This seminar focuses upon the history of cross-cultural contact in North America from the late sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. It challenges students to examine what happened when the cultures, economies, trading institutions and views of New and Old World people mixed together in pre-colonial, colonial and pioneer periods. Students will also have an opportunity to examine the methodological challenges arising in “contact zones” where scholars try to understand sites of exchange, trade and cultural encounter in North American history. Broadly interdisciplinary, this seminar draws not only from history but schools of economic anthropology, archaeology, environmental history and historical geography. The seminar will also examine the limits of dependency, cultural survival and the theoretical cultural and economic characteristics of the “middle ground” established on the expanding commercial frontiers of New France, New York, Pennsylvania, Charleston, the Upper Missouri, Louisiana and in the far West.

Grading

**Weekly Participation 20%**

**Weekly Reading Reports 35%**: Two to 2.5 pages in length (no longer, please), the report will summarize the argument and main points of the Scrum readings and the Document reading from the jam session. Reports must be handed in at beginning of each session; they will not be accepted late.

**Reading Scrum Leading 10%**: The student will lead discussion around the first part of a week’s readings, having developed questions or points that will prompt the seminar students to think differently about the source.

**Research Paper 35%**, 15 pages in length, the research paper will reflect a term’s research into a specific topic in North American cultural encounter, trade or exchange, drawing on primary and secondary sources. Students should think early about collections of primary sources from which they can draw (e.g., Hudson’s Bay Company Archives, Papers of the American Fur Company, etc.) in case they will need to make interlibrary loan requests from the library. Students must submit a research paper proposal by SEPTEMBER 30.
**Week 1: Sept 9: Introduction and seminar organization**

**Week 2: Sept 16: Contact, Early trade and exchange relations**

**Reading Scrum:**


**Jam Session:** Romantic versus Relativist understandings of Early Contact:

**Week 3: Sept 23, The Development of a Middle Ground in Encounters in New France and the Pays-d’en-haut**

**Reading Scrum:**


**Jam Session:** Balanced and Negative Reciprocity in early North American Exchange

**Discussion:** Henry Fleet Journal, “A Voyage Made in the Bark Virginia, to Virginia and Other Parts of the Continent of America” 1664.

**Week 4: Sept 30, the Southern Fur Trade: Frontiers of Violence, Borderlands of Misunderstandings**

**Reading Scrum:**
William L. Ramsey, “‘Something Cloudy in their Looks’: the Origins of the Yamasee War Reconsidered,” *The Journal of American History* 90(1), June 2003, pp. 44-75. Available through the following link:
http://www.historycooperative.org.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/journals/jah/90.1/ramsey.html


**Jam Session:** Stuart Plattner, “Introduction” to Economic Anthropology (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp.1-17

Discussion: excerpt, Gabriel Sagard, Journey to the Huron Country, pp. 44-47.

**Note:** Term Paper Proposals Due: The proposal will comprise an overview of the topic, the key question that will be asked, and bibliography. Most paper proposals run 2 pages in length.

**Week 5: October 7: Sexual Exchange: Women and Men in Cultural Encounter**

**Reading Scrum:**


**Jam Session:**


**Document discussion:** Fort Sarpy Journal, January 1855

**Week 6: October 14: Trades Made across the Line: Captives, Slaves and Adoptees**

**Reading Scrum:**


Brett Rushforth, “Slavery, the Fox Wars, and the limits of Alliance,” William and Mary Quarterly 63(1) 2006, pp. 53-80.

**Jam Session:**


Tabeau’s Narrative on “Nations of the Upper Missouri,”
Week 7: October 21, Cultures Interacting, Cultural Ethnogenesis

Reading Scrum:


Jam Session


Week 8: Oct 28: Theatres of Contact on the Pacific

Reading Scrum:


Jam Session: Oral History from points of Contact:

Week 9: Nov 4, The Race to the Plains

Reading Scrum:


Jam Session:
Discussion: Edwin Denig, “Speech of Le Chef du Tonnerre to the Gentleman in Charge of Fort Union, January 1850,” and Assiniboine Picture Writing
Week 10: No Class, Remembrance Day

Week 11: Nov 18, Power and Impoverishment in Material Exchange: the Cases of the Horse, Gun and Alcohol

Reading Scrum:
Chapter 5, “The Horse and Gun Revolution, 1700-1770” pp. 86-106


Jam Session:

Discussion: Booze at Brandon House: MacKay’s Journal 1794

Week 12: November 25, Tourism and the Encounter with the Exotic

Reading Scrum:


Jam Session

Week 13: December 2, Discussion around Student Essays and Relating them to Seminar Themes

Emergency Management Program
As part of the University’s Emergency Management Program primary and alternative assembly points have been identified for this course in the case of an emergency requiring evacuation. The primary assembly point is the Professional Faculties Food Court. The Education Block Food Court has been identified as an alternative point. These areas have been selected as they are large enough to hold a significant number of people and will provide an evacuated population access to washroom facilities and protection from the elements.
Reserve Reading


Ray, A.J. and Freeman, Donald, "Give us good measure": *an economic analysis of relations between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978)


