

Bellevue College CES 120

Introduction to Native American Studies

Fully Online Course

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D.

Fall Term : September 22nd – December 10th

Office Hours – By appt, online only (No On-Campus office)

[Email](#)

[Website](#)

[Facebook](#)

****Please always email me through the Canvas site first. If you don't hear from me within 24 hours, then email at the above address. Please don't email me on Facebook. ☺****

****Hyperlinks in this class are underlined, bold, and blue****

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides a historic and contemporary perspective on the social, political, and cultural issues of Indigenous People in the United States and Canada through an Interdisciplinary lens. You will be exposed to an overview of American Indian life, including Indian/non-Indian relations (past and present), Indian sovereignty, and Indigenous aesthetics in art, visual culture, and literature. This course is taught from an Indigenous perspective with the intent of focusing not on “who Indian people were” but on “how Indians came to be who Indian people are.” My intent is to dismantle some of the traditional ways of understanding Native Peoples that many of us learn through traditional education and popular media (television, music, film, sports, etc.), even and especially those of us who are Native (enrolled, unenrolled, mixed-blood, etc). It is from this understanding that we will learn about a massive group of diverse people who sometimes continue to be relegated to a homogenous and one-dimensional group in the United States and Canada.

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT: Since interdisciplinary academics examine just about every aspect of the social world, we talk about provocative material. When we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Keep in mind that when we find ourselves in a space outside of our comfort zone, it's an opportunity for learning, and you may be confronted with subject matter that is difficult to watch, see, discuss, or listen to. Please note that you will be responsible for any course material you miss if you choose not to participate. If you have any questions or concerns about content or climate, feel free to speak with me about it right away.



READING REQUIREMENTS:

- Alexie, S. (2003). *Ten Little Indians*. New York: Grove Press.
- Hill, G. (2010). *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book*. Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- Kidwell, S. and Alan Velie. (2005). *Native American Studies*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press.
- *You will need a Netflix streaming account for this class. It is about \$8 per month.*
- All material available on our Canvas Site. Documents are in Power Point, Microsoft Word, and PDF formats.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, please let me know. I do not require that students go through the DRC for accommodations but I recommend you do this for your other classes. I can refer you to our Disability Resource Center (DRC). If you prefer, you may contact them directly by going to B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their [website](#). Please note that *I do not require proof of need*. If you have learning struggles you're aware of, please communicate that with me. I make any and all necessary accommodations for students with or without paperwork.

EXPLORE THE LMC! The Library Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the LMC at least once a week if you can, but you can also access it via the web. Talk to a Reference Librarian at the Library (D-126), by calling (425) 564-6161, or by [email](#).

- [Main Library Media Center](#)
- [LMC online catalog](#)
- [Article databases](#)

LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES: By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Comprehend how the experience of the Indigenous Peoples of North America differs from those of the colonizing and immigrant peoples; and of how some Native Peoples perceive those experiences. Analyses will include those of Native people living in the urban and rural centers and Reservations/Rancherias, as well as issues pertaining to mixed-blood Indian experiences.
- 2) A comprehension of some of the basic principles of Indian sovereignty concepts, which provide a framework for Indian Law and Policy and human rights of Indigenous Peoples as autonomous political bodies.
- 3) A general comprehension of the parameters of traditional tribal knowledge and Indigenous epistemologies in both pre- and post-contact tribal cultures.
- 4) A general understanding of Indigenous activism from contact to the present.
- 5) A general understanding of Indigenous representation and identity in historical and contemporary analyses of dominant US popular culture.
- 6) A general understanding of Indigenous aesthetics in the arts and literature.
- 7) A general understanding of the field of Native American/Indigenous Studies, its history and its future, including the understanding of a global approach to the concept of Indigeneity.

GENERAL RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

- Check in to our online classroom no less than *four times per week* (yes – I do keep track!). This means you log on and surf around the site. No need to check in with me. Make this work for you on your own time.
- Complete readings and homework assignments *on time*. I do not check whether you complete your readings; this is on the honor system! You do need to read your required material in order to complete homework assignments.
- Late homework assignments *are accepted*, but *late exams are not*.
 - Late homework is docked 10% for every day the work is late, including Saturdays and Sundays.
- I expect that your behavior in our virtual classroom be respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class will result in your grade lowering. Please keep your postings to discussion boards (DBs) thoughtful and polite. One-on-one conversations should be taken off-board and onto email so our DBs don't get clogged. If you find at any point that you are uncomfortable with anything posted to a DB, please email me right away. Be wary of soap boxing in this class; you may be tempted to present your opinion and editorialize, but refrain from doing this.

