

# Bellevue Community College

SOC/ETHN 120 Introduction to Native American Studies

Sara Sutler-Cohen, Ph.D.

Fall Term September 22<sup>nd</sup> – December 10<sup>th</sup>

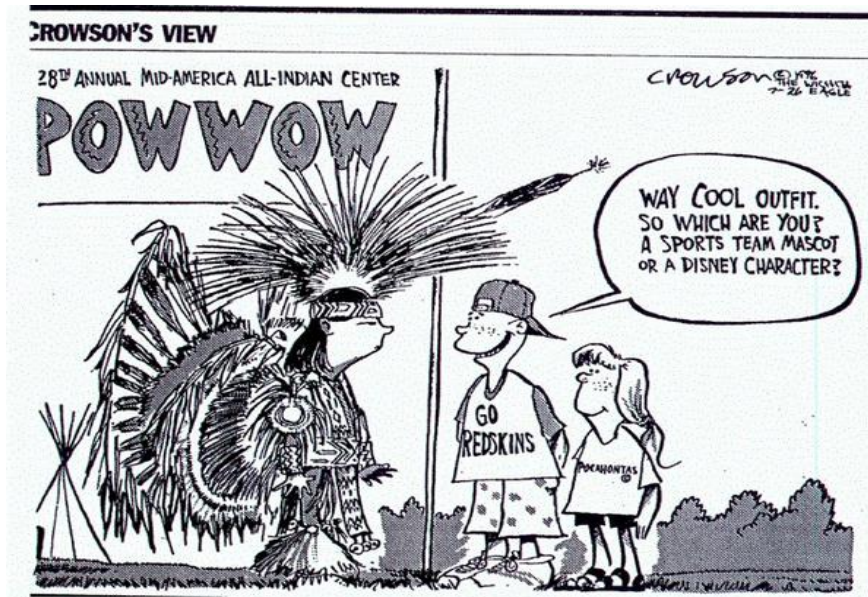
Daily 9:30 – 10:20 L-219

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides an historic and contemporary perspective on the social, political, and cultural issues of the Indigenous Peoples of North America. 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 continue to be relegated to a homogenous and one-dimensional group in the United States and Canada.

Check out BCC Sociology’s MySpace page and add us as a Friend!

<http://www.myspace.com/bccsoc>

**A NOTE ABOUT COURSE CONTENT:** Sociologists examine just about every aspect of the social world and as such, we talk about provocative material. Please be advised that when we explore controversial topics, they will always be framed within an academic context. Keeping 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, however, 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:**

- Kidwell, Clara Sue & Alan Velie. *Native American Studies*. University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 2005.
- Handouts and articles uploaded to our MyBCC course page.
  - A note about handouts: I only make paper copies of your syllabi, in order to save paper. It is your responsibility to either read handouts, articles, and additional material online or print out your own copy. Please be advised that you need to be making notes of the readings, so for that material, I strongly suggest you do print it out.

**STRONGLY RECOMMENDED:**

- Any current Dictionary of the English Language
- *A Writer's Reference*, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed. By Diana Hacker. See the companion website here: <http://www.dianahacker.com/>

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have medical information to share with me in the event of an emergency, please contact me via email or come to see me during office hours. Emergency preparedness is important! If you need course modifications, adaptations, or accommodations because of a disability, 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 at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/>

**EXPLORE THE LMC!** BCC's Library and Media Center is at your fingertips! I *strongly* encourage you to visit the Library at least once a week, 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 [bccref@bcc.ctc.edu](mailto:bccref@bcc.ctc.edu).

Main Library Media Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/>  
 For the LMC online catalog: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/catalogs.html>  
 For article databases: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/lmc/periodicals.html>



**LEARNING AND COURSE OUTCOMES:** Upon your dedicated participation and subsequent completion of this course, you will be able to demonstrate:

- 1) A general knowledge and comprehension of 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) 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) Parameters of traditional tribal knowledge and Indigenous epistemologies in both pre- and post-contact tribal cultures.
- 4) General knowledge Indigenous activism from contact to the present.
- 5) And explain Indigenous representation and identity in historical and contemporary analyses of dominant US popular culture.
- 6) And critically analyze and discuss 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:**

- Come to class every day and ***on time*** (yes - I do keep track!).
- Complete readings and homework assignments ***on time***.
- Emailed assignments ***are not accepted*** without prior arrangement.
- Late homework assignments ***are accepted***, but make-up exams and make-up in-class assignments ***are not*** allowed.
  - Late homework is docked 10% for every day the work is late, including Saturdays and Sundays. For example, if you have an assignment that is worth fifty points, and it is three days late, that grade is knocked down fifteen points (or, 30%), and does not include points off for errors in the assignment.
- I expect that your behavior in our classroom be respectful. Continued disrespectful behavior in my class may result in your being asked to leave and will result in your grade

lowering. Please also see the handout “Ground Rules for Discussion in Class” to get a better idea of what constitutes as disrespectful.

