

# Sociology of Native Americans

Decolonizing knowledge.

## *Course Syllabus*

Meets: TBA

Instructor: DaShanne Stokes, Ph.D.

Contact: TBA

\*Note: Email is the best, most reliable, and preferred means of contact.

Office Hours: TBA

### **Course Description**

Welcome to the Sociology of Native Americans!

Before the United States existed, sovereign and independent nations of Indigenous peoples called these lands home. Today most commonly called Native Americans, these nations made and continue to make immeasurable contributions to the prosperity of the United States. Contrary to the stereotypical Hollywood image of peoples long since vanished and locked in the past, Native peoples continue to live and thrive today. This course provides a brief introduction to the diverse lives, voices, and complex histories of this land's original inhabitants from a sociological perspective. With over 600 state and federally recognized tribes in the U.S., our coverage will necessarily be uneven and incomplete. Instead, we will critically examine a selection of some of the most pressing and consequential issues facing Native American peoples today from a post-colonial perspective. Of particular interest will be developing a critical sociological perspective that decenters whiteness and the living legacy of imperial colonialism while appreciating the many strengths and contributions of Native American peoples. Topics include but are not limited to: settler colonialism and empire, tribal identities and identity politics, federal and state recognition of tribes and their impact on Indigenous rights and resources, colonial and post-colonial treaty relations, Native American activism and social movements, gender and sexuality, tribal politics, sovereignty, the racialization of Native Americans, and Native American self-determination. I anticipate having a great time in class together, so I welcome you to the class!

### **Special Note**

I find that most people have been greatly misinformed or have little or no understanding or familiarity with the diverse original inhabitants of the lands now called the United States. Many hold stereotypical and prejudicial thoughts and feelings about indigenous peoples.

As a result, you may find during the course of our time together that you harbor some misinformed and stereotypical thoughts, images, or racist feelings towards Native American peoples, thoughts and feelings about which you may not even be aware. Having these thoughts and feelings and having been exposed to this misinformation does not make you a bad person. Misinformation and racist and stereotypical thoughts and feelings towards indigenous peoples are, in fact, very normal (not as in meaning good or acceptable, but rather meaning as in so widespread as to be the norm, standard, or custom in our society). Misinformation and racist thoughts and feelings are to be expected as a result of living in a society with deeply institutionalized anti-Native American racism dating back many hundreds of years and that thrives in our present. Everyone in the United States, and everyone in this class, can be expected to have been affected in multiple and often hidden ways by this historical legacy and living present reality.

During our time together, you may sometimes find yourself having unsettling or uncomfortable thoughts or feelings as you learn more about the histories and experiences of Native American peoples. You may have similar thoughts and feelings as you become aware of your own personal thoughts and feelings and as you reflect on class materials and some of your own personal experiences and personal background. Thoughts, feelings, and reactions such as these are normal and to be expected for a course such as this. You may also have feelings of joy, happiness, and optimism. Covering a broad range of events and experiences brings with it a broad range of feelings and reactions.

Please give yourself time, compassion, credit, and understanding that while each of us is responsible for our personal thoughts, feelings, and actions, you are not responsible for how you were taught, how you were raised or socialized, the misinformation family members, friends, and society may have given you, or the racist messages and institutions that surround us every day about Native American peoples. What matters is the choice you make regarding what you do with your feelings, newfound knowledge and understanding. This course encourages you not to shy away from what you may see, feel, and learn in this class, but to embrace these in a positive and constructive way. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or find yourself needing a hand. I am here to help you!

### **Course Goals**

In addition to exposing you to a broad assortment of concepts, theories, and issues concerning Native America, this course is designed to sharpen your critical thinking and analytical abilities. Upon completing this course you will be able to:

- Identify and explain the meaning and significance of central concepts, debates, theories, and research in the sociological study of Native Americans.
- Critically appreciate the complex lives and living history of Native Americans and their relationships with other peoples in lands now called the “United States.”
- Identify Native American peoples as living multiple, distinct, and complex cultures and identities rather than as a single ethnic or racial group.

