

Intro to Native American and Indigenous Studies

NAIS 1

Fall 2025 Sections 02, 03 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/20/2025 to 12/08/2025 Modified 08/17/2025

Contact Information

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Communication Policy

The most efficient way to contact me outside of class is via e-mail. I aim to answer student email within 24 hours during regular business hours. If you have an urgent request and have not heard from me within 24 hours, please e-mail again.

Office Hours

Mondays, 12 - 1PM or by appointment
Dudley Moorhead Hall (DMH) 221

Course Information

Lecture

Mondays and Wednesdays
Boccardo Business Center 301

This lecture course will take place in-person. Hybrid options will not be made available, so students must attend the lecture in person to get access to lecture material. All course content, assignments, and communications will be managed through **Canvas**. To stay on track, please adhere to the posted deadlines and regularly check Canvas for updates.

AI Use Disclosure: Course Design

This course was designed by Dr. Abel R. Gomez. All content—including readings, assignments, and instructional framing—was created by Dr. Gomez and reflects his disciplinary expertise in Native American and Indigenous Studies. No generative AI was used in the creation or revision of academic content.

Transparency in AI use reflects the course's commitment to academic integrity and ethical instructional design. Students are expected to disclose any AI use in their own assignments using the SAID certificate policy outlined in the course.

Course Description and Requisites

Introduction to the epistemological frameworks of Native American and Indigenous Studies, emphasizing settler colonialism, sovereignty, self-determination, autonomy, and decolonization. Students will learn how to recognize stereotypes and ethnocentrism about Native Americans and Indigenous Peoples that are prevalent today.

Satisfies Area F: Ethnic Studies.

Grading: Letter Graded.

* Classroom Protocols

Course Conduct Expectations

In this course, every individual is valued and deserves respect. As we engage in our learning community, please uphold the following standards:

- **Respectful Communication:** Engage with peers and the instructor thoughtfully and courteously in all discussions and communications.
- **Active Participation:** Contribute meaningfully to discussions and activities, demonstrating engagement with the course material.
- **Academic Integrity:** Submit original work and provide appropriate citations for all sources and collaborations.
- **Professionalism:** Adhere to deadlines, follow assignment guidelines, and communicate proactively about any challenges.

Maintaining these standards ensures a productive and inclusive learning environment for all participants.

Academic Integrity – Use of Artificial Intelligence Tools

Permissible Use of AI Tools:

You may use AI tools to assist with:

- Idea generation
- Grammar and syntax suggestions
- Clarifying concepts

Requirements for AI Tool Usage:

If you utilize AI tools for any assignment, you must include a [Student - AI Disclosure \(SAID\)](https://the-said.pages.dev/) (<https://the-said.pages.dev/>) certificate with your submission, detailing:

The SAID certificate does not count toward the assignment's word or page count and must be submitted by the deadline for the assignment.

Academic Integrity Compliance:

Failure to disclose the use of AI tools as specified will result in a grade of '0' for the assignment and referral to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development, in accordance with SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy (University Policy F15-7).

For guidance on responsible AI use, refer to SJSU's Student AI Disclosure (SAID) tool and the [AI Writer Toolbox](https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox) (<https://sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox>) provided by the SJSU Writing Center

Late Work, Extensions, and Make-Up Work Policy

Late Work:

Timely submission of assignments is crucial. Assignments submitted after the deadline will incur a **5% deduction per day**, up to a maximum of **3 days** (15% total). Assignments more than 3 days late will not be accepted and will receive a grade of zero.

Extensions:

Extensions may be granted for serious and compelling reasons, such as medical emergencies or unforeseen personal circumstances. Requests must be submitted **in writing via e-mail** as soon as possible and **before the assignment deadline**. Approval is at the instructor's discretion, and documentation may be required.

