



FALL 2026
SEMINAR in NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY
Course Syllabus
HIST 5310.W01



Native American veterans of the Vietnam War stand in honor as part of the color guard at the Vietnam Veterans War Memorial. November 11, 1990, Washington, D.C. (Photo by Mark Reinstein/Corbis via Getty Images)

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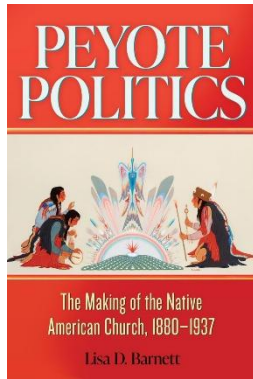
Office Hours: In office: Tuesday, 3:30 to 5. Online: Thursday 2 to 3:30. Available by appointment in-person or online.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

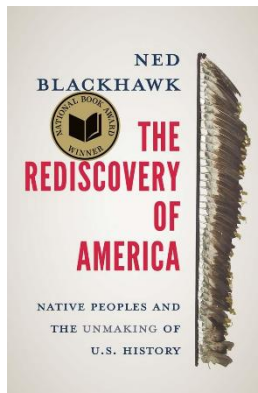
This course recounts a story of resistance, persistence, adaptation, extraordinary hardships, and survival across thousands of years in North America. We begin by exploring the peopling of indigenous America as well as the diverse cultural regions of Native America prior to contact with Europe. Contrary to interpretations of European “discoverers,” we will learn that North America remained very much native ground throughout most of the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries. We will cover events familiar to students of the United States, such as the Seven Years’ War, the American Revolution, the Civil War, and others, but we will turn these standard narratives on their heads as we considered Native American involvement. Moreover, we will explore how Native America endured well into the twentieth century and perseveres in the twenty-first century.

As an online graduate seminar, this course will largely be an independent study. However, certain mandatory meeting times with the professor will be required throughout the semester.

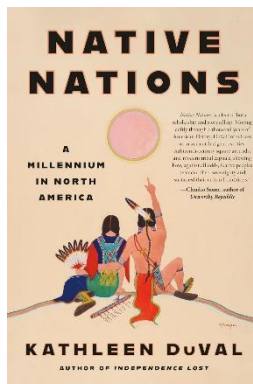
REQUIRED READINGS:



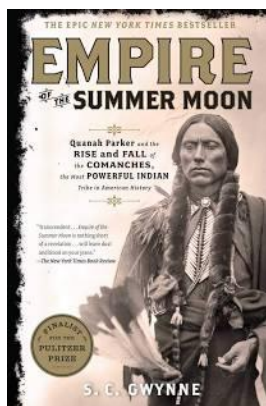
Barnett, Lisa D. *Peyote Politics: The Making of the Native American Church, 1880-1937*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2025.



Blackhawk, Ned. *Rediscovery of America: Native Peoples & the Unmaking of U.S. History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2023.



Duval, Kathleen. *Native Nations: A Millennium in North America*. New York: Random House, 2024.



Gwynne, S. C. *Empire of the Summer Moon: Quannah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History*. New York: Scribner, 2010.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Historical Knowledge & Reinterpreting Core Narratives
 - Analyze the diverse Native American cultures and societies prior to European contact, evaluating the political, social, and ecological impacts of the Columbian Exchange.
 - Critique standard narratives of U.S. history (e.g., the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and Manifest Destiny) by recentering events around Indigenous participation, sovereignty, and resistance.
 - Examine the continuity of Native American history beyond the 19th century into the 20th and 21st centuries, evaluating key policies such as allotment, termination, and self-determination.
2. Historiographical Analysis & Source Evaluation
 - Evaluate differing historical interpretations of Native American history through critical book reviews of monographs.
 - Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, integrating both effectively to construct evidence-based historical arguments.
3. Pedagogy & Practical Application
 - Develop and demonstrate effective methods for teaching Native American history by creating a lesson plan or research project supported by primary/secondary sources and executing a short teaching presentation.
 - Collaborate with peers to design and execute a public-facing educational initiative to promote Native American history's engagement the broader university community and public.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The graduating student in history will be able to:

1. The history student will demonstrate historical research skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content.
 - Marketable Skills:
 - ✓ Students will learn the importance of meeting deadlines in a successful manner.
 - ✓ Students can identify the differences between primary and secondary sources, a crucial step in developing critical thinking skills.
 - ✓ Students can learn to select and organize data in a relevant manner.
 - ✓ Students can hone their writing skills.
2. The history student will demonstrate the ability to write about topics in historiography and how those topics are interpreted.
 - Marketable Skills:
 - ✓ Students can learn how ideas and interpretations change over time.
 - ✓ Students can learn how to evaluate different interpretations and ideas.
 - ✓ Students can learn how to use evidence to persuade various audiences.
3. The history student will demonstrate knowledge of American History, World History, and Non-American History.

