

GEOG 3303
Native American Geography
Spring 2017, Wednesday 6:00-8:50pm
Course Meetings in LH 200

Instructor: Dr. Jen McCormack

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Instructor Office Hours and Location: LH 302; 10:00am-10:50am MW or by appointment



This course incorporates the principles of critical thinking and theories of socio-political geography into a specific realm: Native American geographies. Using scholarly articles, legal cases, narratives, films and case studies, we will look closer at these questions: What is a Native American geography? What are the intersections of law and power within space that have contributed to current

understandings of Native geographies? What is the role of Indigenous philosophy and core values, as well as the historical relations between Native and non-Native peoples in creating these spaces?

In terms of historical span, this course covers pre-contact spaces and the oral histories of mapping Indigenous spaces; colonial contact and treaty-making; and the federal policy eras of assimilation, termination, and self-determination—and the corollary resistance efforts of Native peoples and nations over time.



This is an upper division course with a writing emphasis, and participation in every class is essential. The course objectives are to cultivate a critical and nuanced perspective of geography and law in the U.S., and to interrogate mythologies about North American spatial contests and peoples.

Course Objectives and Skills

- Acquisition of a geographical perspective on human-environmental relationships, and human-human relationships over time and space.

Assessment: exams, writing responses, small group research projects

- Critical analysis of data, theory, law, film and texts pertaining to and created by Indigenous peoples of North America

Assessment: exams, writing responses, small group research projects

- Acquisition of graduate level professional skills:
 - Lead discussion on readings and critical theory

- Primary research sources (data collection in group research project)
- Application of critical legal theory
- Written and verbal presentation of original research

Assessment: discussion group lead, writing responses, small group research projects

- Analyze meta queries: What is the on-going contest between Indigeneity and the U.S. settler state? What is a sacred geography and how does that sacred space co-exist in profane spaces? What is the role of law and racism in the construction of U.S.-Native relations? How have Native Nations sustained their geography, culture and sovereignty to this day?

Assessment: exams, discussion group lead, writing responses, small group research projects

The Americans with Disabilities Act

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartze in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-171, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832, Telephone Number 432-837-8203.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated at any level.

Class discussion etiquette

We will be talking about a lot of tough issues in this course, e.g., racism, genocide, political differences, sexual violence, etc. This is the history of the United States and there is no getting around the blood and the sensitive issues. As a group, we will not always agree and that is okay—but everyone needs to listen and politely deal with the diversity of opinion. Debate keeps us smart, but cheap shots do not. If you have any concerns or frustrations, contact the instructor.

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in this course.

Readings

Texts:

Several of the texts have been made available in the SRSU Bookstore or can be purchased online. The one book you need to buy, either in the bookstore or online:

All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life. Winona LaDuke, South End Press, 1999.

Readings on Blackboard:

Most of our readings are in PDF form loaded on our course Blackboard site. Using the “Content” tab on the side panel of the Blackboard page, there are folders for each week with the appropriate readings in each folder.

Requirements

Participation (50 points): This class needs your participation to fly—our course is a dialogue. You are responsible for doing the weekly readings, which will be part of the in-class discussions, response papers and exams. Always feel free to ask questions or make comments about the readings—what you like, what you don't get, what needs more explanation, even when you disagree. Showing up for class and being present is vital—for you, for your colleagues and for the instructor.

This is an evening class, so grab food and caffeine before you come so that you are alert. We are all in this together and are all due respect. **As this is a once-a-week class, there are no excused absences.** Emergencies do arise, communicate with instructor, a.s.a.p.

Reminder to athletes: With the current absence policy at SRSU, you have a certain number of absences allowed for scheduled sporting events. This does not include practice, gym time, drug tests, etc. Being in class is a priority for all students. You must communicate with the instructor when you will be away. If you foresee missing more than one class, talk to the instructor. This may not be the semester to take this course. *For anyone who misses class: It is your responsibility to catch up on the work, including: 1) using Blackboard to download class materials, 2) connecting with your small group and 3) connecting with colleagues who did attend and can help you. You may also schedule a meeting with the instructor or come to office hours to go over concepts from the days you missed.*

Reading Response Essays (10 essays, 20 points each, 200 points total): Each week, you will write 2-4 pages analyzing the readings. I will be looking for deep analysis of the material, pointing it to the class concepts and revealing your understanding the material. Specifically, I want to see your writing go beyond the superficial perimeters and interrogate and understand the diverse texts. You do NOT have to submit an essay for the week you lead the readings.

