INTRODUCTION TO NATIVE AMERICAN AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 to 2:45
Robinson B, Room 218

An introduction to the histories, social organizations, political experiences, and artistic expressions of Native Americans. I'm a literature professor, but as we discuss Native cultures, we'll do our best to work with methods and materials drawn from a variety of disciplines, including History, English, Anthropology, Religion, Philosophy, Art History, Film Studies, and Ecology. Whether or not you have prior experience with Native American cultures, I assume that you have valuable and interesting knowledge to bring to the table as well as good, respectful, provocative questions and insights to contribute.

NAIS 201 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 about this minor!

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Associate Professor of English
Office: Robinson Hall A, Room 405C
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3-4 and by arrangement/chance

Student Organization: Native American Indigenous Alliance (NAIA)
Facebook Groups: Native American & Indigenous Studies at GMU, GMU Native American Indigenous Alliance

BOOKS FOR THE COURSE


FALL 2011 SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND WRITINGS

August 30
Introductions

September 1
Colin Calloway, "American Indians in American History" and "American History before Columbus" (PDF e-mailed to you)

September 6
Calloway, continued, plus NATIVE AMERICAN VOICES pages 2-6 (up to "in its own right")
September 8
Jack D. Forbes, "The Urban Tradition among Native Americans" (NA VOICES 404-15)

September 13
Darryl Babe Wilson, "Mis Misa: The Power within Akoo-Yet that Protects the World" (NA VOICES 56-61) and John (Fire) Lame Deer, "Alone on the Hilltop" (NA VOICES 310-12)

September 15
Wilma Mankiller and Michael Wallis, "Asgaya-Dihi" (NA VOICES 246-251) and Janet McAdams, "From Betty Creek: Writing the Indigenous Deep South" and "Whippoorwill" (THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED 251-57)

September 20
Deborah Miranda's Fall for the Book presentation. We'll meet at the outdoor tent next to the JC and the clock.

September 22
Karenne Wood's Fall for the Book reading. We'll meet in Johnson Center room 116. Please read Karenne Wood's poems "Blue Mountains" and "Directions, I-VII" (THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED 29-32).

September 27
Regalia-making: a discussion and workshop with T Carter

September 29
Selections from THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED

October 4
Donald Grinde and Bruce Johansen, "Perceptions of America's Native Democracies" and John Mohawk, "Origins of Iroquois Political Thought" (NA VOICES 62-70)

October 6
David E. Wilkins, "A History of Federal Indian Policy" (NA VOICES 104-12)

October 11
No class (go to your Monday classes today!) — Shorter Critical Essay due (e-mail is fine)

October 13
Rose Powhatan, "Surviving Document Genocide" (THE PEOPLE WHO STAYED 23-28)

October 18
Russell Thornton, "Who Owns Our Past?: The Repatriation of Native American Human Remains and Cultural Objects" (NA VOICES 317-28) and James Riding In, et al., "Protecting Native American Human Remains, Burial Grounds, and Sacred Places" (NA VOICES 185-93)

October 20
TBA

October 25
TBA

October 27
Rayna Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture" (NA VOICES 159-65)
November 1
Haunani-Kay Trask, "Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture" (NA VOICES 370-375)

November 3
Tim Giago, "Indian-Named Mascots: An Assault on Self-Esteem" (NA VOICES 172-73)

November 8
TBA

November 10
POWWOW!

November 15
Theresa Harlan, "Creating a Visual History: A Question of Ownership" (NA VOICES 206-10)

November 17
Beverly R. Singer, "Wiping the Warpaint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video" (NA VOICES 224-28). Powwow Paper due by the end of the day.

November 22
Pre-Thanksgiving open floor (please read one additional piece in NA VOICES—your choice, and something that's not on our syllabus)

November 24
No class meeting: Thanksgiving break!

November 29
Post-Thanksgiving open floor (more students' choice discussions)

December 1
TBA. Longer essay proposal paragraph due.

