Methodologies of Crossing: Exploring Interdisciplinary Knowledges, Trajectories, and Worldviews

Professor: Dr. Rajdeep S. Gill

Day/Time: Mondays, 1-4 pm
Location: MacMillan 256, University of British Columbia, Musqueam Territory
Email contact: rajdeep.gill@alumni.ubc.ca
Office hrs: Right after class and by appointment

Course Description

This course offers a creative and collaborative approach to understanding and exploring interdisciplinary constructions of knowledge across the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. The methodological, structural and socio-ecological contours of diverse historical and contemporary formations of interdisciplinarity will be intricately examined. This course will strongly focus on the interrelationship of knowledge and value, interdisciplinarity and public reason.

This course will involve experiential learning and in-depth dialogue. Guest speakers from the UBC community and beyond will be invited to enrich interdisciplinary engagement and learning. This course will also provide a supportive and exploratory space for connecting interdisciplinarity to the specific research, methodological and personal interests of each course participant.

No background in interdisciplinary research is required, and students from any and all areas of study are welcome. Curiosity, adventurousness, imagination and creativity will be encouraged. The desire to expand avenues of knowledge exchange and translation across academic, community and public contexts will be welcomed and supported.

Course Learning Objectives

- To deepen curiosity and knowledge of interdisciplinary research and knowledge frameworks across the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences
- To explore multifaceted possibilities and pathways of translation and dialogue across knowledge, discipline, community and social borders
- To further understanding of knowledge construction in the context of experience and community, value and public reason
- To provide participants the opportunity to practically, theoretically, critically and creatively think through methodological issues in their research and the research of others
- To engage in participatory interdisciplinary learning and exchange
## Evaluation Criteria and Assignments

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<th><strong>In-Class Participation</strong></th>
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<td>Participation marks will be based on preparedness for class as demonstrated by careful reading of assigned materials, questions and comments shared in seminars, and ongoing engagement with class peers and guest speakers. Effort put into various in-class activities and exercises will also count towards participation evaluation.</td>
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<td>The participation grade evaluates consistency of attendance, effort, care in thought and engagement, and ability to sufficiently integrate course materials.</td>
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<th><strong>Critical Responses</strong></th>
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<td>Students will be expected to complete one page critical and creative responses to readings and class activities and discussions every other class.</td>
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<td>These short written responses will test student's capacity to succinctly, critically and creatively engage with a broad range of interdisciplinary methodologies, explorations and writing. Integrative and original thinking will be encouraged. Ability to contextualize and analyze in a well-reasoned manner will be evaluated.</td>
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<th><strong>Individual Oral Presentation</strong></th>
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<td>Each student will be expected to participate in one individual presentation on a set of weekly readings. The presentation will include summaries as well as critical and creative inquiry and engagement with selected course materials and thematics.</td>
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<td>The aim is to evaluate the ability of student</td>
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participants to integrate and present on interdisciplinary research materials in a cohesive manner, to lead group discussion, and respond in class to queries made by their peers. Focus will be on the development of ideas, whether they are in the exploratory or in-depth stage.

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<th>Collaborative Presentation</th>
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<td>This presentation will require collaboration in process, content and development. Groups will be assigned to encourage interdisciplinary learning and exchange with course participants from different fields and areas of interest. The presentation will involve active engagement with diverse methodologies and research, articulation of individual and group thinking, and explorations around a major course thematic. The aim of this assignment is to assist students in strengthening skills in co-operative, dialogic and collaborative knowledge-building as well as the ability to carefully hone meaning and cohesion across diverse yet thematically related fields of inquiry.</td>
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<th>Book or Dissertation Review</th>
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<td>Students will be expected to read and review an interdisciplinary book or dissertation. The dissertation may be selected from UBC theses available online. The book will have to be chosen from a list shared by the instructor or be an approved book of methodological interest and usefulness to the student. Students will be expected to assess the methodological strategies, insights, and implications of their chosen works along with providing a clear and incisive commentary on the work as a whole. This assignment (1200-1500 words) assesses the ability to discuss a large and complex research project in an illuminating and concise manner.</td>
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Final Research/Methodology Paper

The focus of the final paper (2,000-2,500 words) will be determined by the student in close consultation with the instructor. This assignment involves development of a sustained position or argument. This assignment will test methodological, research, analytical, integrative, and comparative abilities within an interdisciplinary context.