Each essay should be 2-4 pages, 12-point font, in-text citations and works-cited page. Essays are due on that class session. No late papers will be accepted.

Student Discussion Leader (50 points): Each student will read the discussion for one of the meetings. As student leader, you will prepare background on the reading, thoroughly read and outline the main points of each reading, and prepared 3-5 discussion questions for each reading. On that session, the instructor will start the meeting and after a short break, the student leader will take over. The student leader of that week should meet with the instructor before the meeting to go over ideas, main concepts, etc. Participating when other students are leading is also critical for your participation grade. Facilitating discussion as the leader and participating as a colleague are both vital components of your final grade.

Exams (100 points each, 200 points total): There will be two exams based on readings, discussions, lecture, guest speaker, films and in-class activities. Anything in class is fair game for the exams.

Small Group Decolonizing Alpine Project (100 points): In small groups, you will use the methods detailed in week 2 to decolonize a space, idea, symbol, name, etc. in Alpine (or Marfa, Ft. Davis). You will co-design the project with your group colleagues and prepare a visual presentation for the last week of the course. This visual can be a film, a PPT, a map with Indigenous (to this area) places, a book of Indigenous plant names, an interview with someone from the two water protector camps, diaries of your time at the camps, etc. In your presentation you need the following components:

1. The site of decolonization
2. Explanation of methods using Smith and Wilson readings
3. Your group’s approach and objective
4. Data accumulated
5. Data analysis and conclusions

As you create this project think about the stories that are missing from this part of Texas vis-à-vis the diverse Indigenous nations or mis-representations of Native peoples (film, mascots, identity suppression, genocide, even our own namesake, Sullivan Ross’s legacy). How can your group creatively decolonize this geography?

Classes in the past have decolonized museums, national park trails and monuments, high school mascots, cultural appropriation in the form of hipster “faux-Native” fashion (American Eagle’s “tribal jewelry”, Urban Outfitter’s “Navajo panties”, Victoria’s Secret and Coachella models wearing Lakota headdresses, etc.).

*Noted on the syllabus are dates where the small groups should present their progress in class.

Grading

<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Course Points Earned</i>
A	550 – 600
B	500 – 549
C	450 – 499
D	400 – 449
E	< 400

Schedule

*subject to change at discretion of instructor

Jan 18/Week 1: Introduction, Sovereignty and Sacred Geography

Jan 23/Week 2: The “Savage” and Indigenous Research Methods

Readings:

1. Selections from “Savage Anxieties” (Williams)
2. “Context for Understanding Native American Issues” (Echohawk)
3. “Colonizing Knowledges” (Tuhiwai Smith)

Essay 1 Due
Small Group Leader #1:
Small Group Workshop

Jan 30/Week 3: Representation, Expectation and 8th Generation

Readings:

1. "The poetics of Navajo weaving" (Zolbrod)
2. "Navajo Spider Woman" (Jacobs)
3. "When All the Cowboys are Indians" (Penrose)
4. "Indians in Unexpected Places" (Deloria, P.)