- Identify the intersectional interplay of historical, political, cultural, gender, sexuality, and religious institutions as they affect Native American peoples past and present.
- Synthesize conceptual, substantive, political, and empirical issues related to the central focus of the course.

Following proven best practices, lectures are not meant to provide exhaustive or complete coverage of every topic or every tribe in the U.S., but instead to cover key content and to provide a wider context in which to deepen your understanding and develop analytical and applied skills exercised throughout the course.

### **Course Materials**

Required:

Reading the course syllabus from beginning to end is **required**.

Lobo, Susan, Steve Talbot, and Traci L. Morris. 2010. *Native American Voices: A Reader*. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Boston: Prentice Hall.

Additional readings will be posted.

Optional, but useful:

Adler, Mortimer J. and Charles Van Doren. 1972. *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*. New York, NY: Touchstone.

This book can be obtained through the university bookstore or online through websites like [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com), or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com). Please be sure when ordering online to allow for shipping times, which may vary considerably and may pose unexpected delays (e.g., a shipping time of “standard” usually means it will be shipped “book rate,” which may take three to four weeks or more).

In addition to these sources above, I have created a document with tips, recommendations, and pointers you may find very useful to your work in our class and beyond available at:

[www.dashannestokes.com/pdfs/student-recommendations.pdf](http://www.dashannestokes.com/pdfs/student-recommendations.pdf)

### **CLASS POLICIES**

#### ***Our Class is a Safe Space***

Everyone will be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect regardless of disability, age, race, ethnicity/culture, gender identity and expression, sex, social class, religion, politics, and sexual orientation. People of all backgrounds are invited and encouraged to participate in class activities and discussions. Please show your colleagues the utmost respect that you’d want shown for yourself.

### ***Indigenous Lands Acknowledgement***

The land upon which the University of Pittsburgh sits was originally inhabited by sovereign and independent Indigenous nations including the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois), Osage, Shawnee, Adena, Hopewell, Monongahela, and Delaware. Land ownership itself is a culturally based concept and part of an ongoing imperial and colonial project. This acknowledgment serves as a reminder that Indigenous lives, views, and cultures matter and before this site was called the University of Pittsburgh it was called home to Indigenous peoples. Many people from these tribes and other Indigenous nations continue to live here today and are a vital part of our community. More information about Indigenous peoples and cultures in this area today can be found at [www.cotraic.org](http://www.cotraic.org). To learn more about Indigenous peoples, Indigenous scholarship, and Indigenous contributions to our society, please see the following (list not comprehensive):

- American Indian Culture and Research Journal: <https://bit.ly/3g1TNSB>
- ASA section on the Sociology of Indigenous Peoples and Native Nations: <https://bit.ly/3cp2X9c>
- Wicazo Sa Review: <https://bit.ly/3uUrnOw>
- Indian Country Today: <https://indiancountrytoday.com/>
- NAISA: <https://www.naisa.org/>

### ***Gender and Sexual Inclusion***

Every aspect of our society is and has been substantially benefitted by the often-marginalized contributions of women and LGBT people. Gender and sexuality are themselves social constructs built on institutionalized patriarchal and heteronormative values, practices, and assumptions that often mask the diversity of human identities and human experiences. This note serves as a reminder that the lives, views, and experiences of women and LGBT people matter and are a vital part of who we are as a society. To learn more about the scholarship of gender and sexuality, and the myriad contributions made by women and LGBT people to scholarship and our society, please see the following (list not comprehensive):

- Section on Sociology of Sex and Gender: <https://bit.ly/3v2Ga9T>
- Gender and Society: <https://bit.ly/3w4OQxG>
- Signs: <http://signsjournal.org/>
- Journal of Homosexuality: <https://bit.ly/3iotzeD>
- Sexualities: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/sex>

