

NAIS 400: Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies

Instructor: Dr. Alexandra Martin

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Class Hours: Tu/Th 8:10-9:30am Ham Smith G21

Office Hours: Fri 10-noon on Zoom or by appt.

Course Focus

This course serves as an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS), exploring the complexity and diversity of Indigenous experiences. NAIS cultivates a broad understanding of the history, lands, culture, literature, language and artistic expression, science and technology, race and identity, and social organization and political statuses of Native American and Indigenous peoples, emphasizing Native peoples' self-determination, sovereignty, and survivance. Students will learn about significant events and issues from Indigenous perspectives and develop new ways of thinking about Native peoples. NAIS 400 is the one required course for the interdisciplinary minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies. Please let me know if you'd like more information!

Required Texts

- *Tales of the Mighty Code Talkers* edited by Arigon Starr
- *The Round House* by Louise Erdrich
- Additional weekly readings will be posted on Canvas: <https://mycourses.unh.edu/>.

Assignments

1. In-Class Participation and Reading Responses (20%)

Please arrive having read the day's assignments and prepared to talk about them. You should bring questions or comments based on the reading to discuss. If you consistently comment, ask questions when intrigued or confused, or answer my questions, you will meet my expectations of in-class participation. If you respond to other students or constructively engage with a concept being discussed, your contributions will exceed expectations. At 5 times throughout the semester you will also be asked to provide a written response to our readings on a Canvas discussion board (each worth 2 pts).

Why? Reading and learning from books is important, but you must be able to articulate how you interpret the arguments in readings, what you agree and disagree with, and engage with peers.

2. Current Events (10%)

At the beginning of each week we'll have time to review relevant current events that have occurred over the past week. Once over the course of the semester, you will be assigned to find a current article, blog, video, or other piece of multimedia online on a topic relevant to the course. You will submit the link and a short written reflection on Canvas before class, and share the media during class and offer a brief description of the news and its significance to the course.

Why? Many jobs encourage engagement with online formats and it is important to be aware of current issues. Reflecting on the course topics and looking for connections between this course and "the real world" will make this course more relevant to your life.

3. Mythbuster Assignment (10%)

In the style of Devon Miheuah's *Stereotypes and Realities* book, you will identify a common modern stereotype about Indigenous people and provide the reality and context of the misconception. Cite at least one course reading – or if your stereotype doesn't fit, meet with me so I can help you identify appropriate citations. 500-750 word paper and brief presentation.

Why? This course challenges us to engage with Indigenous issues from an Indigenous point of view. Examining the context behind commonly held stereotypes will help us to identify and dispel examples of ethnocentrism in our coursework and beyond.

4. Advocacy Assignment (10%)

After reviewing issues relating to Tribal justice, from U.S. Supreme Court decisions to grassroots activism, you will choose an issue and prepare an email or script for a phone call to a legislator. 500 word paper and brief presentation.

Why? This assignment gives us the opportunity to think about how citizens can effectively advocate for change and present evidence and rationale for policy change.

5. The Round House Discussions (10%)

We will read this novel in four parts. For each part, you will lead small group discussions in class. For the other, you will participate in discussions led by your classmates.

Why? This assignment requires you to synthesize a novel from an interdisciplinary perspective. Leading discussion helps you connect course concepts and practice communication.

6. Critical Media Review (10%)

For this assignment you will select a piece of media that engages with Indigenous culture, characters, or history (a musical album, a film, a book, a museum exhibit, etc. – let me know if you need ideas) and write a short critical review of the piece. This assignment will require some research to establish context, including read existing interviews or other coverage of the media you select. 500 word paper.

Why? This assignment asks you to think critically about how Indigenous people are presented in the media and offer a contextualized response.

7. Final Project (30%)

For your final project you will select an Indigenous issue, site, or historic event in NH (this may be Durham or somewhere else) and prepare a blog post, Wikipedia entry, YouTube video, podcast episode or social media series that features the issues you've selected to the public.

