Course description
As global warming accelerates and polar ice melts, the Arctic is fast becoming a “hot” topic of conversation worldwide. Canada is a circumpolar country with sizable Arctic territories, yet most Canadians have never been north of sixty. This course introduces students to the recent human and environmental history of the Canadian North, focusing principally on the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, and Nunavut. We will explore the multiple, often contradictory “ideas of North” that Inuit, Dene, Métis, and Euro-Canadian peoples have constructed over the last 150 years. We will examine key social themes and transformations, including cross-cultural trade, Christianization, and modernization, from both Indigenous and sojourner perspectives. We’ll also learn how people have behaved toward and understood northern environments by studying different cultural traditions of renewable and non-renewable resource use, environmental knowledge, and adaptation to environmental change. Students will hone their analytical and interpretive skills through encounters with textual and audiovisual sources that present conflicting, even radically divergent accounts of Arctic history. They will leave the course able to debunk common myths about the region’s past and present, and to think critically and responsibly about its future.

Course objectives
By the end of this course, you will be able:
• To compare and contrast different “ideas of North,” and to situate each idea within specific historical and historiographical contexts
• To assess the causes and consequences of major social transformations in the Canadian North from multiple perspectives
• To appraise how and why different actors and institutions have altered northern Canadian environments, and with what consequences
• To compare and contrast disparate representations of key northern historical events
• To practice and hone the skills of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating primary and secondary documents in oral and written forms.
Course readings
There is one required text for this course:

The following books may also prove useful when preparing for meetings or assignments. I have placed copies of each, as well as Morrison’s book, on reserve at Bennett Library:

All other assigned readings are available on, or linked to from the course’s Canvas website. Readings should be completed for the date under which they are listed.

Because this is a small class, it’s vital that everyone takes the time to read all of the articles carefully each week in order to ensure good discussions. With this in mind, I have deliberately striven to keep reading loads manageable.

Course evaluation
Your final grade will be determined as follows:
- Participation 20%
- Four short essays 80% (20% each)

Participation
Please plan to attend every meeting. If you have to be absent unexpectedly, please let me know as a courtesy. If you know you will have to miss a meeting due to religious observances/practices or another such conflict (e.g. athletic competitions, interviews for professional programs), please let me know as soon as possible.

Please come to class with hard copies of the readings or with the files easily accessible on your laptop or tablet. You should be prepared to reflect critically, both in written and spoken form, on readings, audiovisual material, and other primary and secondary sources that we shall encounter. I also expect you to listen to your peers and engage with their viewpoints, and to practice expressing your ideas and arguments clearly, concisely, and convincingly.

As part of your participation in this course, you are expected to do the following:
- **Lead one seminar discussion**, for which you will sign up at our first meeting. I will outline the expectations related to this role early on in the term.
- **Weeks 2, 4–6, 9, and 11–12 only**: email a “discussion cheat-sheet” to me no later than Tuesday at 12:30 pm, which should contain 1–2 questions or observations per assigned reading. You will not have to submit a cheat-sheet the week you lead the discussion.
Course assignments
This class requires you to write four essays (1000-1250 words or approximately 4-5 pages each) over the course of the semester. For each, you will be given a short list of primary and/or secondary sources relating to a course topic, and asked to write an interpretive essay in response to a specific question. Each assignment is designed to exercise a different set of historian’s muscles. Together, they constitute a total-body workout that may leave you a little tired, but also (I hope) a stronger writer and thinker than before. I will give specific instructions for each assignment in separate handouts.

These assignments are an experiment in adapting Oxbridge-style supervisions to a Canadian university setting. The idea is that undergraduates write short essays frequently (sometimes weekly), which they then discuss with their professor and peers in small-group settings. You are therefore expected to bring a rough draft of each essay in hard copy to the following meetings:

- First paper: Tuesday, January 19th
- Second paper: Tuesday, February 23rd
- Third paper: Tuesday, March 15th
- Fourth paper: Tuesday, April 5th.

Depending on the essay (and I’ll let you know), you will then either discuss the rough draft one-on-one with me or with a peer, or present the substance of your paper to your classmates. Finally, you will revise the paper as necessary and submit the final draft electronically or in hard copy no later than 5 pm on the following dates:

- First paper: Friday, January 29th
- Second paper: Friday, March 4th
- Third paper: Friday, March 25th
- Fourth paper: Friday, April 15th.

Policies regarding assignments
You may submit assignments either in hard copy to my departmental mailbox or as a Word or PDF document attached to an email. Please include your name, the date, and some kind of descriptive title on the first page. A separate title page is not necessary. Please also number the pages of the assignment. All assignments must be word-processed, using standard 1-inch margins, at least 1.5-inch spacing, and 11 or 12-point font. Please use Chicago style (notes and bibliography) for footnotes or endnotes, and for lists of works cited. If you are not familiar with this style of citation, here is a quick general guide:
http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

A late assignment will have 5% of its final mark subtracted for each day it is late, including weekends, up to a maximum of four days or 20%. After that point, assignments will not be accepted except by prior arrangement. Extensions must be requested at least 72 hours in advance of an assignment’s due date. Please do not request an extension unless serious personal or medical circumstances warrant one.