### ***Race and Ethnic Inclusion***

Our university and our world are and have been immeasurably improved by the neglected and marginalized contributions of racial and ethnic minorities from all around the world. Race and ethnicity are socially constructed concepts formed in racializing imperial and colonial projects that continue today. This note serves as a reminder that the lives, views, and experiences of people of color matter and are a vital part of who we are. To learn more about scholarship on race and ethnicity and the contributions of people of color to scholarship, our communities, and our world beyond, please see the following (list not comprehensive):

- Sociology of Race and Ethnicity: <https://bit.ly/3w2WRTR>
- Ethnic and Racial Studies: <https://bit.ly/3v6KUvm>
- ABS: <https://www.associationofblacksociologists.org/>
- ASA Section on Asia and Asian America: <https://bit.ly/3fZQmM3>
- ASA Section on Latino/a Sociology: <https://bit.ly/3iovKyP>
- ASA Section on Race, Gender, and Class: <https://bit.ly/3g1v11C>

### ***Attendance and Participation\*\****

**In-person attendance is required** for this class. Your success in this course is of paramount importance; therefore I encourage you to attend all of our scheduled classes.

As someone impacted by the pandemic, I empathize deeply with those who do not wish to attend class due to the pandemic. However, for these reasons, and in consideration of other constraints, our class meetings will not be recorded or held online, with the exception of one particular assignment (described below), but classes otherwise will instead be held in-person in our assigned classroom. Please do feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss the attendance policy. I am happy to help you however I can!

Students should arrange their personal and professional schedules around required class time and course work. Attendance is not graded or recorded, but just like skipping work or skipping prescribed medications, if you skip things that are required (i.e., attendance, participation, lectures, readings, assignments, graded materials, etc.) you should expect a negative result. You will only get out of this class as much as you put in. I consistently find that students who skip classes do significantly worse in their grades. I therefore encourage you to attend all classes and to actively participate because active attendance and participation are the best ways to help you learn the material and generate the kind of results you may desire.

**\*\*NOTE:** Side effects of skipping class and not participating in class activities may include the following (list not comprehensive): wasted tuition and effort, increased incidence of making mistakes, lower grades across all work, lower final grade for the course, lower grade point average (GPA), missing skills and lowered skill development as compared to what is needed for securing a employment in a competitive job market, decreased ability to advance professionally, increased general confusion, increased time needed to complete readings and graded work, fewer networking and friend-making opportunities, decreased chances of a positive letter of recommendation, and greater overall dissatisfaction with the course. If you find yourself not doing as well in class as you would like, I encourage you to look at your attendance and participation and to get in touch with me as soon as possible if you need assistance.

### ***Note on Class Meetings***

In order to have the most enjoyable and engaging class possible, it is imperative and your responsibility to give yourself ample time to arrive at class fully alert and ready to participate in every class. This means getting to bed the night before and getting your day started not at the last minute and with more than the bare minimum time you need to get a full night's rest, wake up,

eat, get your coffee, and travel to class on time. You will only get out of our time together as much as you put in. Therefore, please do not come to class half-asleep and expect the course to be nearly as interesting or as engaging and useful without you being alert and actively participating.

### ***Class Recordings***

My lectures are my intellectual property and are protected by federal copyright law. To respect my copyright, to also ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, and to protect individual privacy of those in my classes, students **MAY NOT RECORD OR PHOTOGRAPH** me, my classroom lectures, discussions, commentaries, or any and all other activities, in any form or with any type of equipment, without my prior explicit written permission. Any such recording that is properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's personal private educational non-commercial use and may not be published or otherwise distributed in whole or in part in any way. You are authorized to take one set of notes for your own private personal educational use, but you may not distribute, repurpose, edit, modify, or make derivative works of my content for commercial or other non-educational or public purposes without my prior explicit written permission. Violators will be dismissed from class. Note that this policy has been created in consultation with similar policies used by other professors in our discipline.

