

Summer School

Stories of the Pacific Northwest: Indigenous Perspectives on Land and Literature



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July 21 – August 1, 2022

University of Northern British Columbia
Prince George, British Columbia, Canada

Synopsis

Since the 1970s, there has been a powerful revival of indigenous traditions in North America, especially in Canada. In recent times this has expressed itself in the demand for a comprehensive “decolonization” of all areas of society, especially regarding education and training in schools and universities. The aim is to question the westernized production and transfer of knowledges and to add indigenous knowledges and traditionally indigenous forms of learning that express a different “worldview”.

The University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC) at Prince George is well advanced in the process of “decolonizing” its academic practice. Not only is indigenous knowledge taught there, but indigenous traditions are also utilized in instruction, such as land-based learning or storytelling practices. The University of Northern British Columbia is therefore the ideal place to implement the central objective of our Summer School: together with students and lecturers from UNBC, we want to look at indigenous perspectives as they are portrayed in contemporary literature and other arts as well as in academic publications.

The center of the Summer School will be a five-day block event at UNBC. Thematically, the five days ask about the connection between the linguistic and narrative representation as well as the scientific order of nature and indigenous knowledges. It is divided into two strands: (1) an intensive reading and discussion of selected literary and scientific texts and (2) indigenous forms of learning outside of the classroom, for example a botanical hike led by an indigenous herbalist, a circle-talk with the Elder in Residence, a workshop on indigenous storytelling as well as options for practices in creative endeavors like writing and sketching in the beautiful landscape around the UNBC campus. This block course in Prince George is preceded by a two-day stay in Vancouver, which will be used for acclimatization and introduction to our topic. Here, we will visit several museums (e.g. the Museum of Anthropology) and other places that are important for our Summer School (e.g. the Totem Poles at Stanley Park).

A Rewarding Experience

The 2022 Stories of the Pacific Northwest Summer School offers you a unique opportunity for intercultural learning with little financial contribution. Together we will get to know the impressive landscape of the Canadian Northwest Coast and meet with Canadian students and teachers. Thus, you will experience a (potentially) new land, culture, and deepen your language practice. Above all, however, we will gain insights into different knowledges of nature through representatives of the indigenous cultures around Prince George and experience its traditional forms of learning in a very practical way.

Call for Applications

The Stories of the Pacific Northwest Summer School was originally planned to take place in 2021 with the call for applications already taking place. However, due to the Covid-19 situation, the Summer School has been postponed to 2022, re-opening some of our participation slots. As such, we invite new applications.

Applying

To apply for one of the few remaining places, you need to send your single .pdf application in an email to Prof. Rosenthal via Email by **December 15th, 2021**. Your application should include the following:

- A letter of motivation no longer than 1-2 pages, which outlines your interest in the Summer School
- A short CV
- A list of courses you attended
- Contact address including email and cell phone number
- A copy of a valid passport

By **January 5th, 2022**, we will select and fill the open places from the applications received.

What Do I Have to Pay?

We have successfully applied for several grants for the Summer School with which we can cover the costs for your accommodation in Vancouver and Prince George, common meals, entrance fees, transport within Canada (e.g., the flight to Prince George and back), and part of the transatlantic flight. With Covid-19 flight prices have unfortunately increased considerably, and to cover the initial costs of the flights, you initially are responsible for a portion of your flight fare. Once selected as a participant, we require a contribution from you of **1,200€** until **February 1, 2022**. After the final billing, however, we are confident that we will be able to reimburse you for part of this initial contribution (likely around 300-400 Euros).

Materials and Preparation

In preparation for the Summer School, there will be a one-day seminar in the **first months of 2022**, in which we will introduce the content of the Summer School, present the texts to be read in advance, and clarify all organizational aspects. The exact date will be announced in good time.

Contact Us

For organizational questions (schedule, flight, application requirements, etc.), please email Amanda Halter, M.A. and Florian Wagner, M.A. For application submission or comments/questions related to the content of the Summer School, please email Prof. Rosenthal and (apl.) Prof. Dr. Braun.

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