Academic honesty
By enrolling in classes at SFU, you have consented to a student contract that includes a commitment to academic honesty:
http://www.sfu.ca/students/calendar/2015/spring/fees-and-regulations/student-contract/academic-honesty.html

It is your responsibility to ensure that you understand what constitutes academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to plagiarism. This guide clarifies what actions are considered academically honest and dishonest at SFU:
http://www.sfu.ca/students/academicintegrity/resources/academichonestyguide.html

Classroom etiquette
Please arrive to class in a timely fashion. Please also do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely, physically unavoidable.

Please turn your cell phones to silent and refrain from using them during class. Feel free to use your laptop, tablet, or netbook to take notes or look up things, but please don’t use such devices in ways (Facebook, YouTube, etc) that will disrupt the attention of others around you. This is particularly important in such a small class.

I may make changes to the syllabus during the term. I will always notify you of these, and will post a revised version of the syllabus or reading schedule to the course’s Canvas homepage.

Course schedule: Topics, readings, and due dates
*NB: Starred weeks indicate those for which you need to email a discussion cheat-sheet to me no later than 12:30 pm on Tuesday.

Week 1: Locating the North
Meeting: Tuesday January 5
Readings: Morrison, True North, chapters 1-2 (1-35)

*Week 2: Ideas of North
Meeting: Tuesday January 12

Week 3: Franklin & the uses of history
Meeting: Tuesday January 19
Readings: Morrison, True North, chapter 5 (62-77)
Tina Adcock, “Why Should We Care About the _Erebus_ (or _Terror_)?”


*Bring rough draft of first essay to class*

*Week 4: Whales, Inuit, & whalers*

Meeting: Tuesday January 26


*First essay due Friday, January 29 by 5 pm*

*Week 5: The Klondike*

Meeting: Tuesday February 2


Optional: Morrison, _True North_, chapter 6 (78-104)

Tuesday February 9—No class (Reading Week)

*Week 6: Shamanism & Christianity*

Meeting: Tuesday February 16

Readings: Morrison, _True North_, 54-61


Jarich Oosten, Frédéric Laugrand, and Cornelius Remie, “Perceptions of Decline: Inuit Shamanism in the Canadian Arctic,” *Ethnohistory* 53.3 (Summer 2006): 445-477

Week 7: Animals & the fur trade
Meeting: Tuesday February 23
Readings: Morrison, *True North*, 44-54
Paul Nadasy, “It’s Not Really Knowledge At All, It’s More a Way of Life,” in *Hunters and Bureaucrats: Power, Knowledge, and Aboriginal-State Relations in the Southwest Yukon* (2003), 60-113
*Bring rough draft of second paper to class*

Week 8: Exploration & sovereignty
Meeting: Tuesday March 1 (hopefully at the Vancouver Maritime Museum; TBC)
Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 7 (105-129)
Janice Cavell, “A little more latitude’: explorers, politicians, and Canadian Arctic policy during the Laurier era,” *Polar Record* 47.4 (2011): 289-309
Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Reports and Other Papers Relating to the Two Voyages of the R.C.M. Police Schooner ‘St Roch’...* (1945), 5-26
*Second paper due Friday, March 4 by 5 pm*

*Week 9: Militarizing the North*
Meeting: Tuesday March 8
Film: “Canol” (1945)
Readings: Morrison, *True North*, chapter 8 (130-151)
Philip Fradkin, “The First and Forgotten Pipeline,” *Audubon* 79.6 (November 1977): 59-79

Week 10: Mining bodies & communities
Meeting: Tuesday March 15
Film: “Village of Widows” (1999)
George Blondin, *When the World Was New: Stories of the Sahtu Dene* (1990), 78-79
“Welcome to Pine Point” (NFB, 2011): http://pinepoint.nfb.ca/

*Bring rough draft of third paper to class

*Week 11: High modernism goes North
Meeting: Tuesday March 22
Film: “Qimmitt: A Clash of Two Truths” (2010)
Readings: Morrison, True North, chapter 9 (152-167)
Frank James Tester, “Mad dogs and (mostly) Englishmen: Colonial relations, commodities, and the fate of Inuit sled dogs,” Études Inuit Studies 34.2 (2010): 129-147

*Third paper due Friday, March 25 by 5 pm

*Week 12: Oil, gas, & self-determination
Meeting: Tuesday March 29
Readings: Morrison, True North, chapter 10 (168-188)
Thomas R. Berger, Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland (1977) [excerpts]

Week 13: Climate change & the “future history” of the Arctic
Meeting: Tuesday April 5
Film: “Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change” (2010)
Emilie S. Cameron, “Securing Indigenous politics: A critique of the vulnerability and adaptation approach to the human dimensions of climate change in the Canadian Arctic,” Global Environmental Change 22 (2012): 103-114
Martha Dowsley et al., “Should we turn the tent? Inuit women and climate change,” Études Inuit Studies 34.1 (2010): 151-165

*Bring rough draft of fourth paper to class

*Fourth paper due Friday, April 15 by 5 pm