### ***Readings***

You are expected and required to read the week's assigned readings before lecture that week. I strongly recommend you take notes on the readings while you read. All content from readings and lectures and course materials may appear on your graded work even if they are not explicitly covered during lectures. As with most courses, the majority of your learning will take place *outside* the classroom as you study, complete assignments, work with your peers, and critically engage the activities, assigned readings, and lecture materials.

As you complete the assigned readings, view videos, participate in discussions, etc., please keep in mind that *there are no people or views, opinions, or experiences that represent all Native people. Each author or speaker speaks only for themselves and for their own perspective* with the understanding that others within their tribe(s) and in other tribes may have very differing points of view. This holds true even for authors and speakers who state or imply universality. Native peoples, like all other peoples, simply cannot be homogenized or treated as an indivisible unit or whole. Also bear in mind that each reading, video, etc., is embedded in a certain place and time and within a certain cultural context and should be interpreted with this particular time, place, and context in mind.

I encourage you to take notes not just for general content, but to guide your thinking. A good method is called "double-entry" note taking. For this, you divide each notebook page in half with a vertical line (if you are working on a laptop or PDA, create a table with two columns). In the left column, summarize or give the main argument or point. Always include a reference to a page or range of pages as this will help you with studying and any follow-up you may need later. In the right-hand column, respond with your questions, problems, comments, etc. This will help you

learn the material more effectively and make your notes much more meaningful and useful to you.

### ***Lecture Notes***

At the end of every week, I will post lecture notes used in class at my convenience as a courtesy. Notes may be updated in the event of any changes or additions made. Please be aware that lecture notes are intended only as a beginning entry point and as a rough, cursory skeleton of the larger class lectures. Lecture notes are not intended to be complete and are frequently supplemented with additional course content, terms, theories, discussions, activities, etc., that may not be found in the lecture notes or in the assigned readings. Lecture notes are also designed to be a type of rough and incomplete outline with the expectation that students will take more complete notes in class and fill-in content not reflected in the notes as appropriate. This practice is deliberate as research in best practices shows that giving complete notes does not help students learn nearly as well as incomplete notes that students must fill in themselves. As a result, having lecture notes does not give carte blanche to skip classes. If you skip classes, and even if you read the notes and complete all readings, you will miss information needed to do well in the course.

### ***Office Hours and Open-Door Policy***

My goal as is to help you; therefore I maintain an open door policy. I encourage and welcome you to email me to say hello, to ask questions, to make comments or suggestions, learn about research opportunities, or to discuss your work, general direction, or plan of study. I enjoy getting to know students of all backgrounds and look at visits as an opportunity to learn, have fun, and be of service. If you are unable to attend my regular virtual office hours, please email me to make arrangements.

Please email me at least three business days ahead of time to schedule a meeting during office hours or other times by appointment. In your email, please include a telephone number where I can reach you. If you are not able to make my regular office hours, please give as many alternative days and times when you may be able to meet that are during normal business hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST).

### ***Workload***

Many universities view 2-3 hours of study time for every hour of lecture time as a good rule of thumb in determining how much time to invest in studying. This does not include time you need to complete readings, activities, discussions, graded work, exams, etc. This is a guide; you may need to spend more time during some weeks when working on assignments, preparing for exams, or digesting particularly taxing or mind-expanding readings or if life or other circumstances pop up. Be sure to allot enough time to go through each reading BEFORE class and to take notes.

