and around Red River. This topic ends with the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company in 1821.

### **Unit 3: The Golden Years and Free Trade 1821-1857**

Once established in the Red River area and across the North West of what would later be known as Western Canada, the Métis established communities in places such as St. Boniface, St. Vital, and St. Norbert. In these villages the people organized an economic system based on the fur-trade and the service industry associated with fur trading. They also began to trade independently between St. Paul, Minnesota, and a marketplace in Rupert's Land. This led to conflict with the HBC and the victory of the Métis "free-trade" movement after 1849. It also led to the HBC's desire to return to a strictly commercial venture and to Canada's interest in taking over the government of the West.

## **Module 2: The Métis Nation and the Canadian Nation State**

### **Unit 4: The Canadians Arrive 1857-1870**

In this unit we deal with the arrival of the early Canadian "pioneers" in the Red River Settlement and their desire to control the nature of western development. Blessed with an overly advanced sense of ambition and imbued with nineteenth-century Victorian ideals, they saw the Métis and First Nations as essentially irrelevant in the new scheme of things. Their actions sufficiently politicized the Métis leadership that they decided to act forcefully when Canada proposed taking over Rupert's Land in 1869. The result was the Provisional Government, the List of Rights, and the Manitoba Act with its statutory land rights for the Métis people.

### **Unit 5: Destabilizing the Nation 1870-1872**

Once the Manitoba Act was in place, the Métis discovered that Canadian policies, laws, and "government" fraud would not allow for their expected role in the culture of the new Province of Manitoba. The process whereby the Métis lost their home lands (Section 32 of the Manitoba Act) and the lands promised in Section 31 of the Manitoba Act (1.4 million acres) is dealt with in some detail, as this is the basis for the modern Métis land claim.

### **Unit 6: Dispossessing the Nation 1872-1890**

Following the loss of land and the resultant loss of economic and political roles in Manitoba, the Métis were forced to disperse over the entire Northwest Territories. Their attempts to redo what they did in Red River from 1800 to 1870 elsewhere in the West, were not successful as Canadian settlement rapidly took over the areas they claimed. The last stand, as it were, took place at Batoche in 1885, and with the death by hanging for high treason of Louis Riel, the Métis entered a long period later known as the "Forgotten Years."

## **Module 3: A Nation Lost and Reborn**

### **Unit 7: The Forgotten Years 1890-1960**

During this period the Métis were relegated to the margins of western Canadian society. Their

inability to access proper education, their poverty, and a negative racial identity imposed on them from without, resulted in the extreme marginalization of the people and the loss of self-determination until the period of resurgence in the post-World War II era.

### **Unit 8: Conclusion**

This unit ties together the social, political, and economic experiences of the Métis Nation as the basic building blocks of the Nation and set the stage for the modern situation that the people find themselves experiencing.

## **Evaluation and grading**

You should be familiar with the University's policies on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Requirements section of the *University of Manitoba Undergraduate Calendar*.

**Note:** These policies are also located on the university Student Affairs web site at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

There are three essay assignments, participation assignments, and a final examination in this course.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be written at the University of Manitoba (UM), Fort Garry campus or at an approved off-campus location. **Students needing to write at an off-campus location must declare a location by the specified deadline date** (see off-campus declaration and policy under Student Resources on course homepage). **Students writing at the UM Fort Garry campus do not need to declare an exam location.**

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the [final exam schedule](#) which is available approximately one month after the start of the course.

### **Assignments**

The assignments and instructions on how to complete them are in your course website. The assignments will consist of answers to specific questions in essay format, a short research paper, or a review of a specific reading.

For the participation portion of the grade you are required to take part in several course discussions on the course website. You are expected to make regular and substantial postings. The three essay assignments will draw from readings, course activities, your postings in the course discussion, and additional research. They consist of answers to specific questions, a short research paper, review of specific readings, or a combination of the above.

### **Distribution of marks**

Homepage Introduction and Response	5%
Discussions Posting/Participation	15%
Module 1	15%
Module 2	15%
Module 3	20%
Final examination	30%
Total	100%

## Grading

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A+	90-100	Exceptional
A	80-89	Excellent
B+	75-79	Very good
B	67-74	Good
C+	64-66	Satisfactory
C	57-63	Adequate
D	50-56	Marginal
F	0-49	Inadequate

**Please note:** All final grades are subject to departmental review.

## Assignment due dates

**Note:** If the assignment due date falls during the Mid-term Break in February, it will be due on the Monday following the Mid-term Break. If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date, for we cannot guarantee that the instructor will accept late assignments.

Late assignments which have not been discussed with the instructor before the due date will be graded accordingly. All papers must be handed in before the last day of class. Failure to do this can result in a failing grade.

### **A word of caution about the assignments and the final examination:**

Some students find that they do very well on the assignments, but they do not do nearly as well on the final examination. While your grades on the assignments will give you some idea of how well you are mastering the material, they may not indicate how well you will do on the examination, because the examination is written under very different circumstances. Because the assignments are open book, they do not require the amount of memorization that a closed-book examination requires nor

are they limited to a specific time period. Some students have told us that, based on the high marks they received on the assignments, they were overconfident and underestimated the time and effort needed to prepare for the final examination.

Please keep all this in mind as you prepare for the examination. If your course has a sample exam or practice questions, use them to practice for the examination by setting a time limit and not having any books available. Pay careful attention to the description of the type of questions that will be on your final examination. Preparing for multiple choice questions involves a different type of studying than preparing for essay questions. Don't underestimate the stress involved in writing a time-limited examination.

## Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Campus Manitoba Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website



## Acknowledgments

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