NASD 110: Introduction to Native American Studies

Course Syllabus

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Faculty Office Building, Room 212  Winter, 2010
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Course description: Introduction to Native American Studies is a course designed to introduce students to the academic discipline of Native American Studies. Included in this course are the historical development, theories and models, and the methodology of the discipline. (Three credits).

Prerequisites: None

NWIC outcomes: As a result of this class students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and importance of a sense of place to tribal people.

2. Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a people.

Course outcomes: As a result of this class students will be able to:

1. List the major characteristics that make Native American Studies an academic discipline.

2. Describe the historical development of Native American Studies as an academic discipline at the college and university levels.

3. Explain the impact – both the positive and negative – that anthropology has had on Native American Studies.

4. List the important individuals who have contributed to making Native American Studies an academic discipline and describe the contributions of each.

5. Describe the role of Native American Studies in the tribal college curriculum.
**Required textbook(s):** No textbook will be used in this class. Instead, students will be provided with a collection of readings.

**Class preparation and policies:** Students are expected to attend class regularly and be prepared to study and learn. Each student is expected to take and keep their lecture notes and other materials in one notebook or folder that will be periodically checked by the instructor.

The use of cell phones, computers, and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited in class. Take notes the “old fashioned” way – with pencil and paper.

**Class attendance:** One of the best indicators of academic success is good attendance. You are expected to attend every class and be on time. You are also expected to remain in class for the duration of the class. (This includes you getting up and walking out of the classroom – which I will interpret as being a lack of interest on your part). I will take roll at the beginning of each class. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to see me after class to insure that you have been marked present. If not, you are absent. Students arriving more than twenty minutes late will be marked absent.

Failure to attend class will also lower your grade. Students are allowed four unexcused absences (“unexcused” is defined as any absence other than a legitimate personal illness or participation in another school-related activity) without penalty. On the fifth unexcused absence – and with each unexcused absence that follows – your final grade will be lowered one letter grade. Consequently, after the eighth unexcused absence you will receive a failing grade regardless of your point total.

**Special note to ITV students:** Taking a course over ITV requires a special commitment and sense of responsibility on the part of both the student and the instructor. Difficulties with the technical aspects of the process, and limitations in direct communication between the student and instructor are just two of the problems that we face. Still, ITV can be a great educational experience if we both work to hold up our respective ends of the bargain. Your good and on-time attendance is even more critical for success over ITV. Also, important is the respect that we show each other during class. My responsibility is to keep you engaged. Your responsibility is to remain engaged. This includes me asking you questions and you contributing to the class discussion. I realize that this can be difficult, but we both have to make the special effort.

**Assignments:** This course is primarily a reading, discussion, and lecture course. Students are expected to read the assignments before class and be prepared to discuss them. Students will be also required to write a three page (typewritten) reflective paper or summary, doubled spaced using 12 point font, on each major reading (those designated with an asterisk * in the syllabus) which will generally be due at the end of the week that we discuss them. Make sure that your name appears on the upper left hand corner of the paper and that the title or topic of your paper is clearly written under your name. Assignments can be submitted either in paper form by hand or by email. Please refer to the “due date” list at the end of this syllabus.
We will also be watching several videos in class and possibly invite one or two guest speakers. Students will be expected to write a one-page handwritten review on each of these activities.

Students will also be required to write a five-page biographical report utilizing no less than three sources which will be presented on a separate bibliographical page. These reports – the topic of which will be biographies of selected intellectual leaders in the field of Native American Studies – will also be given as an oral presentation to the class during the final two weeks of the course.

In regard to extra credit: Students may write additional reflective papers on the assigned readings to raise their overall point total or to make up for excessive absences.

Please note that I do not lend my lecture notes out – get them from another student. If you are absent from class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and to prepared before the next class. “I was absent” or “I did not know” are not legitimate excuses. In most cases missed work will need to be made up the next class.

**Grading procedures:** The final grade will consist of the cumulative total of all points earned during the course. By percentage this will most likely breakdown as follows: (1) Summary papers – 80% of final grade, and (2) intellectual biography and oral presentation – 20%.