Make-Up Work:

Make-up opportunities for missed assignments or activities are generally not available. It's essential to stay engaged and adhere to all deadlines to ensure success in this course.

iClicker

We will be using the iClicker app in this class. Visit the SJSU website for more info about [setting up your account](https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/frequently-asked-questions/iclicker-frequently-asked-questions.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/learnanywhere/frequently-asked-questions/iclicker-frequently-asked-questions.php>) if you haven't already. To add the course, you can look up the course name either as Intro to Native American+Indigenous Studies Sec 2 or NAIS 1-02 (47443). The iClicker smart

phone app and account are free for SJSU students. You can answer questions through the iClicker app or via a QR code that will be available in class. Please set up your account before our first day of lecture. I will go over more details about this in class.

Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.

Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.

Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the [GE website \(https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php\)](https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

Course Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze and articulate the complex identities of Native American and Indigenous peoples across political, racial, and ethnic categorization.
2. Explain sovereignty and tribal citizenship in the context of self-determination.
3. Articulate the difference between Indigenous, colonial, and settler colonial worldviews.
4. Define and contrast settler colonialism in the context of decolonization.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

GE Area F: Ethnic Studies

The Area F requirement is based on the premise that all students graduating from the CSU have an understanding of race, racism, and social justice history in the United States. As stated in AB1460/California Education Code 89032 Section 2 Subsection (d): "Commencing with students graduating in the 2024-25 academic year, the California State University shall require, as an undergraduate graduation requirement,

the completion of, at minimum, one three-unit course in ethnic studies.” To fulfill this requirement, eligible courses shall have the following prefixes: Native American Studies (NAS/AIS), African American Studies (AFAM), Asian American Studies (AAS), and Chicax/Latinx Studies (CCS).

GE Area F Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of an Area F course, students should be able to discover and critically evaluate significant topics, then compose and deliver oral and/or media-driven presentations on these topics as related to the group(s) studied in this class. Area F emphasizes comparative concepts and frameworks in ethnic studies with a focus on historically defined racialized core groups: Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and Chicax/Latinx Americans. Approved courses shall meet at least three of the five following student learning outcomes:

1. Analyze and articulate concepts such as race and racism, racialization, ethnicity, equity, ethnocentrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, imperialism, settler colonialism, and anti-racism.
2. Apply ethnic studies theory and knowledge to describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements that have and continue to facilitate the building of a more just and equitable society.
3. Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, national origin, immigration status, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, language, and/or age.
4. Critically review how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics as, for example, in immigration, reparations, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, language policies.
5. Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements that have contributed to the building of a more just and equitable society.

Writing Practice: Students will write a minimum of 1500 words in a language and style appropriate to the discipline.

Course Materials

Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future

Author: Patty Krawec

Publisher: Broadleaf books

Year: 2022

ISBN: 9781506478265

Availability: Campus Bookstore, online vendors

Price: \$26.99 (new)

[Becoming Kin \(https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991075190938402901&context=L&vid=01CAL_S_SJO:01CAL_S_SJO&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,Becoming%20Kin:%20An%20Indigenous%20Call%20to%20Unforgetting%20the%20Past%20and%20Reimagining%20Our%20Future\)](https://csu-sjsu.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma991075190938402901&context=L&vid=01CAL_S_SJO:01CAL_S_SJO&lang=en&search_scope=MyInst_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,Becoming%20Kin:%20An%20Indigenous%20Call%20to%20Unforgetting%20the%20Past%20and%20Reimagining%20Our%20Future) is available through the MLK Library as an ebook. You can also purchase at the campus bookstore, online through a retailer, or [directly from the publisher \(https://www.broadleafbooks.com/store/product/9781506478258/Becoming-Kin\)](https://www.broadleafbooks.com/store/product/9781506478258/Becoming-Kin).

"All the Real Indians Died Off": And 20 Other Myths About Native Americans

Author: Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz and Dina Gilio-Whitaker

Publisher: Beacon Press

Year: 2016

ISBN: 978-080706265-4

Availability: Campus Bookstore, online vendors

Price: \$16.00 (new)

You can also purchase at the campus bookstore, online through a retailer, or [directly from the publisher \(https://www.beacon.org/All-the-Real-Indians-Died-Off-P1224.aspx\)](https://www.beacon.org/All-the-Real-Indians-Died-Off-P1224.aspx).