December 6
Richard Littlebear, "Just Speak Your Language: Hena'haanehe" (NA VOICES 90-92) and Leanne Hinton, "Hawaiian Language Schools" (NA VOICES 480-88)

December 8
Outros

Longer Essay due during Finals Week (date and time TBA)

WRITTEN WORK

Shorter Essay: The shorter (3-4 page) critical essay you'll write for this class is designed to help you practice and develop your skills at imaginative, persuasive critical writing about topics and texts that interest you. I'll give you a choice of topics, and you'll be able to incorporate materials from class discussions if you want, including comments made by your classmates, by visitors to the class, and/or by people you meet at NAIS-related events. In fact, our class discussions are designed to give you ideas for your own writing, as well as a good sense of how to approach
literary texts critically. Please take notes as you read, and also during class or after class, and use your notes to help you prepare this paper and your other writings for this course.

**Powwow Response Paper:** For this 2-3 page paper, I’d like you to describe and reflect on your experience of attending the Veterans’ Day Powwow at Mason. Please be sure take notes either during the event or immediately after. Also, if possible, see if you can gather print or other materials related to the event: pamphlets, programs, photos, video, etc. These will help you to remember the event and to develop your thoughts about it.

**Longer Essay:** The goal of this longer (7-8 page) essay is to begin to pull the course together by identifying a reasonably large and complicated issue or question and exploring this topic by working with one or perhaps two course texts. As in the shorter critical essay, you’ll have plenty of space for close, specific examination of particular texts and/or issues. Here, though, you’ll be able to develop your ideas and interpretations further, think more deeply about various kinds of connections and interrelationships, reflect on the various issues and questions we’ve raised in class discussion—and just basically show me and tell me what you’ve learned in this course. In this essay, you might find yourself returning to an issue or question that has interested you this semester; your final project, however, should be a new piece of writing.

You can work with any selection in *The People Who Stayed* and any essay in *Native American Voices*, whether or not we discussed it in class. And you can also incorporate secondary/critical sources if you want to—but this is not a research paper unless that’s what you want it to be.

When I read your paper, I’ll be looking for evidence that you’ve thought carefully and deeply about the topic and texts you decide to work with. You should present a sharply-focused, contestable thesis (main argument); I’ll help you with this in particular as I read your proposals. We’ll make sure that this main point is neither too big nor too small for an 8-pager, and we’ll talk as needed about how best to organize your essay. Do bear in mind, too, that a critical argument stands or falls on the quality of its evidence. It’s crucial to integrate specific evidence clearly and persuasively throughout your essay. Your primary form of evidence will be quotations from the course texts; remember to give follow-up commentary and analysis on each quote, explaining how this quote helps support and develop your ideas. Lastly, still on the topic of “what I’ll look for,” it probably goes without saying that the writing itself should be as good as you can make it: well crafted, nicely paced, lovingly polished, and in your own voice.

I’ll ask you to hand in a Final Project Proposal paragraph on December 1; this gives you and me the chance to talk strategy and to work on shaping your essay. The project itself comes due about two weeks later, during Finals Week (date TBA).

**Wiki Posts:** Over the course of the semester, we will do approximately 8-12 wiki posts. (I’ll know the exact number as soon as our class roster settles.) Most weeks, I’ll ask each of you to post one paragraph (or more—more is okay) in response to an announced topic. The purpose of these assignments is to give you a good way to expand, extend, and otherwise contribute to our semester-long discussions. I want you to have as many chances as possible to think out loud, with others, about the things we’ll be doing in NAIS 201 this fall.

Also, for each round of wiki posts, two people in our class will take on more of a leadership role. We’ll rotate the designated discussion leaders, so that each person will share this role one time only during the semester. The leader will have two jobs: the first job is to write brief responses to ten of your classmates’ posts. (Please make sure that each student who posts receives at least one response from a discussion leader.) You can offer praise, make suggestions, ask follow-up questions, etc. And second, I’ll ask each leader to wrap up the discussion by writing a 1-2 paragraph wiki post that sum up the overall discussion: what were the main ideas that your classmates expressed? What were the main points of agreement and disagreement?
What were the high points of this round of wiki posts? And what were some of the things that might have been discussed but weren't?