### ***Preparation***

Preparation in this class is critically important. To meet the learning goals of this course, and to participate at the level required and get the most out of the time and money you're investing in

this course, you will need to read all materials and course content carefully, thoughtfully, and critically. As you may be exposed to new concepts, new ideas, and new ways of thinking and seeing the world, it can take some practice to digest the assigned readings and their main points and arguments. This is a natural part of learning, and even the most talented scholars need time to digest and make sense of new ideas and concepts. Additionally, if there are words whose definitions you don't know, this should not be a roadblock or cause of frustration as it happens to us all. In the event you don't understand a word's meaning, you should make use of a dictionary and look it up (Merriam Webster has a great online dictionary at [www.merriam-webster.com](http://www.merriam-webster.com)). Looking things up, taking time to digest, etc., are all necessary steps in the learning and empowerment process that you're here for.

### ***Academic Integrity***

To be fair to the class, the work you submit should represent your own original thinking and your own original work. Review, critique, editing, or other contributions from others to your work on exams, quizzes, discussion posts, weekly homework, essays, case studies, etc. is not permitted in any form. Work demonstrating suggestions, comments, contributions, edits, changes, etc. will not be accepted.

Cheating, plagiarism, etc. will not be tolerated and infractions will be coordinated with the academic honesty office. Students are expected to comply with the policy on academic honesty.

### ***Students in Need of Assistance***

If there are ways I can support your learning, please contact me, whether you have disabilities or not, the sooner the better.

Disability Services also offers additional resources and learning specialists who can help you. If you have a disability and would be helped with certain accommodations, please register with Disability Services (412-648-7890, 140 William Pitt Union, <https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/drs/>). If you need a special accommodation, you should let me know immediately so that we can make any necessary arrangements ahead of time during the first week of class (or during the first week you are enrolled, if you enroll after class has already begun).

***\*\*Special note:*** After consulting with student disability services, and to better help students with special needs, I purposefully design exams, assignments, and all work with an overabundance of extra time built in. For this reason, no additional extra time will be given on any graded work because this extra time and extra accommodations have already been built in. (Example: If you have an accommodation that allows twice the amount of time to complete, this extra time, and usually more, have already been built into the assignment/exam/etc.). This means that there will be no additional extensions, and all posted due dates remain in effect for all students, unless there are additional extenuating circumstances that will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If you have any questions, please contact me. I'm happy to help!

### ***Communication and Email***



We have many students in our class, but you shouldn't feel nameless or anonymous. Please communicate with me via email and with your class colleagues. I am here to help you any way I can. I will post announcements online that should be checked and monitored daily. Direct email should be used only after class resources have been referenced or for personal concerns.

Each student has a University e-mail address and all students taking the course for credit have access to Canvas, the university online system. Your e-mail and the Canvas system will be used for official communications, updates, and announcements. Students are expected to read e-mail and announcements, etc., posted to Canvas in a timely manner and on regular daily basis. Failure to read and react to these University communications does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of communications. It is your responsibility to set up e-mail forwarding to access your email via other services if you choose, though forwarding is at your own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications via email and/or announcements posted on Canvas.

I will do my very best to reply to emails as quickly as possible. Please understand, however, that teaching is only one portion of my job requirements and I am required to spend a large amount of time on research and administrative activities. Please also be aware that there is only one of me and I am unable to work twenty-four hours a day or seven days a week. Quality instruction and giving you my very best requires a reasonable work-life balance; therefore my response to emails will be very limited and sporadic on evenings, weekends, breaks, and holidays. Please be sure to take this into consideration when planning your schedule and activities or contacting me with questions (e.g., start early and work to finish ahead of time to manage unforeseeable delays life may throw at you). Please also contact me with any questions you have well before due dates, exams, quizzes, etc. (especially not the night before) so that I can best help you. If you don't hear back from me after three business days, please feel free to give me a nudge.

Please be sure to add my email address to your "safe" list so that it is not lost. Please also be sure to regularly check your "junk" folder as emails can sometimes get routed to such folders and students are not exempt from the content of emails due to their being routed to junk folders.

Significant personal, assignment, or course issues are best resolved through conversation in-person, by phone, or by Zoom. For this reason, if there are significant issues that arise, you should contact me as soon as possible to arrange an in-person conversation, telephone conversation, or Zoom meeting so that I can best help you.