Digital materials

Additional texts, podcasts, and links to articles online will be linked on Canvas

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this class requires your active participation, both in the readings and in-class activities. The goal of this course is not to memorize facts, but to develop critical thinking skills by examining Indigenous movements, perspectives, and histories. As you read, jot down key words, laws, and court cases, and individuals mentioned in the text. Look for central arguments in the reading. What evidence does the author use to support their claim(s)? Bring these to class notes to class and use them in your assignments.

The **Course Contract** is a formal acknowledgement that you have reviewed the syllabus and you agree to its terms. You must submit this contract before any grades will be administered. This is available on the Canvas website for this course.

Participation means engaging in class discussion, showing up prepared with the reading and notes, and listening attentively. Students will use the iClicker app to participate in in-class quizzes, polls, and other activities. In-class polling and iClicker activities cannot be made up. For full credit, students must have at least 21 daily poll responses.

Harkness Discussions are another way students will interact and discuss course materials. This form of student-led discussion allows students to think out loud to understand the materials. Students are provided with instructions and a discussion prompt. Harkness discussions will be conducted at the conclusion of

each section. A more detailed set of instructions for how to facilitate and participate in these discussions as well as discussion prompts will be posted on the Canvas website for this course.

Indigenous in the News is an assignment that invites students to examine a current event related to the course. Students will present their article to the class in pairs and describe 1) the story and 2) how it relates to material we have explored in the course. Full details will be available to the Canvas website for this course.

The **Indigenous Event Reflection Paper** will be an opportunity for students to write and critically reflect about a Native event on or off campus. This assignment is meant to invite students to hear from Native people directly to see how material in the course is connected to communities on the ground. A list of events will be posted on Canvas. Students should reach out to the instructor in advance to have their event approved for this assignment if event is not listed on Canvas

Exams will be administered at the conclusion of each of the first two sections following the Harkness Discussion. Each exam will cover the material from the section just completed.

The **Indigenous Movement Presentation** will allow students to learn about an Indigenous-led movement or organization. Students will research a movement and examine how it connects to course material. Students will also be asked to describe the ways that the tribe(s) offer action items to join in solidarity with the movement. This will culminate in a group presentation to the class.

Extra credit opportunities will be available throughout the semester. These include going to an additional Indigenous event and/or volunteering for at least 3 hours at an approved event.

✓ Grading Information

Criteria

Course Contract	2 Points
Participation/iClicker Responses	20 Points
Harkness Discussions (2 at 10 points each)	20 points
Indigenous in the News Presentation	10 Points
Indigenous Event Reflection	8 Points
Exams (2 at 15 points each)	30 Points
Indigenous Movement Presentation	10 points
Total Points Possible	100 points

Breakdown

Final grades are based exclusively on the quality of submitted work and in-class activities outlined in the assignments described above. Grades will **not be curved**. Final grades are determined by the **percentage earned**, and grades will **not be rounded** up or down.

In accordance with **CSU Area F requirements**, students must earn a **C- (70%) or higher** to receive general education credit for this course in Ethnic Studies.

Grades will be assigned and tracked in **Canvas** and will appear as **letter grades** based on the scale below.

Grade	Range	Notes
A	93–100%	Outstanding work; exceeds all expectations with clear insight, depth, and accuracy.
A-	90–92%	Excellent work; meets all key expectations with minor areas for improvement.
B+	87–89%	Very good work; demonstrates strong understanding with above-average execution.
B	83–86%	Good work; meets expectations with competent analysis and consistent performance.
B-	80–82%	Mostly good work; meets most expectations but lacks depth or consistency in places.
C+	77–79%	Satisfactory work; shows basic understanding with some clarity or accuracy issues.
C	73–76%	Adequate work; fulfills minimum requirements with limited depth or development.
C-	70–72%	Minimally adequate; meets basic criteria but with significant weaknesses.
D+	67–69%	Below satisfactory; shows incomplete understanding and limited skill application.
D	63–66%	Poor performance; major gaps in understanding and execution.
D-	60–62%	Very poor performance; work shows minimal engagement with course objectives.
F	0–59%	Failing; does not meet minimum standards for credit or understanding.

