

Saint Mary's University
ACST 1000.2
Making Sense of Atlantic Canada
Winter 2011

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Other: I am on Facebook and Twitter but these are not reliable ways to reach me regarding the class. I also maintain an Atlantic Canada Studies blog, which might be of interest to some of you (<http://acstatsmu.blogspot.com>). I also maintain another blog and make regular media appearances to discuss Atlantic Canada Studies and history.

Required Texts

Margaret Conrad and Jim Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A History* (2nd Edition, Oxford, 2010).

Introduction

This course will provide students with an introduction to the Atlantic region of Canada. It will examine specific content areas from multiple perspectives, including landscapes and geographies, settlement, economic development, cultural industries, health and social services and representations of the region. This course is intended as an introduction to Atlantic Canada Studies and to interdisciplinary inquiry. Of course, it is my hope that students with an interest in some or all of these topics will pursue them in greater depth through taking subsequent courses.

Selected information will be placed on the academic drive (P:\Arts Interdisciplinary Studies\ACST1000). I do not, however, put full lecture notes or the keywords on this drive. Based on past experience, this means that a good attendance record is necessary to succeed in this course.

Evaluation

Written Assignments	50%
Examinations	50%

Course Requirements:

Written Assignments (50%)

- a. Students are required to write a one-page summary of any article appearing in one of the following: *The Island Magazine*, *Cape Breton's Magazine*, or *New Maritimes*. Students may, if the choose, select an article pertaining to Atlantic Canada from *Canadian Geographic*, *The Beaver*, *Fiddlehead*, or *Canadian Art*. This assignment is due on **18 January** and is worth 10% of your final mark.
- b. STUDENT CHOICE: CRITICAL ANALYSES
 - i. Option One: Students are required to write a critical analysis of a book drawn from the Selected Bibliography in the back of your text (pp. 224-30). Students may, *with the instructor's permission*, select another scholarly book. Please note that if you are selecting a book not in the Selected Bibliography, *it must be pre-approved by the instructor*. Students are required to complete a critical analysis of the book, not a review of it. This assignment is due on **15 February** and is worth 20% of your final mark.
 - ii. Option Two: Students are required to write a critical analysis of a film about Atlantic Canada. The film may be drawn from television or films and can be a documentary or a fictional representation. The length of the film may vary but it must be a piece longer than 15 minutes. Many films are available at the university library, local libraries or through the National Film Board of Canada website. Film choices *must be pre-approved by the instructor*. Students are required to complete a critical analysis of the film, not a review of it. This assignment is due on **15 February** and is worth 20% of your final mark.

- c. Students are required to write a critical analysis of the text, following the specifications outlined in the attached handout. This assignment is due on **5 April** and is worth 20% of your final mark.

Any of the written assignments may be submitted via email. Students who choose this option will receive an acknowledgement from me that their essay was received. *If you do not receive an acknowledgment from me, you should assume that I did not receive your assignment. The only acceptable proof of submission is an acknowledgment from me.* If the assignment is not submitted in hard copy at the end of class or electronically by 11:30 am on the date it is due, it will be considered late. Late assignments will have one letter grade deducted for the first two days it is late. If an assignment is more than two days late, it will receive an automatic “F”. This policy is strictly applied and there are no exceptions.

In-Class Exam (20%)

The mid-term (on 15 February) will consist of short answer, multiple-choice and other questions. At the beginning of each lecture, I will provide you with a number of key words which will form the basis for short answer or multiple choice part of the examination.

Final Examination (30%)

There will be a final examination during the examination period. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that he or she will be present for the final exam. Alternate arrangements will not be made to accommodate travel plans. The final examination will consist of short answer, multiple choice and/or essay-style questions.

Seminar Schedule

Jan 6	Introduction & Review of Syllabus; The Idea of Atlantic Canada
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Unit 1	The Spaces of Atlantic Canada (Readings: Introduction and Ch 1)
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Jan 11	Nova Scotia
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Jan 13	Newfoundland
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Jan 18	New Brunswick & Writing Assignment “A” is DUE
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Jan 20	Prince Edward Island
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Jan 25	Film: The Ballad of South Mountain
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Unit 2	The Peoples of Atlantic Canada (Readings: Chapters 2-7)
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Jan 27	Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada
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Feb 1	Acadians
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Feb 3	Case Study: The Irish in Atlantic Canada, Part 1
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Feb 8	African Canadians
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Feb 10	Film: Remember Africville
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Feb 15	In-Class Exam & Writing Assignment “B” is DUE
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Feb 17	No Class
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Feb 22 **NO CLASS – READING BREAK**

Feb 24 **NO CLASS – READING BREAK**

Unit 3 Culture of Atlantic Canada (Readings: Chapters 8-12)

Mar 1 Nova Scotia: The Province of History?
Short Film: Songs of Nova Scotia (excerpt from Celtic Spirits)