**GRADING**

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<th>Weight</th>
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<td>Shorter Critical Essay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powwow Response Paper</td>
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<td>Longer Project Proposal Paragraph</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longer Project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wiki</td>
<td>25% (15% for regular posts plus 10% for one-time-only wiki leading)</td>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10% (for suiting up and showing up in class and at events)</td>
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**For Written Work**

- A+ (100), A (96), A- (92)
- B+ (88), B (85), B- (82)
- C+ (78), C (75), C- (72)
- D+ (68), D (65), D- (62)
- F (50), No essay (0)

**For Final Grades**

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**POLICIES: REVISIONS, LATE WORK, ATTENDANCE**

**Revisions.** Good papers can't just be cranked out in one sitting. When I write, at least 50% of the work I do is revision — so revising is really built into the whole process of drafting and crafting a good paper. But even with all this revising, it's possible that the paper you eventually turn in will not, for whatever reason, end up meeting your expectations or mine. And if this happens, we can talk about revising it some more and resubmitting it for a new grade. In rare cases, I will invite or require you to revise; you are also welcome to approach me about working on a revision. To be eligible for revision, the original paper must have been carefully proofread and handed in on time. Please keep in mind that revisions should be substantive rather than simply cosmetic; that is, you should overhaul rather than touch up your essay. Expand, delete, and rearrange; respond thoughtfully to my questions and comments. Merely correcting your spelling and grammar or changing a few words here and there does not constitute a revision. I'll be happy to give you more information about the revision policy as the semester progresses.

**Keeping up with the Reading.** All reading assignments for this class must be completed as indicated on pages 1-3 of this syllabus and/or as announced during class. Please read each assignment carefully and completely before class, and come to class ready to talk, write, and ask questions about what you've read. If you fall behind with the reading assignments, or run into any other difficulties with them, please feel free to get in touch with me; I'm happy to help.

**Papers.** If extremely unfortunate events significantly compromise your ability to meet the deadline for a paper, you may arrange with me to hand in your paper after the due date without penalty. Unless completely impossible, please get in touch with me and request this extension before the paper comes due.
Otherwise, I will accept late papers up to four calendar days (not class meetings) after the due date, but will dock late work one full letter grade for each day the paper is late. For example, a "B" paper turned in two calendar days late will receive a "D". Even so, keep in mind that an "F" paper still counts for 50 points; better to hand in the paper anyway than to take a zero. I reserve the right to make exceptions to this rule, at my discretion, for students facing serious difficulties.

**Attendance.** I expect and strongly encourage you to suit up and show up for class. Especially in small classes such as this one, your participation in the day-to-day work of the class is crucial. A significant portion of your grade for this course hinges on work you will do, often with classmates, in class. This work cannot be made up. Attendance problems can and probably will lower your course grade significantly, and may very well also cause problems for your classmates. I don't anticipate any such problems, but if you do run into difficulties that I should know about, please let me know in advance (if possible) or contact me by e-mail or telephone during, and we'll do our best to work something out. The rule of thumb here is that we're a community: you should try to communicate with me as problems arise. I also suggest that you get the email addresses and phone numbers of a few other people in the class, so you can contact them if needed.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY AND THE GMU HONOR CODE**

All work done for this class must be your own. Period. Please keep in mind that plagiarism is a violation of the GMU Honor Code. Plagiarism means using words, ideas, opinions, or factual information from another person or source without giving due credit. This includes Internet sources. In other words, plagiarism is a form of fraudulently claiming someone else's work as your own, and as such is the equivalent of cheating on an exam—a serious academic offense. Plagiarism is grounds for failing at least the assignment, if not the course. If you are not 100% clear about what you should document, consult with me. When in doubt, document. (Adapted from the English Department Statement on Plagiarism)

Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles consulted is not sufficient. Nor does rearrangement of another person's phrasing (paraphrase) release one from the obligation to document one's sources. Please bear in mind, though, that the written work I'm asking you to do in this course does not involve outside research.

To review the English Department Statement on Plagiarism, please go to the Writing Center website:

writingcenter.gmu.edu

Like you, I am bound by the honor code to report suspected plagiarism to the Honor Committee. For a description of the code and the committee, please consult the GMU Catalog. The relevant section is available online at:

http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=15&navoid=1039#Honor

**GMU INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITY POLICY**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Their website is ods.gmu.edu