Remember: Falling behind can be hazardous to your health!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: In this course you will be completing assigned readings, participating in discussion board assignments, and completing short homework assignments. The work you do for this class will keep you critically engaged with the world around you from a sociological perspective. There are no exams for this course. Expect to be writing every week. The key to this course is your thoughtful reflection on course material.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation*:	150 points
Film Reflections (5):	100 points
Reading Reflections (4):	160 points
Main Discussion Boards (3):	300 points
TOTAL:	710 points

The Fine Print:

*Participation points accrue with various short assignments in the Discussion Area, such as your Introductory DB. These are labeled **PARTICIPATION DBs**. The Main DB assignments are labeled **MAIN DBs**.*

Attendance & Participation: Check in no less than four times per week, be engaged with all of your discussion board assignments, provoke energetic and polite discussion, listen/read/comprehend actively, work respectfully with your colleagues in class, take loads of notes from your readings, look up words you don't understand, ask questions, think critically about the world around you, etc. Make use of the Q&A Board as well. This is not scored, but even if you don't have questions, you might be able to answer somebody's query – so have some presence there.

Film Reflections: You will be reviewing several films throughout the course; some are streaming on Netflix, some on our [American Indian Studies Playlist](#), some elsewhere. You will be able to watch all our films online. Your Film Reflections will be 1-2 paragraph answers to questions I pose to you, which will ask you to engage both the readings and the films together.

Reading Reflections: These short assignments are an opportunity to put your learning to use as you explore our readings deeply. Your reflections are a little bit like journal entries. You have freedom of perspective (though I do not to read opinion/editorial styles of writing) as you reflect on what you think about these readings, what is brought up for you in terms of new knowledge, and how your consciousness may be shifting about the experience of American Indians/First Nations People (even and especially if you yourself are Native!).

Main Discussion Board Assignments: The work done in the Discussion Board area will have you engage course material and work closely together. You are expected to participate in these assignments in order to generate critical discussion amongst one another. Be aware that some of these require a few days, or even a week, of preparatory work. Make sure you look ahead at your homework! This method of learning gets you going socially! These assignments are always due on Thursdays and Sundays (your initial post goes up Thursday and your responses to one another are due Sundays). Your DBs are graded on two things: your original post and your responses (usually two of them) to colleagues of yours in the class. You must do both to earn full credit. A submission with no responses posted earns ½ credit at most, and responses without an original submission receive zero credit.

Participation Discussion Board Assignments: These are meant to support you throughout the course. They are required and the grades get folded into your overall Participation Grade.

For *all* of your work: Submit proofread work **only**. Work not proofread will be returned *once* for a rewrite, expected to be handed in within 48 hours. If you need help with your writing, please make use of the following student support services:

- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [Academic Tutoring Center](#)
- [TRiO Student Support Services](#)
- [Writing Lab @ BC](#)

Required Writing Guidelines:

- Twelve-point sized Times font, double-spaced *and stapled*. (I won't take papers not stapled together.)
- 1" margins all around
- APA Citations where appropriate – credit must be given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own (see notes below about avoiding plagiarism)
- Title pages and bibliographies are not counted as pages due
- Student information is at the top left of the page, single spaced
- There are no extra spaces between paragraphs.
- Paragraphs contain no less than four sentences.

- Magazines, newspapers, journals, and books are *italicized*. Movie titles, article titles, song titles, etc. are “in quotation marks.” Quotes inside of a quotation use ‘single quotation marks.’
- Avoid the universal “we”, “our”, “us” – ask yourself: Can I speak for everyone? If you cannot, do not write it. Also avoid phrasing such as “nowadays...” and “since the beginning of time.” Be accurate. Know what you’re writing and why.
- Do not ever use Wikipedia, CliffNotes, or other such encyclopedic references. Wikipedia is not peer-reviewed and therefore unreliable. Do your own research. If you’re going to research online (which is absolutely encouraged and totally legit), make sure you understand what you’re looking for. Do a deep dive into the internet to find your stuff.
- Be sure that no more than 20% of your papers are outside sources. You must be providing your own analysis while you draw from material presented to you in class.

Your work is evaluated on:

1) Content

- a. Fulfilling the entire assignment. Doing the minimum amount of work expected will likely get you a passing grade, but not an outstanding one. You’re expected to go the extra mile.
- b. Fully developing your argument(s) and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument(s).
- c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.
- d. Assignments eligible for high marks must present evidence that all material has been reviewed.

