

**Anthropology 3110**  
**Indigenous Peoples of North America**  
**Fall 2015**

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“Native survivance is an active sense of presence over absence,” - Gerald Vizenor

This course explores the ways of life, history, and cultural diversity of the indigenous peoples of North America – those peoples present on this continent prior to the arrival of Europeans. This course will be particularly geared towards overcoming persistent and incorrect stereotypes among college-age non-indigenous Americans about indigenous peoples. Where mainstream media represents Native Americans as a monolithic whole, we will use ethnographic studies to show how there is no homogenous group of “Native Americans”: rather, there are hundreds of indigenous nations in North America, and we will attempt to briefly survey this vast and rich cultural diversity. Furthermore, while indigenous peoples and colonial assaults against them are often thought of as belonging to history, we will show how many indigenous nations to this day struggle for sovereignty and survivance against continued colonialism. A final overarching topic will be who has the right to speak about indigenous peoples and if research, itself, is colonial.

### **Assigned Texts**

- Muckle, Robert J. *Indigenous Peoples of North America: A Concise Anthropological Overview* (University of Toronto Press, Inc., 2012).
- All other readings will be made available through Blackboard or are available online.

### **Learning Objectives**

Students will disrupt prevalent stereotypes about indigenous North Americans as they:

- Comprehend the diversity of North American indigenous populations, past and present.
- Become acquainted with present-day indigenous nations.
- Analyze the continuing impacts of colonialism and the social, economic, political, and cultural factors affecting present-day issues of sovereignty for Native Americans.
- Survey the history of anthropological research on indigenous North Americans and consider who has the authority to research and write about these peoples.
- Consider pressing questions in the anthropology of indigenous peoples around which this course is structured.

## A Note on Pedagogy

My pedagogical approach to teaching this course has been influenced by indigenous colleagues and coworkers as well as by critiques of anthropology by indigenous people. In terms of readings, we will read from a variety of authors, including anthropologists, indigenous people, and (often) indigenous anthropologists, in an attempt to expose students to a diversity of perspectives rather than simply that of outside researchers. In lessons, I will emphasize discussion, holism, and a questioning of our own assumptions about other human beings. In course structure, I will emphasize directionality and place: the peoples we explore entail roughly a geographic circle around North America, going in a sunwise direction. We also return to dwell on certain questions multiple times, in a variety of ways, rather than proceeding in a linear direction. More broadly, in this course I will emphasize dialogue, collaboration, and decolonization in our efforts to understand indigenous nations rather than exploitative knowledge models where indigenous peoples are objects of study.

## Grading Scale

90-100 A / 80-89 B / 70-79 C / 60-69 D / 59 and Below F

## Grade Breakdown

Attendance.....	20%
Midterm.....	25%
Peoplehood Paper.....	30%
Final Exam.....	25%

## Assignments:

**Attendance:** Students may miss up to 4 classes without penalty and with no need of getting those absences excused. However, after this, every class missed is a deduction of 4% from your attendance grade, unless it is an unusual circumstance and cleared with the instructor by email prior to the absence. Clearance subject to instructor discretion.

**Midterm Exam:** On 10/22/2015 you will take a midterm exam, which will be composed of a mix of short answer, multiple choice, true/false, and essay questions.

**Peoplehood Essay:** You will write an essay of no less than 5 full pages in length (single spaced) in which you holistically and anthropologically describe an indigenous nation based on research with scholarly or primary sources. Students will focus their papers on the essential elements of peoplehood – a common sacred story, language, and identity – and describe how these have changed over time. Students will receive top marks who can also be reflexive about the ethnographic sources utilized (i.e. issues of representation, context, authority, and power dynamics). Rubrics and more detailed instructions for these essays will be provided in-class. Due 12/03/2015.

**Final Exam:** On 12/08/2015, at the time we would regularly have class, you will come to the classroom and take a final exam, which will be multiple choice, short answer, and essay-based.

## Course Policies

**Withdrawal:** If you are unable to complete this course, you must officially withdraw by the University-designated date (for a “W” with instructor approval). Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure that YOU must initiate. I cannot do it for you. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an “F”.

**Extra Credit:** There is no extra credit planned at this time.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.deanofstudents.unt.edu](http://www.deanofstudents.unt.edu).

In this classroom, “**acceptable student behavior**” includes:

Always be respectful of others’ thoughts, opinions, and perspectives.

Do not come late to class.

No cell phone usage, internet browsing, or social media use unless directed by the instructor.

Engage in class discussions, having read assigned readings.

Attend class regularly.

**Class Participation:** In many North American indigenous traditions the process of dialogue and participation are important parts of instruction. I hope to follow in that method in my teaching style. Despite the large size of this class, it is hoped that you will, in addition to doing the readings prior to class, be prepared to take part in lively discussions.

**Contacting the Professor:** Please feel free to come by office hours for assistance. Otherwise, email is the best way to get in touch with me outside of class. In the email, indicate your course to facilitate my response. I require 24 hours to respond, 48 if it is a weekend or holiday.

**Do Not Miss Essays or Exams:** If you have a conflict with a due date or with either exam, it is your responsibility to make alternative arrangements ahead of time – NOT the week of the due date. Students may NOT turn in the essay late, unless there are previous arrangements made with the instructor. Allowing alternative arrangements is up to the discretion of the instructor.