- **There are no extra credit assignments for this class.**

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** For this course, you will be writing short Critical Thinking essays that ask you to engage the reading materials, and completing in-class assignments. Expect to submit assignments nearly every week. There is a Midterm and a Final this quarter. You will also be doing one major project at the end of the term, which you can do in pairs, alone, or in a group. The project will be your brainchild – all you need to do is relate it to course material. What you decide to do is up to you and we’ll discuss this during the first couple of weeks into the course.

**Remember: Falling behind can be hazardous to your health!**

**ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION, AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS:**

<b>Attendance and Participation:</b>	150 points
<b>Critical Thinking Essays (3):</b>	150 points
<b>Final Project (1):</b>	200 points
<b>In-Class Assignments (3):</b>	150 points
<b>Course Midterm (1):</b>	125 points
<b>Course Final (1):</b>	225 points
<b>TOTAL:</b>	1000 points

*The Fine Print* (or, what I really mean by that table above):

**Participation:** Come to class and on time regularly, provoke energetic and polite discussion, speak out, listen actively, work diligently and respectfully with your colleagues in class, take loads of notes in class and from your readings, look up words you don’t understand or know, ask questions, etc. Think critically about the world around you. A lot.

**Midterm and Final:** Your Exams will cover everything up through the week they’re scheduled and will usually include multiple choice and short-answer questions (either or both). Your responses should be clear and concise. Your short-answer responses must range from no less than one full (four-sentence) paragraph, to three full paragraphs. Study guides will be made available to you. You will *never* be asked a question out of “left field”. Questions are based on readings, in-class discussion, and lecture material. Point distribution info will be on the exams.

**Critical Thinking Essays:** Each week we will be exploring contemporary Indigenous issues and the way in which these subjects relate to current events, popular culture, and our daily lives. In your papers *and* in class, we’ll be discussing these varying themes and these areas will drive our discussion around our readings. Your papers should reflect particular topics and themes we go over. You may be asked to bring in an article or report on the news. You are required to include attachments to your papers when you’re asked to do outside research. Your Critical Thinking Papers are not graded on a “right” or “wrong” basis, but you are asked to respond to the Questions and Topics pointedly and show how you’re engaging both the reading material as well as the general themes in question. Explore and question what’s presented in class, and think about how they relate to our readings and the lecture material.

**In-Class Assignments:** The work done in class asks that you engage the readings and lecture material, as well as work closely together. You will be working in pairs or groups for these assignments in order to generate critical discussion to be reflected on in the assignments. Occasionally the assignments will take more than one class period so again, it's imperative that you do not miss class. **Assignments partially completed receive partial credit (if you miss 1/3 of the assignment, you get 1/3 of the grade).**

**Final Project:** This is a free-flowing and creative project for which you come up with the idea(s) on your own. You may work on this independently, or in pairs or groups. You will choose an area of Native American Studies covered this quarter that is of interest to you. Federal Indian Law and Policy, Media, Tribal Government, Education, Religion, Sports Mascots, anything! You could do a collage or a painting. A film analysis, or research on Indians in popular music or politics. What the project ends up looking like is also up to you (although I will help you stay on track to make certain it remains academically relevant). You could do a skit in class or make a film. Gain permission to do a public mural or start a club on campus; there really is no limit to applying your sociological imagination to a project and getting something educational out of it! We'll talk about this over the first couple of weeks of class. Most projects will have a writing component. If you want to do a straight research paper, that's great, too! Guidelines will be made available for research papers.

**For all of your written 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: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/academicsuccess/>
- Academic Tutoring Center: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/tutoring/>
- TRiO Student Support Services: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/TRiO/>
- Writing Lab @ BCC: <http://bellevuecollege.edu/writinglab/>

**Below is a checklist for you to go over before you hand in each written assignment.**

- Twelve-point sized Times font, double-spaced
- 1" margins all around
- MLA Citations where appropriate - credit is given even where any *ideas* presented in the paper are not your own
- Title pages and bibliographies are not counted in final page count
- 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.'



Your written work is evaluated on:

1) Content

- a. Fulfilling the assignment.
- b. Developing your argument and making use of examples and evidence to support your argument.
- c. Flow of thought throughout the paper, with strong analyses and conclusions.

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.
- g. Dude, like totally don't write **colloquially**. A conversation is a conversation. A paper is an entirely different set of discussions. ☺

**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.
- f. Consequences: If it is determined that you have plagiarized or engaged in other forms of academic dishonesty, you will 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 rubric to help explain the grade you're given for a given assignment. You will receive a Numerical Grade from me, with little-to-no commentary. This is only because I've found that most students do not read written comments from their professors. 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.