- Marketable Skills:
 - ✓ Students can develop a better understanding of the development of various cultures, political and economic systems, gender and race relations, and environmental change.
 - ✓ Students can develop a multicultural perspective necessary for an increasing globalized world.
 - ✓ Students can learn how to manage and absorb various perspectives and information.

The Student Learning Outcomes will be measured by the administration of exams, book reviews, and research papers.

COURSE POLICIES:

1. **Attendance at class meetings:** You are expected to attend every class if possible! Regular attendance and punctuality are vital to academic success. If you feel ill, **please do not come to class in person**. Send me an email explaining your situation and symptoms.

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Please make every effort to be on time. Arriving late and leaving early are very disruptive to your fellow colleagues as well as to the professor.

Responsibilities for notifying faculty of absences and for arranging potential make-ups rest with the students. If you miss class due to illness, car trouble, a death in the family, etc., you must contact me directly via email or in person with an explanation of your absence. If you are going to be absent from class while traveling on a university-sponsored trip, you are responsible for notifying the professor beforehand.

Regular attendance will influence students' participation grade. Students with excessive unexplained absences may be dropped from the class with the grade of "F."

2. **Contacting the Instructor:** The instructor's email is the preferred method of contact. Students should use the phone number for emergency situations only. Student phone message will normally not be returned due to the problem of "phone tag."

All email messages to the instructor should include your name, the course you are enrolled in, and a simple message stating the reason you are contacting the instructor. During the week, emails will normally be answered within twenty-four hours. Emails that arrive late Friday afternoon, Saturday, or Sunday most likely will not receive a reply until Monday, but you may send an email at any time. Questions such as "what did we cover in class?" will normally not be answered.

3. **Make-Up Policy:** I will give make-up assignments only in extreme cases. Make-up assignments are allowed only in cases of documented unavoidable events that prevent attendance or of previous arrangements made with the instructor. Students who are unable to attend the regular exam session must notify the professor by email or phone within 48

hours and provide documentation of their emergency. Students who do not give such notification and provide documentation will not be allowed to make up the assignment.

4. **Late assignments:** Late assignments incur a 10-point penalty for every 24-hour period that passes from the due date and time until the instructor or teaching assistant receives the assignment.
5. **Your Responsibilities:** Each student has individual responsibilities that go beyond simply showing up for class and reading the assigned books.
 - a. **Mutual courtesy and respect:** Courtesy and respect for others are essential elements of the academic culture. The academic environment welcomes a difference of opinion, discourse, and debate within a civil environment, and we will all engage in mutual courtesy and respect for one another. To that end, address comments to the entire class rather than to adjacent students, and remember the Golden Rule—treat others as you would like to be treated.
 - b. **Adherence to technology policies:** In this twenty-first-century world, I recognize that many students use technology in their learning endeavors, and I welcome the use of it in the classroom for educational purposes only. That said,
 1. **PLEASE** silence all cellphones before class. If your phone disrupts class, I reserve the right to ask you to leave.
 2. Any use of cell phones or other electronic devices used to send and receive calls or text messages, to check or update your status on a social network, or to surf the web, etc. is absolutely forbidden in this class. If I find a student using technology for entertainment or other purposes, I will ask that student to leave class for the day, and that student will receive an absence. I also reserve the right to ban the use of all technology in the classroom should I find students abusing the privilege.
 3. You may use a personal computer, but only if you are using the computer to take notes or access the information on the Blackboard website for this course. Students deemed not to be using a computer effectively will lose their computer privilege.
 4. No use of any technological device is allowed during exams unless specific permission is given by instructor.
 - c. **Academic calendar and course information:** Students also have a responsibility to be familiar with the key dates on the academic calendar (such as deadlines for dropping the course and the first and last days of class) in addition to course-specific information (such as exam dates and all other course requirements as outlined in the syllabus).