Additionally, many, if not most, questions that require explanation will generally necessitate us to speak by phone or Zoom rather than email, which in turn will require some time to plan and arrange. Please take this into consideration when approaching me with questions so that we can speak during my office hours or by phone or Zoom as needed.

### ***Late Work and Make-Up Policy***

You should contact me as soon as possible if you ever have any questions, need help, join the class late, or encounter or foresee encountering circumstances that might impede or prevent you

from completing required work by the posted due dates and times. This includes unforeseeable events as well as ongoing or short, medium and long-term circumstances. Also note that it is your responsibility to pay attention to posted due dates and times to not confuse the dates and times by which assignments are due (e.g., confusing a.m. and p.m., confusing dates or days of the week, etc.).

**PARTIAL CREDIT:** Late work, including but not limited to any exams, papers, essays, quizzes, or other assignments or graded work will be accepted for grading for *possible* partial credit if submitted late and will be assessed a penalty. The penalty for late work is discussed below. With the exception of discussion posts, late work can be submitted late without prior discussion and approval following the guidelines shown here.

For those submitting late work, as described above, a two-letter grade penalty rounded to the nearest whole point (not percentage) will be assessed for each twenty-four-hour time increment by which the work is late, beginning one minute after the posted/announced due date and time. This penalty will be in addition to any deductions the work submitted would otherwise have received had it been submitted on time.

Example: If a student submits something that is between one minute to up to twenty-four hours late, the work will receive a one-day penalty amounting to a two-letter grade reduction. If, for example, the work is worth 100 points, the maximum score possible for the student would be 80 points. If the work is worth 25 points, then the maximum score the student could earn would be 20 points. If the work is worth 10 points, the maximum possible for the student is 8 points. If the work is submitted between 24 hours and one minute up to 48 hours late, the work will be treated as two days late and assessed a two-day penalty, and the corresponding maximum points possible for the student would be 60 points (out of 100), 15 points (out of 25), and 6 points (out of 10), respectively, following the pattern above. The same progression of additional penalties per twenty-four hours will follow this same pattern for each additional 24-hour time increment late. Note that at five days late, following this pattern, no credit will be given and late work after five days late will not be accepted. Note that late penalties are assessed in addition to any penalties that the work would otherwise normally incur, such as for incorrect or incomplete work.

Late discussion board posts will be accepted with a 50%-point total penalty up to 24 hours past the original due date and time. At one minute after this grace period has passed, late discussion board posts will not be accepted. No exceptions. The discussion board posts are very short and require very little time to complete (10 to 20 minutes should be sufficient), and so posting them on time should generally pose no problems given the very large time windows available to complete them.

**FULL CREDIT:** Late work and make-up work, including but not limited to any exams, papers, essays, quizzes, discussion posts, or other assignments or graded work will be accepted for grading for consideration for *possible* full credit if and only in cases of late class admission or if there are university approved, documented, and verifiable extenuating circumstances. Late work and make-up work with extenuating circumstances will be accepted and graded for full credit as if the work were submitted on time. Work will only be accepted, however, if it has been **discussed with me ahead of time, in a timely fashion**, as described in this syllabus, and a timetable for completion and submission has been negotiated and **explicitly approved ahead of**

**time.** Work not falling under these guidelines will not be accepted.

For students who join the class late or who face university approved extenuating circumstances that cannot be foreseen ahead of time and which require or unavoidably lead to the student's absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact me to request and make special arrangements for any needed late work submissions or makeups **within four calendar days** after the student joins the class or when the returns. No exceptions.

**Any and all late work, makeups, or extensions, whether for partial credit or full credit, must be completed and submitted no more than seven (7) calendar days** from the date the work/exam/etc. was originally administered or due or from the date when a student returns from a university approved extenuating circumstance. Specifics on this must be worked out with me and approved. Students failing to meet this requirement will receive a score of zero. No exceptions.