Mar 3 Case Study: The Irish in Atlantic Canada, Part 2

Mar 8 Tourism, Culture and Heritage Working People

Mar 10 Film, Music and Art

Mar 15 Literature of Atlantic Canada

Mar 17 Going Against Type & **Writing Assignment “C” is DUE**

Unit 4 The Atlantic Revolution (Reading: Chapters 13-15)

Mar 22 The Making and Unmaking of Atlantic Canada

Mar 24 Health and Medicine in Atlantic Canada

Mar 29 Social Justice in Atlantic Canada

Mar 31 Region and Canadian Identity: Representing Atlantic Canada

April 5 Review Class **LAST CLASS!**

Guideline for Summaries

Writing Assignment A

Members of the class are required to prepare a one-page summary of an article **pertaining to any aspect of Atlantic Canada** appearing in one of the following: *The Island Magazine*, *Cape Breton’s Magazine*, or *New Maritimes*. Students may, if they choose, select an article pertaining to Atlantic Canada from *Canadian Geographic*, *The Beaver*, *Fiddlehead*, or *Canadian Art* or other such periodical. This assignment is due on **18 January** and is worth 10% of your final mark. This summary is to be purely descriptive – all you have to do is effectively introduce your selected article, providing a full citation for the article (Author, Article Name, Journal Name, Journal Volume and Number, Page Numbers). A sample would be: Peter L. Twohig, “Mythical Citation,” *The Beaver*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1997): 40-5.

Students should simply introduce the article and summarize the key aspects of the article. This assignment should be one double-spaced page, approximately 250 words. This assignment is intended to allow me to gauge your comprehension and your writing style. Ensure that your writing is polished. Like all writing assignments in this course, I expect formal, well-written work.

Guideline for Critical Analyses Writing Assignments B & C

Students are required to complete two critical analyses described in the syllabus. The first one is a critical analysis of either a book or a film, while the second one is a critical analysis of the text. Due dates are in the syllabus. The purpose of these critical analyses is to offer an informed, scholarly evaluation of the qualities and character of the work being reviewed. It should demonstrate that you have thought about what you read or viewed and have assessed the validity of the argument and evidence used to support the argument or narrative of the work. Critical thinking involves making decisions about what is valid and what is open for discussion. An effective review recognizes that most works contain a bit of each. Think about alternatives to the picture being painted by the author or creator (the "other side"). Feel free to criticize, but do not be overly sceptical. Acknowledge what the author or creator has done well.

Your critical analysis will include an INTRODUCTION, a BODY and a CONCLUSION. They are described below. The assignment should not be more than 800 words (4-5 double-spaced pages).

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the author and title of the work under consideration. Something simple such as "Joe Student's *Life and Death in ACST 1000* argues that a student's enjoyment of the class is directly proportional to whether it is sunny outside or not." A successful critical analysis will briefly summarize the author's thesis. The thesis is the author's argument. A brief summary of the thesis (usually no more than one or two sentences) will help clarify your understanding of the book and will establish a guideline for the review. Most books contain many interesting things. By stating the author's thesis, you will be able to select where the author has been successful, where he or she has failed, etc.

Critiques are essentially opinion papers that are grounded in evidence. You have to decide whether the author succeeded in making his or her argument. You must take a position and support it with evidence. Your position should be stated in the first paragraph, when you are introducing the book.

BODY

Now that you have introduced the work and your opinion of it, you must substantiate it. The book review should include a summary. This is not a full description of the book. Rather, you should be selective in what you present. The summary of the book should not exceed 1 1/2 to 2 pages.

The benchmark for a good review is the ability to present the author's argument concisely, while demonstrating that you understood the book's purpose. Beyond the summary, the body of the review should include a description of the author's EXPLANATION: how does the author explain his or her topic? What EVIDENCE does the author use and how effective is it? Did it help establish the argument effectively? Are there other kinds of evidence that could have been used? Is the ARGUMENT convincing? What are the THEMES? Analyze the main parts of the author's discussion and replicate his or her emphasis. In this way, you will avoid tangents or missing significant parts of the author's work. Remember, you are striving to present an accurate portrayal of the book, so do not over emphasize or neglect significant parts of the discussion. Look for themes in the introduction to individual chapters, although there may be others. How do the themes or ideas in a book interrelate? Are there inconsistencies in the argument?

Matters of style and presentation are a legitimate part of any review, but usually only in general terms. For example, good writing may constitute an element of the book or film's success, while poor or mediocre writing could be noted as a shortcoming. Please do not focus on isolated or minor flaws, unless they are part of a larger pattern of stylistic problems.

CONCLUSION

Be concise here, no more than a paragraph on the books particular strengths and weaknesses. How successful was the book? What is your overall assessment of the book? What effect did the book have on you? On your understanding of the topic? Has this book led you to come up with a possible new or different interpretation to the subject? If so, what?