**90-100 = A.** The A paper shows me you're engaged with the readings, the media, and the lectures in class by utilizing quotes and ideas. It's a paper *completely free* from grammar and spelling errors, and demonstrates 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.** The B tells me you're doing very good work. You may have a couple of grammar issues, but your paper 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.** The C paper 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. 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.** Your struggles should not be with writing so much at this point but if they are please see me immediately. A D paper 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 no integration of material and you're not responding to the questions raised in class. 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.)

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:**

We will set the rhythm of the class in the first couple of weeks. I am a firm believer in being a lifelong learner and to that end I often carry away a lot more information from students than I ever expect. I'm most interested, for the purposes of this class, to see how well we can all wrap our minds around the idea of thinking critically about the various issues and themes presented about the social world in which we live and you should expect to be exposed to new and various ways of thinking and knowing. As a learning community, we'll be helping one another think through all of the ideas that connect back to course themes.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

READINGS DUE MONDAY UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

HOMEWORK DUE FRIDAYS UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

**Week One: September 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup>****Thematic Overview:**

Introduction to the course and the field of Native American Studies  
The Sociological Imagination  
Shifting the Center

**Readings (please have your reading done by Friday this week):*****Native American Studies (NAS):***

Chapter One: Introduction

***Handouts:***

"Defining Indigenous People" by David Maybury-Lewis

**Quote of the Week:**

"I'm sure they felt they were honoring us by having our scalps on their walls, too, or by taking our land." - Susan Shown Harjo (Cheyenne/Moscogee)

**Week Two: September 30<sup>th</sup> - October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**\*\*NO CLASS MONDAY, 9/29 - BCC REMAINS OPEN\*\* See announcement on MyBCC.**

**Thematic Overview:**

Cultural ties to land  
Identity construction  
Senses of place-permanence  
Philosophical thoughts on/by/about Time, Space, and Indians

**Readings:*****NAS:***

Chapter Two: Land and Identity

**Film:**

Monday and Tuesday: "In The Light of Reverence" (PBS)

**Assignments:**

In-Class Assignment on our in-class film Thursday & Friday.

**Quote of the Week:**

"Two hundred years of tradition does not make using Indians as mascots right." - Tim Giago (Lakota)



Week Three: October 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*NO CLASS M, Tu, W 10/6-8 – BCC REMAINS OPEN\*\* See announcement on MyBCC**

**Thematic Overview:**

Exploration and Discovery or Exploitation and Conquest?

American Society: Rights vs. Responsibility

Remembering who tells us our history, the history of who remembers us

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Three: Historical Contact and Conflict

**Handout:**

“Columbus, The Indians, and Human Progress” by Howard Zinn

**Assignments:**

Critical Thinking Essay #1 Due Friday

**Quote of the Week:**

“The nobility of the Redskin is extinguished and what few are left are a pack of whining curs who lick the hand that smites them. The whites by law of conquest, by justice of civilization, are masters of the American continent, and the best safety of the frontier settlements will be secured by the total annihilation of the few remaining Indians. Why not annihilation? Their glory has fled, their spirit broken, their manhood effaced, better they should die than live the miserable wretches that they are.” - L. Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz* and editorial contributor for *The Aberdeen Journal*. This came out just prior to the 1898 Massacre at Wounded Knee in South Dakota.

Week Four: October 13<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>

**Thematic Overview:**

What is this thing called Sovereignty?

Cultural Citizenship

Federal Indian Law and Policy

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Four: Tribal Sovereignty

**Handout:**

“American Indian Sovereignty: Now You See It Now You Don’t” by Peter d’Errico

**Assignments:**

In-Class assignment – Group collages on Sovereignty. Bring materials! See MyBCC site.

**Quote of the Week:**

“One does not sell the land people walk on.” - Tashunca-Uitco (Crazy Horse) (Lakota Sioux)

Week Five: October 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>

**MIDTERM FRIDAY!**

**Thematic Overview:**

Language is Culture

Language Retention Programs

Indian Education

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Five: Language

**Handout:**

“InuitTV is must for language retention” by Zebedee Nungak

“It is Time for Indian People to Define Indigenous Education on our Own Terms” by Gregory Cajete

**Assignments:**

Prepare for Midterm

Final Project log due Friday

**Quote of the Week:**

“We must trust our own thinking. Trust where we're going. And get the job done.” - Wilma Mankiller (former Chief of the Cherokee Nation)

**Week Six: October 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup>**

**\*\*NO CLASS Wed. 10/29. ALL BCC CLASSES CANCELLED for College Issues Day\*\***

**Thematic Overview:**

Indigenous Aesthetics in the Arts

Native Voices

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Six: Indian Aesthetics: Literature