Why? Bringing the themes of this class to the local setting will help demonstrate the relevance of NAIS to you, your peers, and your community.

Final Grades by Percentage

100% to 94% = A	93.99 to 90% = A-	89.99 to 87% = B+	86.99 to 84% = B
83.99 to 80% = B-	79.99 to 77% = C+	76.99 to 74% = C	73.99 to 70% = C-
69.99 to 67% = D+	66.99 to 64% = D	63.99 to 61% = D-	60.99 to 0% = F

Schedule at a Glance

Assigned readings listed must be read before class.

Class Topic	Date	Readings and In-Class Presentations
Course Introduction	T 8/31	Syllabus
	Th 9/2	Mihesuah (Choctaw) 1996 – <i>American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities</i> (1, 5, 9, 19, 20, 22)
Indigenous Identities	T 9/7	Garrouette (Cherokee) 2003 – <i>Real Indians</i> Ch. 1 & 2
	Th 9/9	Garrouette 2003 – <i>Real Indians</i> Ch. 3 Chaat Smith (Comanche) 2009 – <i>Lost in Translation & Homeland Insecurity</i> Reading Response #1 due
Indigenous Identities	T 9/14	Garrouette 2003 – <i>Real Indians</i> Ch. 4 Tosie (Diné) 2018 – Elizabeth Warren's DNA
	Th 9/16	Mythbuster assignment due
Indigenous Ways of Knowing	T 9/21	Tuhiwai Smith (Ngāti Awa and Ngāti Porou) 1999 – <i>Towards Developing Indigenous Methodologies: Kaupapa Maori Research</i>
	Th 9/23	McCoy (Miami) et al. 2009 – <i>myaamionki</i>

		Mason et al. 2012 – Listening & Learning from Traditional Knowledge & Western Science
Indigenous Ways of Knowing	T 9/28	Basso 1996 – Quoting the Ancestors Herlihy and Knapp 2003 – Maps of, by, and for the Peoples of Latin America Reading Response #2 due
	Th 9/30	Watch Battle over Bears Ears in class
Surviving and Survivance	T 10/5	Vizenor (Minnesota Chippewa) 2000 – <i>Fugitive Poses</i> pp. 14-17 Treuer (Ojibwe) 2012 – <i>Rez Life</i> Introduction
	Th 10/7	Starr (Kickapoo) 2019 – <i>Tales of the Mighty Code Talker</i>
Surviving and Survivance	T 10/12	Holfling 1996 – Indigenous Linguistic Revitalization... The Itzaj Maya Case Wesley (Stó:lō) 2014 – Twin-Spirited Woman Reading Response #3 due
	Th 10/14	Watch The Linguists in class
Tribal Justice	T 10/19	Harjo (Cheyenne & Muscogee) 2014 – <i>Nation to Nation</i> excerpt Byrne 2003 – Nervous Landscapes: Race and space in Australia
	Th 10/21	Erdrich 2013 – Rape on the Reservation Erdrich (Chippewa) 2013 – <i>The Round House</i> Ch. 1-4
Tribal Justice	T 10/26	Erdrich 2013 – <i>The Round House</i> Ch. 5-7 Cohen 2013 – Indian Affairs, Adoption, and Race
	Th 10/28	Erdrich 2013 – <i>The Round House</i> Ch. 8 & 9
Tribal Justice	T 11/2	Erdrich 2013 – <i>The Round House</i> Ch. 10 & 11 Estes (Lower Brule Sioux) 2016 – Fighting for Our Lives: #NoDAPL
	Th 11/4	Kēhaulani Kauanui (Kanaka Maoli) & Brown-Pérez (Brothertown Indian Nation) 2018 – Tribal Legitimacy NoiseCat (Secwepemc and St'at'imc) 2020 – The McGirt Case is a Historic Win for Tribes Reading Response #4 due
Tribal Justice	T 11/9	Advocacy assignment due
	Th 11/11	No class – Happy Veterans Day
Museums and Media	T 11/16	Meighan and Zimmerman 1994 – Native Americans and Archaeologists Explore the National Museum of the American Indian online Watch Who Owns the Past? in class
	Th 11/18	Hart 2019 – Patuxet/Plymouth Haaland (Laguna Pueblo) 2019 – Museums and Historical Spaces
Museums and Media	T 11/23 (classes follow Th schedule)	Play Never Alone (Iñupiat) (or watch run-through online) Barbaro 2016 – Native Fashion Now Exhibition Browse shops Beyond Buckskin and OXDX Clothing online Watch MTV Rebel Music: "Native America" Reading Response #5 due
	Th 11/25	No class – Happy Thanksgiving
Museums and Media	T 11/30	Watch <i>Reel Injun</i> in class Green (Cherokee) 1975 – The Pocahontas Perplex
	Th 12/2	Critical Media Review assignment due
Indigenous NH	T 12/7	Abenaki Guest Lecture
	Th 12/9	Final Project work, due 12/21/20