**Late Work:** Unexcused submissions of late work (i.e. the peoplehood essay) will incur a 20% loss of points per calendar day.

**Academic Misconduct:** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit an automatic “F” in the course. For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

**ADA:** The Anthropology Department does not discriminate based on an individual’s disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our program provides academic adjustments or help to individuals with disabilities, and attempts will be made to meet all certified requirements. Please see me if you have a documented disability so that appropriate arrangements can be made to help you get the most out of this class. In such cases, please make sure to obtain documentation through the Office of Disability Accommodation.

## Course Schedule

### **Week 1: Introduction: Native North America in Context**

08/25

No reading

08/27

Muckle: Chapter 1

### **Week 2: Haudenosaunee: Who Are We To Research?**

09/01

(1) Theresa McCarthy: "Iriquoian and Iriquoianist: Anthropologists and the Haudenosaunee at Grand River" (Blackboard)

(2) Declaration by Haudenosaunee Environmental Task Force (Blackboard)

09/03

Muckle: Chapter 2

### **Week 3: Seminoles and Cherokees: How To Remain a People?**

09/08

Cushman: "The Cherokee Syllabary from Script to Print" (Blackboard)

09/10

Cattelino: "Casino Roots: The Cultural Production of Twentieth-Century Seminole Economic Development" (Blackboard)

### **Week 4: Caddo, Wichita, and Other "Texan" Nations: Whose Land Do We Inhabit?**

09/15

Muckle: Chapter 5

09/17

(1) Miller: "Changing Moons: A History of Caddo Religion" (Blackboard)

(2) Wichita Reading (Blackboard)

### **Week 5- Maya: Does Conversion End a Culture?**

09/22

No reading

09/24

Mackenzie: "Judas Off the Noose: *Sacerdotes Mayas, Costumbristas*, and the Politics of Purity in the Tradition of San Simón in Guatemala" (Blackboard)

### **Week 6- Diné (Navajo): What is Colonialism?**

09/29

Muckle: Chapter 6, Appendix 5

10/01

Schwarz: "Unraveling the Anchoring Cord: Navajo Relocation, 1974 to 1996" (Blackboard)

### **Week 7- Diné (Navajo) and Western Apache: What is Sacred Land?**

10/06

Dunstan: "Desecration and Destruction: Responses to Snowmaking on *Dook'o'ost'íid*, the San Francisco Peaks" (Blackboard)

**10/08**

Basso: Excerpt from *Wisdom Sits in Places* (Blackboard)

**Week 8- Pomo: Is Detached Research Possible?**

**10/13**

Sarris: Selection from “Mabel McKay: Weaving the Dream” (Blackboard)

**10/15**

Sarris: “Living With Miracles: The Politics and Poetics of Writing American Indian Resistance and Identity” (Blackboard)

**Week 9- Nimiipu: What Does It Mean To Be of The Land?**

**10/20**

Benedict Colombi: “Salmon and the Adaptive Capacity of Nimiipuu (Nez Perce) Culture to Cope with Change” (Blackboard)

**10/22**

**Midterm Exam, In-class**

**Week 10- Kwakwaka’wakw: Do Indigenous Peoples Believe in Ownership?**

**10/27**

Boas: Excerpt from “The Indians of British Columbia” (Blackboard)

**10/29**

U’mista Cultural Society: [http://www.umista.org/masks\\_story/en/ht/introductions.html](http://www.umista.org/masks_story/en/ht/introductions.html)

U’mista Cultural Society: <http://www.umista.org/kwakwakawakw/index.php>

**Week 11- Inuit: How Do You Live in a Changing Climate?**

**11/03**

Inuit Reading #1 (Blackboard)

**11/05**

Inuit Reading #2 (Blackboard)

**Week 12- Cheyenne and Lakota: What Does It Mean To Be a ‘Warrior’?**

**11/10**

Jeanette Writer: “Terrorism in Native America: Interrogating the Past, Examining the Present, and Constructing a Liberatory Future” (Blackboard)

**11/12**

No reading

**Week 13- James Bay Cree: How Does One Fight Colonialism?**

**11/17**

Muckle: Chapter 7

**11/19**

Ronald Niezen: “Power and Dignity: The Social Consequences of Hydro-electric Development for the James Bay Cree” (Blackboard)

**Week 14- Overarching Themes: Land, Peoplehood, Sovereignty**

**11/24**

Biolsi: “Imagined Geographies: Sovereignty, Indigenous Space, and American Indian Struggle” (Blackboard)

**11/26**

University closed

**Week 15- Overarching Themes: Survival and Survivance**

**12/01**

Lerma: “Shocks to the Navajo (Diné) Political System” (Blackboard).

**12/03**

**Due Date: Peoplehood Essay Due Thursday, Start of Class**

**Finals Week**

**12/08/2015 Final Exam (Cury Hall 203 at 9:30 AM)**

**A NOTE ON THE SCHEDULE**

The schedule is subject to change at instructor discretion. Please regularly check Blackboard and your email for announcements of changes, in addition to attending class regularly.