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

A more complete and up-to-date schedule is available on Canvas. This schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Note: Each week typically reading and listening activities. Students should read (and or listen/watch) the assigned materials before class.

Week 1	Introduction	
Wednesday, August 20	In class - Syllabus and Course Overview	
Part 1	Indigenous Relationalities, Identities, and Resistance	
Week 2	Relational Frameworks	
Monday, August 25	Krawec, "Nii'inaaganaa" AND "Introduction" AND Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 20 "Native Americans Can't Agree on What to Be Called."	*Course contract due by August 25 at 10 AM
Wednesday, August 27	Krawec, "Creation: How We Got Here" AND Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 2 "Indians Were the First Immigrants to the Western Hemisphere"	
Week 3	Colonial Relations and Anti-Colonial Resistance	
Monday, September 1	Labor Day. Campus closed.	
Wednesday, September 3	Alfred and Corntassel, "Being Indigenous: Resurgence Against Contemporary Colonialism" AND Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 1, "All the Real Indians Died Off"	
Week 4	Sovereignty as Relationship	

Monday, September 8	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 12 "Indians are Wards of the State" AND Chad Uran, "Professor Breaks Down Sovereignty and Explains its Significance"	
Wednesday, September 10	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 11 "The United States Gave Indians Their Reservations" AND Simpson, "The Place Where We All Live and Work Together: A Gendered Analysis of 'Sovereignty'"	
Week 5	Place Relations - Native California	
Monday, September 15	Akins and Bauer, "Introduction: Openings" AND "A People of the Land, a Land for the People" from <i>We Are the Land: A History of Native California</i>	
Wednesday, September 17	Miranda, "The End of the World: Missionization 1770-1836" from <i>Bad Indians: A Tribal Memoir</i>	Optional on-campus event: American Indian Heritage Celebration Saturday, September 20, 12- 9 PM, Sunday, September 21, 12-6 PM, Provident Credit Union Event Center, San José State University
Week 6	Place Relations - Ohlone Territory	
Monday, September 22	Field et al, "A Contemporary Ohlone Tribal Revitalization Movement: A Perspective from the Muwekma Costanoan/Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco Bay Area" AND Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 8 "The United States Did Not Have a Policy of Genocide"	
Wednesday, September 24	Yamane, "Costanoan/Ohlone" from <i>Native America in the Twentieth Century: An Encyclopedia</i> AND Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 6 "Indians Should Move On and Forget the Past"	Optional off-campus event: Annual California Native American Day Friday, September 26, 2025, 10 AM- 2 PM, California State Capital, West Steps

Week 7	Relationship as Religion	
Monday, September 29	Crawford, "Preface" AND "Religion in Action: Transcendence, Thanksgiving, and Transformation" from <i>Native American Religions</i>	
Wednesday, October 1	LaDuke, "What is Sacred?" from <i>Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming</i> AND Eigen Vasquez "The American Religious Freedom Act as applied to Native Americans and the Role of the Protection of Sacred Sites"	Optional off campus event: Gathering of Ohlone Peoples Saturday, October 4, 10 AM - 3 PM, Coyote Hills Regional Park, Fremont
Week 8	Review Week	
Monday, October 6	Harkness Discussion Day 1	*Harkness Discussion questions and discussion points due by 10 AM on Canvas
Wednesday, October 8	Harkness Discussion Day 2	*Online Exam due by Thursday, October 9 by 11:59 PM on Canvas
Part 2	Variations of Indigenous Relationalities	
Week 9	Relations Across Genders, Sex, and Sexuality	
Monday, October 13	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 3 "Columbus Discovered America" AND Myth 19 "What's the Problem with Thinking of Indian Women as Princesses or Squaws?" AND Yazzie, "The Limits of Matriarchy: Rethinking Gender and Sexuality in Traditional Law"	Optional off-campus event: Indigenous Peoples Day Sunrise Ceremony on Alcatraz Island Monday, October 13, hosted by the International Indian Treaty Council, starting at 4:15 AM. Tickets must be purchased in advance