Course Expectations and Additional Information

#UNHTogether: All students are required to wear masks in class and campus buildings unless a medical exception is made through an accommodation process. It is your responsibility to obtain a mask before coming to class. For information on proper use of masks, acceptable mask types, and other PPE and social distancing guidelines visit <https://www.unh.edu/coronavirus>. Students wishing to request a medical accommodation should contact the [Student Accessibility Services](#). Failure to comply with PPE and social distancing classroom protocols is a violation of the [Student Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities](#). If you refuse to comply, you will be asked to leave class immediately and you may also be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students and your associate dean.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend class as usual. Do not attend class if you have any symptoms of illness or if your daily Wildcat Pass does not show that you are cleared to participate in classes and other campus activities. Inform the instructor that you will be absent from a scheduled in-person class. It is your responsibility to keep up with all course expectations. When appropriate, accommodations will be made. In the event that a student needs accommodation for a religious or cultural holiday/observance, you are encouraged to make that request as early in the semester as possible. If a student will be missing class for non-academic reasons and for the short term (typically less than and no more than 2 weeks), the instructor will receive a letter from the Dean of Students (Michael Blackman, Michael.blackman@unh.edu) requesting that the instructor work with the student to enable them to keep up with class expectations or to make up class expectations without penalty. If the student needs more than 2 weeks of an accommodation for non-academic reasons, then the student must follow the UNH Student Accessibility Services (SAS) processes.

Late Work Policy: In this class, written assignments have an automatic two-day grace period. This does not apply to exams. On time assignments are best, but you have up to 48 hours to turn in an assignment, no questions asked. After that, an automatic 10% will be deducted from the assignment. Two weeks after the due date, assignments are no longer accepted. I encourage you to plan ahead, comparing the syllabi for your courses at the beginning of the semester, to see when you have conflicting assignments or difficult weeks. If things look difficult, please talk to me with plenty of advance notice.

UNH Credit Hour Policy: UNH is in compliance with the federal definition of credit hour. For each credit hour, the University requires, at a minimum, the equivalent of three hours of student academic work each week. Academic work includes, but is not limited to, direct faculty instruction, e-learning, recitation, laboratory work, studio work, field work, performance, internships, and practica. Additional academic activities include, but are not limited to, readings, reflections, essays, reports, inquiry, problem solving, rehearsal, collaborations, theses, and electronic interactions. Student work reflects intended learning outcomes and is verified through evidence of student achievement.

Technology: You are responsible for learning to access this course in all possible formats. In this class, you may always use your laptop etc. to be engaged in the lesson. Please respect your classmates by making sure your devices are silenced, and avoid checking social media, etc. When you're here, be here – if you're checking your phone or social media, you will not receive credit for participation. If you're bored, raise your hand and ask a provocative question!