The following grading scale will be applied:

- 100 to 90% = A
- 89 to 80% = B
- 79 to 70% = C
- 69 to 60% = D

*Students are again reminded of the impact that unexcused absences will have on final grades.*

**Course calendar and readings:**

Week 1 (January 11/13)

- Topic: Native American Studies as an Academic Discipline
NOTE: Write one review paper on the two combined papers.

Week 2-3 (January 20 and 25/27):

Topic: Robert K. Thomas and the Dynamics of American Indian Tribal Societies: The Tribe as an “Ideal” Type.

Reading: “Robert K. Thomas and the Ideal Tribal Society Model,” by Steve Pavlik*

Topic: Robert K. Thomas and the Dynamics of Tribal Societies: Tribes as an Expression of “Peoplehood.”


Week 4 (February 1/3):

Topic: The Philosophical Background of Native American Studies.


Week 5 (February 8/10):


Reading: “Introduction” by Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie in Native American Studies.*

Topic: The Historical Development of Native American Studies.

Film: More than Bows and Arrows.
Week 6 (February 17):

Topic: The Colonialism Model in Native American Studies.

Readings: “Colonialism: Classic and Internal” and “Powerless Politics” by Robert K. Thomas in *New University Thought*.

Week 7 (February 22/24):

Topic: Vine Deloria, Jr. and his Impact on Native American Studies.


Premier video documentary on the life of Vine Deloria, Jr. (by Darren Kipp).

Week 8 (March 1/3):

Topic: Here Comes the Anthros! Academic Colonialism in Native American Studies.

Reading: “Anthropologists and other Friends,” by Vine Deloria, Jr. in *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*.

Week 9 (March 8/10):

Topic: The Role of Native American Studies in the Tribal Community.

Reading: “Native American Studies: Academic Concerns and Community Service” by Clara Sue Kidwell in *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*.

Topic: Elizabeth Lynn-Cook’s Indigenous Model of Native American Studies.

Reading: “Defensive, Regulatory, and Transformative Functions of Indian Studies,” by Elizabeth Lynn-Cook in *New Indians, Old Wars*.
Week 10 (March 15/17):

Topic: Native Creation as a Foundation for Native American Studies.

Reading: “Darwin, Deloria, and the Origin of Life,” by Steve Pavlik
In Destroying Dogma: Vine Deloria, Jr. and His Influence on
American Society edited by Steve Pavlik and Daniel R. Wildcat.*

Topic: The Bering Strait Theory.

Readings: “Disturbing the Spirits,” by N. Scott Momaday, New York
Times, and “OK Scott, Where’s the Beef?” by Vine Deloria, Jr., News
from Indian Country.*

Week 11 (March 22/24):


Reading: “The Current Status of Native American Studies,” by Clara
Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie in Native American Studies.

Topic: Intellectualism in Native American Studies.

Video: The Faithkeeper: Oren Lyons.

Topic: Intellectualism in Native American Studies – Oral presentations.

**Final word:** This syllabus is meant only to be a general guide to this course and is not
carved in stone. I reserve the right to change, add to, or delete from this syllabus as the
course progresses. I will make every effort to inform you of any changes in a timely
fashion.
DUE DATES

Please note: You are required to write reflective papers on 10 of the following papers. You may write on either or both of the remaining two articles to receive extra credit or to make up for excessive absences.

1. ____ “American Indian Studies as an Academic Discipline” and “Methods Models and Scholarship.” 1/15

2. ____ “Robert K. Thomas and the Ideal Tribal Society Model.” 1/22

3. ____ “Peoplehood: An Extension for the Model of Sovereignty.” 1/29

4. ____ “Indian Thinking in a Linear World.” 2/5

5. ____ “Introduction.” 2/5

6. ____ “Colonialism: Class and Internal” and “Powerless Politics.” 2/12

7. ____ “An Open Letter.” 2/26

8. ____ “Anthropologists and Other Friends.” 2/27

9. ____ “Academic Concerns and Community Service.” 3/6

10. ____ “Defensive, Regulatory, and Defensive Functions” 3/6


12. ____ “Disturbing the Spirits” and “Where’s the Beef?” 3/25