

M 10-11; Th 3-4

This course will introduce you to core concepts and themes on the subject of

Meskwaki nation continue to live, work, and raise families on the Meskwaki Settlement in Tama County, Iowa, less than 30 miles from Grinnell College.

#### Course Texts

Most course readings are available electronically through Burling Library. Others are available on the course site or online. Whenever possible I provide a link on the syllabus for maximum accessibility.

#### Course Requirements

As a two-credit offering, we will meet less frequently than other full-semester courses. This makes attendance especially important. The nature of our work together, which will emphasize collective learning and scholarship, will very much depend on a common and consistent commitment to the course.

cultivating an accessible and equitable community of living and learning. Each student will also be responsible for identifying one campus educator with whom to engage in dialogue about decolonizing the curriculum and learning spaces.

### Course Expectations and Goals

Decolonizing the Curriculum, as a course and a goal, is in every sense a collective, collaborative effort. We will read together, discuss together, create together. If we approach this work with a spirit of generosity we will also have many opportunities to grow together. Practicing a spirit of generosity is the **foundational expectation** of our course. I use the word practice very intentionally.

In **Generous Thinking**, Kathleen Fitzpatrick writes, "Practices are not about perfection but about a continual, impossible attempt to perfect. They are ways of being in the world." (68) She suggests that a key element of generosity as practice is critical humility, which requires that in order to truly listen to each other "we must not only refrain from assuming that everyone else is in the wrong, but we also must remain open to the real possibility that **we might be.**" (40) Fitzpatrick follows this with a simple, though very difficult, formula for generous thinking: Assume positive intent; own negative effects. This is generous thinking as a practice, a habit of mind.

We will all have missteps in our work together. Assume positive intent. Own negative effects. We will—we should—disagree with readings and with each other. Assume positive intent. Own negative effects. This is generous thinking as practice.

Fitzpatrick imagines generous thinking as a fundamentally dialogic practice. Being in dialogue requires that we develop a shared vocabulary. "The kind of inquiry that scholars and other writers undertake relies on the possibility of a shared vocabulary, which creates the conditions under which we might conduct a conversation about complex and often contentious ideas, in the hope that we might come to some kind of mutual understanding." (47) Like generous thinking itself, developing a shared vocabulary is an ongoing process, particularly as more and more members of our communities enter into conversation.

We have two central goals in this course. The **first goal** is to use our readings to develop a shared vocabulary about what it means to decolonize a curriculum and learning spaces. Developing this shared vocabulary is a necessary step toward the **second goal** of the course, which is to create a resource—a toolkit, to borrow Sarah Ahmed's term—to share with others at Grinnell with whom we want to be in dialogue. Sharing this kind of resource can be a first step in developing a shared vocabulary with others.

To help accomplish these goals and remain within the parameters of a collaborative two-credit course, we will

- ◀ Meet every other week collectively. On weeks we aren't all meeting together as a class, there will be one-hour student-only gatherings. We will work together to



September 26: Rhodes Must Fall

- < Reading
  - o Gebrial, "Rhodes Must Fall: Oxford and Movements for Change"

October 10: Being Unsettled

- < Reading
  - o Tuck and Yang, "[Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor](#)"

October 31: Directions

- < Reading
  - o Mbembe, "[Decolonizing the University](#)"

November 14: Toolkits for Chip, Chip, Chipping

- < Reading
  - o Sarah Ahmed, "[Resignation](#)," "[Resignation Is a Feminist Issue](#)," and "[Feminism and Fragility](#)," all from her blog, **Feminist Killjoy**

December 5: Our Curriculums and Classrooms

- < Reading
  - o #decolonizingyoursyllabus: <https://twitter.com/MaxLiboiron/status/1160131991498567682>
  - o O'Sullivan, "[Decolonizing the Classroom](#)"
  - o Connell, "[Decolonizing Sociology](#)"
  - o Zinga and Styres, "[Decolonizing Curriculum: Student Resistances to Anti-Oppressive Pedagogy](#)"

December 12: Preparing Our Toolkit For Change

- < Reading
  - o Research, select, and read one scholarly resource that relates to decolonizing a syllabus or curriculum in your major/field.