If you have special needs or extenuating circumstances, whether short-term, medium-term, or long-term, you should notify me immediately so that I can work with you and determine any extensions, adjustments, etc., that may be needed to best help you. Note that, in order to be fair to the rest of the class, I reserve the right to adjust assignments, exams, quizzes, and other graded work if I believe it necessary to compensate for additional time studying and preparing that is not otherwise available to students who submitted their work on time. All special needs and extenuating circumstances are judged on a case-by-case basis.

University approved "extenuating circumstances" include things such as documented medical or mental health reasons, death of an immediate family member, major family difficulties, being the victim of a crime, life-changing events, and/or circumstances outside of your control.

\*\*\*\*\*Please understand that I am required to adhere to this course syllabus and to apply course policies evenly for all students to maintain fairness. Please also understand that, like other professors, I sometimes get students who lie, cheat, request favoritism, etc., in order to take advantage to benefit themselves. Consequently, all special needs and extenuating circumstances must be accompanied with valid documentation. Documentation need not divulge specific diagnoses or other sensitive information, but it should be in writing. It is the student's responsibility to secure documentation of special needs and extenuating circumstances in a timely manner. I may ask for documentation regarding family or other personal crises or extenuating circumstances; this is to ensure that I treat everyone in class fairly and equally. In order to maintain fairness and guard against abuse, **special needs and extenuating circumstances cannot be considered or approved without valid documentation.** Please understand that my ability to help you is limited by what you do or give me to help you and by the overarching need to maintain fairness for everyone. If you would like help, I am here and happy to help, and I ask that you please do everything you can to help me help you.\*\*\*\*\*

Generally speaking, it is always best to notify me and work with me from the moment a problem arises--and ideally before something has the chance to become a problem--so that I can work with you and help you. I am happy to help you however I can.

*No Extra Credit, No Curves*

I find that my students generally do very well in my courses and that extra credit or curving grades is not necessary. I make it a point to closely monitor class performance, so there is no need to ask about curves as I will make curves if necessary. I will not consider curving any graded work for the class unless the class average (excluding those who submit no work) is below 70%. I also do not give extra credit or extra work, so please don't ask because this would not be fair to the rest of the class.

### ***Grade Errors, Grade Disputes, and Your Duty to Monitor Grades***

It is your responsibility to closely monitor your grades and it is your responsibility to immediately notify me of any questions, concerns, or problems you have with your grades or if you believe your work has been missed, mis-entered, or graded incorrectly. Students may challenge a grade or request a re-grade only with a documented, compelling, and valid reason and must make their request within seven calendar days of grades being posted for the class for the assignment/exam/work/etc. in question (or otherwise due, in cases for students with approved special or extenuating circumstances). This seven-day limited period also applies to any grades believed to be in error, missing, etc. Grade errors and disputes must be brought to my immediate attention and must be completely resolved within seven calendar days, not weeks or months later. Grade challenges or requests for re-grades beyond this seven-day period will not be considered. No exceptions.

You should think very carefully before requesting a re-grade and be very sure that you completely accept and agree to be bound to the terms of the re-grade as it forms a contractual agreement to the terms, process, and outcome involved. Challenging a grade or requesting a re-grade also requires much more than a "feeling," hope, or expectation that you "should" have done better (or wanted to have done better). It also requires more than coming to me near or at the end of the semester in a last-minute hail Mary attempt to boost your grade. This applies to all students, including those with special and extenuating circumstances and disabilities.

A grade challenge or request for a re-grade is not guaranteed and will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances with a valid and compelling reason, not based on a student's hopes or expectations of doing better, student performance in other classes, or a student's selective interpretation of grades to arrive at what they desire. Additionally, I will not take direct or implied direction from students as to how to grade or interpret their work, nor will I go looking through your work attempting to find any way possible to boost your grade because this is not fair to the class. In conducting a re-evaluation of your work, I will re-read your work one time only as it was originally submitted without any changes and without reference to any original grade comments in order to give your work a fresh look.