20%

Peer Review

Assessment of in-class participation, individual and group presentations will also involve peer review. Peer review may also be incorporated into other assignments.

Assigned Readings and Reference Texts

The assigned material will include a wide range of articles and book chapters. Some readings may change based on observation of student engagement and class dialogue. There will be two main reference texts: Julie Thompson Klein, Carl Mitcham, and Robert Frodeman, Oxford Handbook of Interdisciplinarity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) and Allen F. Repko, Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing, 2012). These books have been put on reserve at Koernor Library.

Weekly Topics and Readings

Introductory Class – September 12

Thematic:

❖ Institutional and Social Contexts of Inter/disciplinarity

❖ Methodology, Knowledge Construction and Creativity

❖ Relationship between Form and Content of Knowledges

Screenings/Talks:

• Jeanette Armstrong on Knowledge of Place (Center for Ecoliteracy, 2009)
• Craig Calhoun on Interdisciplinarity and Innovation (University of Southern California, Annenberg Series in Sustainable Innovation, 2009)
Class Two – September 19

Thematic:

❖ Intersections of Epistemic Justice, Social Justice and Interdisciplinarity

❖ Cross-Sector, Collaborative Approaches to Knowledge

❖ Taxonomies of Interdisciplinarity

Reading:


Due: Student Mapping Exercise – map your research/creative process through collage, drawing, diagram, painting, poem or another medium

Class Three - FIRST CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE – September 26

Thematic:

❖ Interdisciplinary Research: Examples, Process and Theory

❖ Sciences, Value and Integrative Thinking

❖ Constructs of Knowledge, Authority and Reason

Reading/Listening:

• Gregory Cajete, “Indigenous Knowledge and Western Science,” Conference Talk, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFeN1Oglbzw>

Class Four – October 3

Thematic:

❖ Notions of Humanism, Culture and Nature
❖ Interdisciplinary Contextualizations of Economy and Politics
❖ Interdisciplinarity & Socio-political and Socio-ecological Thought

Reading:

Class Five – SECOND CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE – October 17

Thematic:

❖ Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Research
❖ Interdisciplinarity and Cognitive Justice
❖ Technology and Epistemology

Reading:


Class Six – October 24

Thematic:

❖ Democracy and Knowledge
❖ Interdisciplinarity & Public Reason

Reading:


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**Class Seven – COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS + THIRD CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE – October 31st**

**Student Presentations**

**Class Eight – November 7 – COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS cont.**

**Thematic:**

- Decolonization, Creativity and Interdisciplinarity
- Experience and Knowledge
- Emotions and Research

**Reading:**


Class Nine- BOOK/DISSERETATION REVIEW DUE – November 14

Thematic:

❖ Secularity and the Construction of Knowledge

❖ Interdisciplinarity & Spirituality

Reading:


Class Ten-OPTIONAL FOURTH CRITICAL RESPONSE DUE – November 21

Thematic:

❖ Environmental and Cognitive Justice

❖ Role of the More-than-Human World in Enactments of Knowledge and Consciousness: Interdisciplinary Grounds and Implications

Reading:

intelligent-of-bees-1.2913610


Class Eleven- FINAL ESSAY DUE – November 28

Student-Focused Seminar

Student-led and student-focused discussion regarding Interdisciplinarity, Methodology, and Research

Class Twelve – December 5

Thematic:

- Bringing Interdisciplinary Explorations Home

Reflection-based sharing and summation in relation to each student’s journeying during the course as well as instructor’s sharing on course process, content, and discussions.
Some Additional Resources Pertaining to Discussions of Interdisciplinarity Knowledge


Some Resources on Thesis Writing and Research Proposals