6. **Academic Misconduct:** Any act that violates the academic integrity of the institution is considered academic misconduct. Violation of college, state, or federal standards with regard to plagiarism, cheating, or falsification of official records will not be tolerated. Students violating such standards will be subject to discipline as outlined in the Student Handbook. Anyone caught engaging in academic misconduct in an exam or assignment will automatically receive an “F.” Specific examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:
 - a. **Cheating:** Copying from another student’s test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files and listings; Using, during any academic exercise, material and/or devices not authorized by the person in charge of the test; Collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or laboratory without permission; Knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in its entirety or in part, the contents of a test or other assignment unauthorized for release; Substituting for another student or permitting another student to substitute for oneself.
 - b. **Plagiarism:** The appropriation, theft, purchase or obtaining by any means another’s work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one’s own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another’s work without giving credit therefore.
 - c. **Collusion:** The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Participation:** Participation points will be determined by attendance, class discussions, and supplemental homework assignments.
2. **Book Reviews:** Students will write two book reviews and turn in chapter-by-chapter notes over the books. Guidelines on how to write a successful book review will be posted on Blackboard.
3. **Weekly Reflections on *Native Nations*:** *Native Nations: A Millenium in North America* will serve as the “textbook” for this course. Students will write weekly reflections with prompts provided over specific chapters.
4. **Primary Source Analysis Essay:** Students will analyze primary sources over a 19th and a 20th century topic in Native American history of their choosing. Guidelines will be provided on Blackboard.
5. **Comparative Essay:** After reading *Native Nations* and *The Rediscovery of America*, students will compare the two works. Both are very recent and cover the same timelines. What similarities exist in Blackhawk’s and Duval’s work? What are their differences?

Consider the targeted audience and sources used in both. The essay should be between 5 to 7 pages.

6. **Final Project:** Students have two options for the final project in this class.

- Historical Precedents/ Contemporary Issues Research Paper: Students will pick a Native American topic, event, or individual and research how historical precedents can explain and offer solutions to challenges facing 21st century Indigenous America. Students selecting this option must:
 - ✓ Use at least five primary sources and three secondary sources.
 - ✓ Write an 8-to-10, double-spaced page paper with an introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, citations, and bibliography.
 - ✓ Briefly present paper to classmates at the end of the semester.

OR:

- Teaching Demonstration Paper: Students will select a topic in Native American history, conduct research, and write a paper describing how they would teach the topic to a class. Students selecting this option must:
 - ✓ Use at least five primary sources and three secondary sources.
 - ✓ Write an 8-to-10, double-spaced page paper with an introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, citations, and bibliography.
 - ✓ Briefly present paper to classmates at the end of the semester.

GRADES:

Students can earn a possible 1,100 points (including bonus points) by the end of this class.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Participation	100 pts.
Book Notes (2 @ 25 pts. each)	50 pts.
Book Review (2 @ 75 pts. each)	150 pts.
Primary Source Essay (2 @ 100 pts. each)	200 pts.
Comparative Essay	100 pts.
Final Paper	200 pts.
<u>Native Nations Reflections (10 @ 30 pts. each)</u>	<u>300 pts.</u>
Total Possible	1,100 pts.

Grade Breakdown:

1,000 to 900 pts.	A
890 to 800 pts.	B

790 to 700 pts.	C
690 to 600 pts.	D
590 and below	F

A Range = Outstanding. All assignments are turned in on time and reflect thoughtful and analytical thinking with a thorough understanding of historical events and trends.

B Range = All assignments are turned in on time and are above average but are not outstanding work. They demonstrate an understanding of historical events, but the analytical thinking is weaker than that for an “A.”

C Range = Average. Assignments indicate an average understanding of historical events. Work tends to be narrative rather than analytical. There is need for improvement.

D Range = Below average. Writing is mostly narrative. There is no analysis and narrowly answers the question assigned. Assignments are incomplete.

F Range = Fail. Assignments are not turned in or are late without the instructor’s approval. They are substantially below average and fail to answer the questions. Plagiarizing, of course, will result in disciplinary action.

UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS AND RESOURCES:

Americans with Disability Act Statement (ADA) SRSU Accessibility Services

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. To help protect confidentiality, students seeking accessibility/accommodation(s) services must submit the [Accommodation Request Form](#) located on our [website](#). Students are welcome to call the Office of Accessibility Services at 432-837-8203 or stop by Ferguson Hall Room 112 if they have any additional questions regarding the process. Our mailing address is PO Box C-122; Alpine, TX; 79832.

Adequate time must be allowed to arrange accommodations. Accommodations are not retroactive; therefore, students should contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports.

Students with emergency medical information or needing special arrangements in case a building must be evacuated should discuss this information with their professor as soon as possible.

Student Responsibilities Statement

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all

federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, 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 through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. 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. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Statement Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information—such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details—into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users. Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources ***unless permission is expressly given*** for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Classroom Climate of Respect

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack.