2) Writing Style

- a. Excellent command of the written English language. In other words, most excellent grammar. **NOTE: If you struggle with grammar and spelling or are an ESL student, *please* let me know! I’m happy to work with you and point you in the right direction.**
- b. Clarity of thought.
- c. Good organization and attention to detail.
- d. Persuasiveness of your argument/s.
- e. Creativity. Make it an interesting read!
- f. **PROOFREAD** your work. Please do a spell/grammar check before you hand it in. Read it out loud to yourself, too! It really helps.
- g. Dude, like totally don’t write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different way of presenting your research and ideas. ☺

Preventing Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty occurring when students use information or material from outside sources and do not properly cite those sources. This is grounds for disciplinary action. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism and its consequences. Plagiarism occurs if:

- a. You do not cite quotations and/or attribute borrowed ideas.
- b. You fail to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks.
- c. You do not write summaries and paraphrases in his/her own words and/or doesn’t document his/her source.
- d. You turn in work created by another person.

- e. You submit or use your own prior work for a current or past course, or work from one current course in another course *without express permission* from your professors. This may also be considered academic dishonesty.
- f. Consequences: If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will likely fail the assignment and possibly the course, despite points earned through other work. Acts of academic dishonesty are reviewed for disciplinary action.

Grading:

Please use the following to help explain the grade you're given for a given assignment. Please do not hesitate to come to me with any questions you ever have on a grade you receive. There is no limit to how many times you email me! My email door is *always* open and I'm always happy to go over grades with you.

A: 94-100
 A-: 90-93
 B+: 87-89
 B: 84-86
 B-: 80-83
 C+: 77-79
 C: 74-76
 C-: 70-73
 D+: 67-69
 D: 64-66
 D-: 60-63
 F: 59 and below

90-100 = A Range. "A" work shows me you're engaged with all course material by utilizing quotes and ideas. It is writing *completely free* from grammar and spelling errors, demonstrating your command not only of the English language, but of the form and flow of a solid piece of written work. I also like to see/read/hear your "writing voice." That is, I want your style to come through! Your arguments should be solid and backed up with intellectual ammunition. You should demonstrate a strong understanding of our readings and the in-class media and how they intersect with one another. Your ideas should be "fleshed out" and not just a series of statements, in other words.

80-89 = B Range. The "B" tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a couple of grammar issues, but your work is still tidy and the writing is still strong. You have a firm grasp on the themes in the course but you may not be as well-versed in the readings and/or media and/or lecture material as you could be. I should see that you're being challenged and that you're struggling with the course issues and themes, and what they represent to you in an interconnected way. Your understandings of some of the course materials are stronger than others.

70-79 = C Range. "C" work means that you're not as invested in the material as I would like to see. Your writing is relatively weaker than it could be and you're not thinking as critically as I would like you to. You write the bare minimum of the length requirement. Some of what you

point out I may not follow logically, and your use of the course materials may not be as solid as it could be. You omit some of the important points raised in class.

60-69 = D Range. Ah, the “D.” “D” is for “Don’t be Discouraged.” I will work closely with each of you as much as time allows, getting you up to speed in class. Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. “D” work is not proofread, nor does it deal critically with the themes in the course. It responds, perhaps, to one part of one of the readings but there is little-to-no integration of material and you’re not responding to the questions raised in the assignment. Demonstrated understanding of the course materials is not presented clearly, or at all. (NOTE: A “D” and below may be rewritten **once** if you choose to do so. It must be turned in within 72 hours, and I enter the better grade.)

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

ASSIGNMENTS ARE ALWAYS DUE BY MIDNIGHT

DO NOT WORK AHEAD MORE THAN TWO WEEKS

THE SYLLABUS SCHEDULE IS MIRRORED IN THE MODULES SECTION OF THE COURSE.

Week One: September 22nd

Readings:

- [Website: Native Appropriations: Examining Representations of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [American Indian Studies Playlist](#) (This is only for review.)