**Handout:**

TBA

**Assignments:**

Critical Thinking Essay #2 Due Friday

**Quote of the Week:**

“All I try to do is portray Indians as we are, in creative ways. With imagination and poetry. I think a lot of Native American literature is stuck in one idea: sort of spiritual, environmentalist Indians. And I want to portray everyday lives. I think by doing that, by portraying the ordinary lives of Indians, perhaps people learn something new.” - Sherman Alexie (Spokane and Coeur d'Alene)

**Week Seven: November 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**

**\*\*All eligible students VOTE TUESDAY!!!!\*\***

**\*\*AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL W/TH/F. SEE HANDOUT FOR DETAILS\*\***

**Thematic Overview:**

Indigenous Aesthetics in the Arts, con't

Celluloid Indians

Images and Distortions of “The Indian Maiden”

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**

Excerpts from *Killing the Indian Maiden* by M. Elise Marubbio, and companion film-clips

**Quote of the Week:**

“There is no death. Only a change of worlds.” - Chief Seattle [Seatlh], (Suquamish)

Week Eight: November 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*NO CLASS Tues. 11/11. ALL BCC CLASSES CANCELLED for Professional Development Day\*\***

**Thematic Overview:**

Indigenous Aesthetics in the Arts, con't  
Native Perceptions of the world  
The (dis)incorporation of “The Native” in “The Arts”

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Seven: Indian Aesthetics: Art and Expressive Culture

**Assignments:**

Critical Thinking Essay #3 Due Friday

**Quote of the Week:**

“The only thing more pathetic than Indians on TV is Indians watching Indians on TV.” - Evan Adams (Coast Salish) as Thomas Builds-The-Fire in “Smoke Signals”

Week Nine: November 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>

**Thematic Overview:**

Native American Studies and the future of academia  
Vine Deloria, Jr.'s predictions

**Readings:**

**NAS:**

Chapter Eight: The Current Status of Native American Studies

**Assignments:**

In-Class Assignment: Discussion Question Development and Implementation  
Final Project final drafts for feedback due Friday. Please print out Power Points, drafts, whatever you have.

**Quote of the Week:**

“Indian legislation on the desk of a do-right Congressman  
Now, he don't know much about the issue  
so he picks up the phone and he asks advice from the  
Senator out in Indian country  
A darling of the energy companies who are  
ripping off what's left of the reservations. Huh.”

- Lyrics to “Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee” by Buffy Ste. Marie (Chippewa)

Week Ten: November 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>

**\*\*NO CLASSES Th/Fr. 11/27-28. ALL BCC CLASSES CANCELLED for Holiday\*\***

**Thematic Overview:**

Where do we go from here?

**Assignments:**

Tuesday and Wednesday: final touches, Final Project. In class, Library Media Center, or N-Building Computer Lab. See sign-n sheet for details

**Film:**

Student Choice!

**Quote of the Week:**

“You don't stand a chance  
against my prayers  
You don't stand a chance  
against my love  
They outlawed the Ghost Dance  
but we shall live again,  
we shall live again.”

- Lyrics to “Ghost Dance” by Robbie Robertson (Six Nations)

**Week Eleven: December 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>**

**Assignments:**

Final Presentations and discussion

**Quote of the Week:**

“That weapon will replace your tongue. You will learn to speak through it. And your poetry will now be written with blood.” - Gary Farmer as Nobody in “Dead Man”

**FINAL EXAM: Monday, 12/8, 9:30-11:20 am**

**EMAILING ME:**

When you email me using my BCC EMAIL, ALWAYS put in the SUBJECT LINE the following, in this order: SOC or ETHN 120 – YOUR NAME – SUBJECT

For example: SOC or ETHN 120 – **John Trudell – Question about Midterm Question #2.**

**ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:**

When I'm not teaching, I'm usually whipping up some sort of baked goodness in my kitchen, doing collage art, taking photos of the world around me, hanging out with my partner and my kid, watching horror movies, or going out to listen to live music. Mostly, I go to hear metal, bluegrass, punk, or local hip-hop shows. I received my Ph.D. in Sociology (with an emphasis in American Studies) from UC Santa Cruz. I received my first MA in Sociology from Humboldt State University and my second MA in Sociology from UCSC, my BA in Sociology and Journalism from Mills College, and my AA in English and Creative Writing from Vista Community College. This is my third year as Instructor of Sociology at BCC, and my first year as Chair of the Sociology Department. I am the Programmer for BCC's Annual American Indian Film Festival. I love to write and am currently working on a memoir collection of poetry. More at: <http://sara.sutlercohen.com>

*Thank you for a wonderful term!*