Wednesday, October 15	Scott, "Indigenous Feminism: An Entry to Understanding an Indigenized Feminism" AND Gomez, "Two-Spirit Indigenous Peoples Building on Legacies of Gender Variance: What Two-Spirit Peoples Can Teach about Transgender Identities, Religion, and Indigenous Communities"	
Week 10	Relations to Stereotypes, Representation, and Appropriation	
Monday, October 20	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 13 "Sports Mascots Honor Native Americans" AND Singer, "Wiping Warpaint Off the Lens: Native American Film and Video."	
Wednesday, October 22	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 14 "Native American Culture Belongs to All Americans" AND Keene, "Why Tonto Matters" AND All My Relations Podcast: "Rez Doggin with Ryan Redcorn & Sterlin Harjo" (58 Minutes)	
Week 11	Oceania - Native Hawaiian Relationalities	
Monday, October 27	Laenui, "The Rediscovery of Hawaiian Sovereignty"	
Wednesday, October 29	Trask, "Lovely Hula Hands: Corporate Tourism and the Prostitution of Hawaiian Culture" from <i>From a Native Daughter: Colonialism and Sovereignty in Hawaii</i>	
Week 12	Latin American and Latinx Indigenous Relations	
Monday, November 3	Edmunds, "Native Peoples of Mexico" AND Alberto, "Coming Out as Indian: On being an Indigenous Latina in the US"	
Wednesday, November 5	Hernandez-Avila, "La Mesa del Santo Niño de Atocha and the Conchero Dance Tradition of Mexico-Tenochtilaán: Religious Healing in Urban Mexico and the United States" AND All My Relations Podcast: "The Border Crossed Us" (65 Minutes)	
Week 13	Review Week	

Monday, November 10	Harkness Discussion Day 1	*Harkness Discussion questions and discussion points due by 10 AM on Canvas
Wednesday, November 12	Harkness Discussion Day 2	*Online Exam due by Thursday, November 13 by 11:59 PM on Canvas
Part 3	Building Relations Across Difference	
Week 14	Becoming Kin	
Monday, November 17	Dunbar-Ortiz and Gilio-Whitaker, Myth 21 "Indians Are Victims and Deserve Our Sympathy" AND Krawec, "The People: We Are Related"	
Wednesday, November 19	Krawec, "Solidarity: Becoming Kin" AND Sayers-Roods, "Pocket Guide to Ohlone Solidarity"	
Week 15	Together on the Land	
Monday, November 24	Densho, "50 Years Ago, Asian Americans Took a Stand at Wounded Knee" AND Zhou-Lee, "Reaching Asian Power: To Build Solidarity, Asian Americans Must Know Ourselves First"	
Wednesday, November 26	Non-Instruction Day.	<p>Optional off-campus event: (Un)Thanksgiving Sunrise Ceremony on Alcatraz Island</p> <p>November 27, hosted by the International Indian Treaty Council, starting at 4:15 AM. Tickets must be purchased in advance</p> <p>Optional off-campus event: Black Friday Protest/Gathering</p> <p>November 28, Bay Street Mall, Emeryville, CA (Emeryville Shellmound) organized by Indian People Organizing for Change</p>

Week 16	Relations of Co-Resistance	
Monday, December 1	Simpson, "Sintering with Palestine: Grounded Solidarity in Practice with Palestinian Dreams of Freedom" AND Red Nation Podcast: "Indigenous solidarity with Palestine w/ Uahikea Maile and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson" (51 minutes)	
Wednesday, December 3	Mays, "The Forgotten History of Solidarity Between Black and Indigenous Freedom Movements" AND Starks, "Envisioning Black Liberation and Indigenous Sovereignty" AND All My Relations Podcast: "Black Native Kinship with Amber Starks" (47 minutes)	
Week 17	Wrap up	
Monday, December 8	No reading. In-class wrap up activity.	
Week 18	Final Exams Week	
Monday, December 15	10:45 AM-12:45 PM - Final Project Presentations	*A member from each group must upload a copy of final project PowerPoint by 10 AM on Canvas