Assignments:

- Participation DB I: Introductions. Due Sunday, 9/28
- Participation DB2: American Indians & Mass Media Representations. Due Sunday, 9/28

Week Two: September 29th

Readings:

- *Native American Studies*, Chapter One: “Introduction”
- *Native American Studies*, Chapter Two: “Land & Identity”
- How To Read A Film

Film Screening:

- (Streaming on Netflix) Fon, C., Bainbridge, C., and Linda Ludwick (Producers), & Bainbridge, C. and Jeremiah Hayes (Directors). (2009). *Reel Injun: On the Trail of the Hollywood Indian*. United States and Canada: National Film Board of Canada and Rezolution Pictures.
 - [Film Site](#)
 - [IMDB Site](#)

Assignments:

- Main DB 1 Due Thursday, 10/2, responses by Sunday, 10/5
- Film Reflection 1. Due Sunday 10/5

Week Three: October 6th

Readings:

- *Native American Studies*, Chapter Three: “Historical Contact and Conflict”
- *The 500 Years of Resistance Comic Book* in its entirety

Assignments:

- Main DB 2: Initial Submission Due Thursday, 10/9; Responses Due Sunday, 10/12

- Reading Reflection 1. Due Sunday 10/12

Week Four: October 13th

Readings:

- *American Indian Studies*, Chapter Four: “Tribal Sovereignty”
- *American Indian Studies*, Chapter Five: “Language”
 - Short video accompaniment: [Mushkeg Media Playlist](#) (13 short clips)

Film Screening:

- (Streaming on Netflix) Wacks, Jonathan (Director). (1989). *Powwow Highway*. Anchor Bay Entertainment: USA.

Assignments:

- Film Reflection 2. Due Sunday, 10/19

Week Five: October 20th

Readings:

- *American Indian Studies*, Chapter Six: “Indian Aesthetics & Literature”
- *Ten Little Indians*
 - The Search Engine
 - Lawyer’s League
 - Can I Get a Witness?

Assignments:

- Participation DB 2: How are we doing? Due Sunday, 10/26
- Reading Reflection 2. Due Sunday, 10/26

Week Six: October 27th

Readings:

- *American Indian Studies*, Chapter Seven, “Indian Aesthetics: Art & Expressive Culture”
- *Ten Little Indians*
 - Do Not Go Gentle
 - Flight Patterns

Film Screening:

- (Streaming on Netflix) Jarmusch, Jim (Director). (1995). *Dead Man*. 12 Gauge Productions: USA.
- OR (see Film Reflection Directions for this week)
- (May be viewed [here](#)) Caro, Niki (Director). (2002). *Whale Rider*. South Pacific Pictures: New Zealand.

Assignments:

- Main DB 3: Initial submission Thursday, 10/30, Responses Due Sunday 11/2
- Film Reflection 3. Due Sunday, 11/2

Week Seven: November 3rd

Readings:

- Fleming, W. (2006). Phi Delta Kappan International: *Myths and Stereotypes About Native Americans*, 213-217.
- *Ten Little Indians*

- The Life and Times of Estelle Walks Above
- Do You Know Where I Am?

Assignments:

- Reading Reflection 3. Due Sunday, 10/9

Week Eight: November 10th

Readings:

- West, Dennis and Joan M. West. (1998). Sending Cinematic Smoke Signals: An Interview with Sherman Alexie: *Cineaste*, 23(4).
- *Ten Little Indians*
 - What You Pawn I Will Redeem
 - What Ever Happened to Frank Snake Church?

Film Screening:

- (Streaming on Netflix) Eyre, Chris (Director). (2008). *Smoke Signals*. United States: ShadowCatcher Entertainment.
 - [IMDB Site](#)

Assignments:

- Film Reflection 4. Due Sunday, 11/16

Week Nine: November 17th

Readings:

- *American Indian Studies*, Chapter Eight, “The Current Status of Native American Studies”
- I Hated Tonto (still do) by Sherman Alexie (for Reflection only)

Assignments:

- Reading Reflection 4. Due Sunday, 11/23

Week Ten: November 24th

Holiday Break: 11/27-28

Readings:

- “American Indians’ Construction of Cultural Identity” by Glatzmaier, Myers, and Bordogna

Film Screening:

- [*Half of Anything*](#) by Jonathan Tomhave (Director)

Assignments:

- Film Reflection 5. Due Sunday, 11/30

Week Eleven: December 1st

Readings:

- No readings. Gear up for the final exam

Assignments:

- Final Participation DB 3, due Sunday, 12/7

Finals Week: December 8th – 10th

The final exam will be open from 8:00am December 8th to midnight December 10th. Once you begin, you must complete it, so make sure you’re ready to take the exam in full. The exam will be open for four hours (double-time) in order to accommodate all students.

Let's have a wonderful term!