Lectures or other class meetings for this course may be recorded by the university using UNH media platforms. Such recordings may be available for educational use by students enrolled in the class (including both for instruction and as a review tool), the course instructor(s), and other university officials who support course instruction. Your voice or image may be captured on the recordings, and by enrolling in this course you are consenting to such recording for these purposes. The University and Zoom have FERPA-compliant agreements in place to protect the security and privacy of UNH Zoom accounts. You may not share recordings outside of this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

Classroom Policies: This class shall be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If you go by a different name or have a gender pronoun other than the one under which you are officially enrolled, please inform me. Students are expected to respectfully refer to each other by correct pronouns and names during class discussions.

You will be asked to share your opinion, but you are also responsible for acknowledging that other people may have different opinions than yourself and to show respect. Students should expect that if their conduct during class is disruptive, they will be asked to leave.

We will be discussing some controversial and sensitive issues in this class – consider this a **content warning** for a variety of issues, including violence, sexual assault, and racism. If you are concerned that you may need advanced warnings for any specific subjects, or if issues emerge for you during the semester, please speak with me, so that I can offer you support and guidance in ensuring your mental and emotional well-being. Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP) provides free and confidential advocacy and direct services to survivors (<https://www.unh.edu/sharpp/>).

Campus Community: UNH and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students and for the university as a whole. To this end, the university requires faculty members to report to the university's Title IX Coordinator (Laura Buchs, laura.buchs@unh.edu, 603-862-2930/1527 TTY) any incidents of sexual violence and harassment shared by students. If you wish to speak to a confidential support service provider who does not have this reporting responsibility because their discussions with clients are subject to legal privilege, you can find a list of resources here [privileged confidential service providers/resources](#). For more information about what happens when you report, how the university considers your requests for confidentiality once a report is made to the Title IX Coordinator, your rights and report options at UNH (including anonymous report options) please visit [student reporting options](#). Help us improve our campus and community climate. If you have observed or experienced an incident of bias, discrimination or harassment, please report the incident by contacting the Affirmative Action and Equity Office at affirmaction.equity@unh.edu or TEL # (603) 862-2930 voice/ (603) 862-1527 TTY / 7-1-1 Relay NH, or log on to the AAEO website. Anonymous reports may be submitted.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty on quizzes, tests, or written assignments will not be tolerated. Violators will fail the given assignment caught cheating on, no exceptions, and risk failure of the course and, in every case, will be reported to the Dean and may be subject to full disciplinary action by UNH. Please note the University has no tolerance for students who break the University Academic Honesty Policy. Please see the Students Rights, Rules, and Responsibilities Handbook for full description: <http://www.unh.edu/vpsas/handbook/academic-honesty>

Disability Services for Students: According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended, 2008), each student with a disability has the right to request services from UNH to accommodate their disability. If you are a student with a documented disability or believe you may have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 201 Smith Hall (disability.office@unh.edu). Accommodation letters are created by SAS with the student. Please follow-up with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of the identified accommodations in the letter. Faculty have an obligation to respond once they receive official notice of accommodations from SAS, but are under no obligation to provide retroactive accommodations. Accommodations for assignments, exams, and absences must be discussed with me at least a week in advance.

Health and Wellbeing: Your success in our course is truly very important to me, as are your health and wellbeing. In order to succeed in this class (and in college, and in life), you must work hard and balance your work with rest, exercise, and attention to your mental and physical health. Take breaks. Ask for help. If any student finds that emotional or mental health issues are affecting their success, or if challenges securing food or housing are affecting course performance, please contact [Psychological and Counseling](#)

[Services](#) (PACS) (3rd fl., Smith Hall; 603 862-2090/TTY: 7-1-1) which provides counseling appointments and other mental health services.

Course Disruption: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to change when necessitated by revised course delivery, semester calendar or other circumstances. Information about changes in this course can be obtained at the myCourses site or by contacting me via email. If the course is not able to meet face-to-face students should continue to check myCourses for announcements and updates to this syllabus as needed.

The above course objectives, teaching strategies, course requirements, assessments, course calendar and topic outline are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.