Essay 2 Due

Film: *Reel Injun*

Feb 6/Week 4: Federal Indian Law

Readings:

1. "Supreme Court and Legal History of Racism in America" (Williams)
2. "Indian Rights and The Marshall Court" (Williams)
3. "The Rise of the Plenary Doctrine" (Williams)
4. "Justice, Injustice and the Dark Side of Federal Indian Law" (Echohawk)

Essay 3 Due

In Class: *Moot Court Exercise*

Feb 13/Week 5: Colonial Contact, Treaty Making and Removal

Readings:

1. "Conquest" (Smith)
2. "*Cherokee Nation v. Georgia*: Shutting the Courthouse Doors" (Echohawk)
3. "Two Documents on the Cherokee Removal" (Zinn)

Essay 4 Due

Student Leader #2:

Feb 20/Week 6: Assimilation, Allotment and Reorganization

Readings:

1. Selections from "School Days of an Indian Girl" (Zitkala-Sa)
2. Selections from Report on Boarding Schools by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples, pp. 1-10; 28-33 (United Nations)
3. "Wolves Have a Constitution" (Cornell)
4. "Tribal Sovereignty and American Indian Leadership" (Deloria, V.)

Essay 5 Due

Student Leader #3:

***Small Group Progress Report**

Feb 27/Week 7: Termination, Relocation and Resistance

Readings:

1. "Sold!: Loss of Kiowa Land" (Palmer)
2. "For America to Live" (Means)
3. "Contested Boundaries: native sovereignty and state power at Wounded Knee, 1973" (D'Arcus)

Essay 6 Due

Film: *Wounded Knee*

Mar 6/Week 8: Exam 1

Mar 13/Week 9: Spring Break

Be safe and have fun!

Mar 20/Week 10: Self-Determination and Reclaiming Sacred Spaces

Readings:

1. "Rethinking Tribal Sovereignty Doctrine" (Coffey and Tsosie)
2. "Imagined geographies" (Biolsi)
3. "Mapping Intergenerational Memories" (Hershey, McCormack and Newell)

Essay 7 Due

Student Leader #4:

Mar 27/Week 11: Indigenous Environmental Justice and Sacred Spaces

Readings:

1. Selections from *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*, Intro & Chs.1, 4, 5, and 6 (LaDuke) ***BUY BOOK, not online**
2. "Thinking in Time and Space" from *God is Red* (Deloria, V.)

Essay 8 Due

Guest Speaker: Prof. Taylor Keen [Omaha/Cherokee], Creighton University

Apr 3/Week 12: Indigenous Jurisprudence and Criminal Jurisdiction

Readings:

1. "Life Comes from It" (Yazzie)
2. "Towards an Indigenous Jurisprudence of Rape" (Deer)
3. Background on PL 280 (Melon and Gardner)

Essay 9 Due

Student Leader #5:

***Small Group Progress Report**

Apr 10/Week 13: Indigenous Economic Development and Constitutional Reform

Readings:

1. “American Indian self-determination: The political economy of a policy that works” (Cornell and Kalt)
2. “American Indian Land Rights, Rich Indian Racism” (Flaherty)

Essay 10 Due

Assignment: “Current Economic Development in Indian Country: Diverse Nations”

Tigua, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo:

Dine, Navajo Nation:

Ndeh, San Carlos Apache:

Menominee Nation of Wisconsin:

Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Lakota Nation-Standing Rock:

Citizen Potawatomi Nation:

*Using the following three sources, find out the main economic drivers for each nation.

Bring to class information for each of the following questions.

1. How does this nation build their economy?
2. What are their natural assets (environment, labor, culture, etc.)?
3. What have they developed to provide for each other?
4. What do they do with the assets?

Sources:

- Native Nation Website: varies (google search)
- HPAIED “Honoring Nations” Website: http://hpaied.org/publications-and-research/search?keys=&field_tribe_tid=All&field_topic_tid=All&field_year_value=&field_pub_type_value=Honoring+Nations+Case+Studies
- Indian Country Today Network: <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com>

Apr 17/Week 14: Indigenous International Law and Human Rights

Readings:

1. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 2007
2. Indigenous Law and Its Contribution to Global Pluralism (Anaya)
3. Mary and Carrie Dann Case Materials

Essay 11 Due* (this is not technically 11th essay but the 10th depending on which week you led)

Film: *Our Land, Our Life*

Apr: 24/Week 15:

Small Group Decolonizing Project Workshop: *No class meeting

May 1/Week 16:

Decolonizing Project Student Presentations

May 8/Finals Week: Final TBA