No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](#). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu/](#). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123). No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting [library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/](#) or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Tutoring Center

[The Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

- Important Information:
 - ✓ Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments: Flexible options to fit your needs.
 - ✓ Hours of Operation: Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
 - ✓ Workshops: Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
 - ✓ Location: BWML Room 128.
 - ✓ Contact Us: For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.
- Looking for additional support?
 - ✓ Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
 - ✓ Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

****NOTICE TO STUDENTS**:**

Supportive Statement:

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create a supportive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

Course Content Disclaimer:

Course materials are selected for their historical and/or cultural relevance. They are meant to be examined in the context of intellectual inquiry of the sort encountered at the university level. The primary and secondary source materials (both words and images) speak to issues and controversies in history that may be considered disturbing and offensive by contemporary standards. Language is performative and performances of racial slurs in their historical context reflect past perceptions and historical attitudes toward other racial/ethnic groups, which is why any current use of the word/phrase does not lose its sting. The task of the historian (which you are this semester by virtue of being in the class) is to read the primary sources, written as products of their day and time, and to interpret them for an audience in today's time by using language that reflects a deeper understanding of sensitive topics and critical thinking.

At certain times this semester, we will be discussing events that may be disturbing to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I am happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork. *Please remember I do not expect or require students to hold the same opinions as one another (or me) about controversial topics.*

SEMESTER SCHEDULE

This syllabus with its schedule is an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and anticipated student learning. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule that would result in enhanced or more effective learning on the part of the students. Students will have prior notification of any necessary changes in the schedule.

Note: All assignments are due on Sunday of each week to work with your busy schedules.

Week 1: Aug. 24 to 28

Introduction to the Course

- Read: Three articles on Blackboard
- **DUE 8/30:** Introductory Post on Blackboard
- **DUE 9/4:** Contemporary Native American History Reflection

Week 2: Aug. 31 to Sept. 4

"One of the Most Extraordinary Stories in Human History"

- Read: "Foreword: Many Nations" in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 9/4:** Three insights on "Foreword: Many Nations" in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 9/4:** Contemporary Native American History Reflection

Week 3: Sept. 7 to 11

North American Pre-European Contact & New Worlds for All

- **NO CLASS MONDAY 9/3:** Thank the Labor Movement!
- Read: Chapter 1 & 2 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 9/13:** Chapters 1 & 2 Reflections in *Native Nations*
- **DUE:** Schedule online meeting with class sometime this week.

Week 4: Sept. 14 to 18

The Native Northeast from 1500 to 1750

- Read: Chapter 3 & 4 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 9/20:** Chapters 3 & 4 Reflection in *Native Nations*

Week 5: Sept. 21 to 25

The Native South & Southwest from 1500 to 1750

- Read: Chapter 5 & 6 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 9/27:** Chapters 5 & 6 Reflection in *Native Nations*

Week 6: Sept. 28 to Oct. 2

The American Revolution in Indian Country

- Read: Chapter 7 in *Native Nations* & Supplemental Blackboard Articles
- **DUE 10/4:** Chapter 7 Reflection in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 10/4:** Quiz over Supplemental Blackboard Material

Week 7: Oct. 5 to 9

Indian Resistance & Removal: Many Trails, Many Tears

- Read: Chapter 8 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 10/11:** Chapter 7 & 8 Reflections in *Native Nations*

Week 8: Oct. 12 to 16

The Comanche Empire

- Read: Chapter 9 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 10/18:** Chapter 9 Reflections in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 10/18:** *Empire of the Summer Moon* Book Review

Week 9: Oct. 19 to 23

19th Century Transformations in Native Nations

- **Note:** Professor presenting at the Western Historical Association Annual Conference. No in-person or online scheduled class
- Read: Chapter 10 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 10/25:** Chapter 10 Reflection in *Native Nations*

Week 10: Oct. 26 to Oct. 30

- **DUE 11/1:** Primary Source Analysis Essay # 1

Week 11: Nov. 2 to 6

Indian Termination or Self-Determination?

- Read: Chapter 11 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 11/8:** Chapter 11 Reflection in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 11/8:** *Peyote Politics* Book Review
- **Note 11/6 & 11/7:** Center of Big Bend Studies Conference @ SRSU on Alpine Campus

Week 12: Nov. 9 to 13

Native Radicalism and Reform

- Read: Chapter 12 in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 11/15:** Chapter 12 Reflection in *Native Nations*

Week 13: Nov. 16 to 20

The Survival of Nations

- Read: “Afterward: Sovereignty Today” in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 11/22:** Afterward Reflection in *Native Nations*
- **DUE 11/22:** Primary Analysis Essay #2

Week 14: Nov. 23 to 27

- **NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Holiday**

Week 15: Nov. 30 to Dec. 2

- Research Work Week—No class; individual meetings with Professor encouraged
- **DUE 12/2:** Comparative Analysis Essay over Blackhawk and Duval

Final: Monday, December 7 from 6 to 8 p.m.

- **Online final presentations and final papers due.**