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 a foundation in federal and Indigenous law. 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
• Critical analysis of data, theory, law, film and texts pertaining to and created by Indigenous peoples of North America  
  Assessment: exams, writing responses

• Acquisition of graduate level professional skills  
  o Read critical social and legal theory, legal cases  
  o Primary research sources  
  o Application of critical legal theory  
  o Written and visual presentation of original research  
  Assessment: essays, original 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, writing responses, 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 Schwartz 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.

Distance Education Statement
Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university’s academic support services, such as Smarthinking, library resources, such as online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments to instructor email. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated at any level.

Readings and Sources

• All 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 relevant readings in each folder.

• Additionally, I would like you to subscribe to the free global Indigenous news source: Intercontinental Cry. This is an amazing international news source from a
Native perspective: https://intercontinentalcry.org

Once you subscribe, email me confirmation. On the exams and intermittently, I will ask you to discuss some of the stories.

Requirements

- Every week will be a new topic, based in law and geography for Indigenous nations of North America. You may work at your own pace, but the assignments are due by midnight on the Friday of that week, CST to the professor via email.

- For every week, I have prepared a Lecture PPT with the main ideas and media links to assist. I suggest starting there, then doing the readings and following with the films or multi-media assignment on the relevant weeks. For 10 weeks in the semester you will have a reading response essay due. Additionally, on some of those weeks you will ALSO have a film or multimedia project to complete. Everything is due by the Friday midnight deadline.

- The week of the mid-term, Thanksgiving and last week of courses you have no new assignments. You will have a reflection piece due via email on Thanksgiving week, and time for your Decolonizing Project on the last week of class---both detailed below.

- This is an upper-division course based in law and theory. Never hesitate to email me for clarification or seek a meeting in person or on the phone. I am giving you all graduate level work because you are brilliant and because it is GOOD stuff. And I would love to discuss with you!

Breakdown of assignments:

I. Subscription to Intercontinental Cry and at least one email discussing an article (10 points).

II. 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. Interrogate and understand the diverse texts.

Each essay should be 2-4 pages, 12-point font, with in-text citations and works-cited page. Use APA style for citation formatting.

Online guide for the American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guide: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/
III. Film Analysis Guides and Multimedia Assignments (7 assignments, 20 points each, 140 points total) Because this is an online class and I don’t get to listen and share with you gorgeous people, we will use 4 films and 3 multi-media projects, as well. For these weeks, you will submit a film or multi-media analysis guide, with your weekly essay. The guides are on Blackboard in that week’s folder. These weeks are noted on the syllabus. Instructions for the multi-media assignments are on the syllabus schedule below.

IV. Exams (100 points each, 200 points total): There will be two exams based on readings, discussions, lecture, films and multi-media.

V. Thanksgiving Reflection (50 points): For Thanksgiving week, I am assigning no extra readings. Rather, during the time you celebrate with loved ones, I want you to also connect to the perspectives, stereotypes of Native people, the irony of this federal holiday, resistance of Indigenous people, reclaiming of culture, etc. Instructions for this reflection are on the schedule below.

VI. Decolonizing Project (100 points): You will use the methods detailed in Week 2 and Intercontinental Cry news source, to decolonize a space, idea, symbol, name, etc. in West Texas and use a visual medium: film, photography, an infographic, a recording of music or story, a map with Indigenous places, a book of Indigenous plant names, an interview. For your visual project, you need the following components:

1. The site of decolonization
2. Explanation of decolonization using Smith and Wilson (and any other) readings
3. Your approach and objective for the visual medium chosen
4. Visual expression of decolonization
5. Analysis

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 you creatively decolonize this geography?

Examples: Students 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.), El Cosmico “tee pees.” Other students have promoted Indigenous knowledge that is often not recognized or shared in “official stories”, like creating guides of Indigenous plant knowledge of the Big Bend region, researching Native names for mountains and places, learning about Indigenous cosmology and constellation stores for the night skies and Marfa lights, etc.
Grading

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Schedule
*subject to change at discretion of instructor

Week 1/Aug 27: Introduction, Sovereignty and Sacred Geography
Review Lecture PPT
Subscribe to Intercontinental Cry: https://intercontinentalcry.org
Email confirmation to instructor.
No other assignment due

Week 2/Sept 3: 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

Week 3/Sept 10: 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.)
Film: Reel Injun

Essay 2 Due
Film Guide for Reel Injun Due

Week 4/Sept 17: 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

Week 5/Sept 24: 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

Week 6/Oct 1: Assimilation, Allotment and Reorganization
Readings:
1. Selections from “School Days of an Indian Girl” (Zitkala-Sa)
3. “Wolves Have a Constitution” (Cornell)
4. “Tribal Sovereignty and American Indian Leadership” (Deloria, V.)

Film on Boarding Schools, TBD
Essay 5 Due
Film Guide on Boarding Schools Due

Week 7/Oct 8: 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)

Film: Wounded Knee
Essay 6 Due
Film Guide on Wounded Knee Due

Week 8/Oct 15: Exam 1
*No new materials due.

Week 9/Oct 22: 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

Week 10/Oct 29: 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.)
Multi-Media: LaDuke, Deloria and other sacred geography interviews
Essay 8 Due
Multi-Media on Sacred Geography Due

Week 11/Nov 5: 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)

Multi-Media on Indigenous Peace-Keeping

Essay 9 Due
Multi-Media Guide on Indigenous Peace-Keeping Due

Week 12/Nov 12: Indigenous International Law and Human Rights

Readings:
2. Indigenous Law and Its Contribution to Global Pluralism (Anaya)
3. Mary and Carrie Dann Case Materials

Essay 10 Due
Film: *Our Land, Our Life*
Film Guide on *Our Land, Our Life* Due

Week 13/Nov. 19

Reflection piece to answer this question: “From your studies in this course so far, how has your perception of Thanksgiving changed?”

*Just send me an email of 4-6 paragraphs by Friday. Connect the readings and your ideas to the federal holiday.

Week 14/Nov 26: 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)

Multi-Media Assignment: “Current Economic Development in Indian Country: Diverse Nations” Due

For this project, you will select three of the following Native Nations to compare:
1. Tigua, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
2. Dine, Navajo Nation
3. Ndeh, San Carlos Apache
4. Menominee Nation of Wisconsin
5. Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Lakota Nation-Standing Roc:
6. Citizen Potawatomi Nation

*Using the following three sources, find out the main economic drivers for three of these nations. Answer the following four questions and connect with the ideas from the readings in your analysis. Your analysis should be in the form of a short essay. You do not have an additional reading essay due.

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 for your nations)
• 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

**Week 15/Dec 3:**
Decolonizing Project Workshop (You will have this week to work on your project with no extra assignments!)

**Week 16/Dec 10:**
Decolonizing Project Due
Final Exam