In this process, I am not able to consider any additional information, details, or explanations you may provide. To ensure fairness, I have to go by the work you originally submitted as it appears on the page as this is how I grade everyone's work. Considering any additional details, information, explanations, etc., that you might provide would constitute additional content and information not available to the rest of the class when they submitted their work; therefore I cannot consider such additional information as it would not be fair to the class. I also will grade by any provided instructions or details provided in the original assignment/exam prompt as well as details/policy/etc. noted in the syllabus, and as may be elaborated upon in communications, announcements, etc. with students, in a manner consistent with how I grade everyone's work.

I find that re-grades rarely result in a higher score and almost always result in the original grade remaining the same or dropping in the event that new things are found that should have resulted in a lower score the first time around. If I find something was missed that should have resulted in a lower grade the first time around, the lower grade will be issued and no further challenges or re-grades will be considered. Requests to revert to the original grade, an average between the original grade and re-grade, pleas to look at work again or to reconsider grades after conducting a re-grade, additional re-grades, etc., cannot be accepted because that would mean overlooking the true quality of the work and breaking the agreement outlined before conducting a re-grade.

For these reasons, I do not recommend re-grades and I strongly urge caution before requesting a re-grade. After seven calendar days have passed since grades have been posted, or after the assignment was due for the student (in cases of approved special or extenuating circumstances, see above), any grade challenges and requests for a re-grade or claims that work was in error or somehow went “missing” will not be considered. Your grade challenge or request for a re-grade indicates an explicit understanding of and agreement to these terms and that these terms will not be changed under any circumstances. NO EXCEPTIONS.

### ***Computer and Internet Access is Required***

Because course communications, materials, activities, and assignments are often posted, administered, and delivered online, it is expected and required that you maintain a good working computer and uninterrupted internet service and a good working internet connection throughout the duration of the course. This means, for example, that you maintain subscription or enrollment with an internet service provider and take action to ensure your bills are kept up to date or, if you rely on someone else for internet, to make sure they keep bills up to date and help them if needed.

If you foresee or encounter any problems with your internet service or computer or other hardware or software issues, such as but not limited to difficulty of access due to financial concerns, internet or hardware or computer issues, etc., it is your responsibility to remedy the problem or find workable alternatives in a timely fashion to ensure as best as possible your uninterrupted internet service and to ensure your ability to complete assignments, quizzes, exams, etc., as scheduled. There are many options if you only look. You may, for example, visit a library, visit a friend, relative, coffee house, or other location with internet access, use your cell phone internet service, seek technical support, borrow a laptop or computer or cell phone with internet access, sit in your car or otherwise outside the house of someone who has wifi that you are allowed to use if the pandemic is an issue, etc.

### ***Work Submission Policy***

Your time, work, and grades are important and worth protecting. For this reason, the work submission policy below has been designed to help protect your work and your grade, to help maintain fairness for the class, and to help guard against false claims and abuse surrounding work submissions.

When you submit your work, you are required to double-check that you have submitted the correct work as assigned and obtain confirmation that your work has indeed been submitted and also to obtain proof of your confirmed submission.

To familiarize yourself with this process and to better protect your work, it is your responsibility to practice completing these steps before any work is due. The steps involved are outlined below:

1. Before you submit your work, please **clear your browser internet cache**. You can find sample instructions on how to clear your cache online at the following links\*:

<https://www.fvsu.edu/how-to-clear-your-browser-cache/>

<https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/32050?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop>

2. After you have submitted your work, please remain on the page for a minute and **refresh your browser several times** to guarantee that the submission was successful. If you leave the submission page before receiving submission confirmation, the work you submit may not be submitted. Therefore, you need to see obtain this submission confirmation. On Canvas, you should see a confetti effect and you should also see something on the upper right of the page that says the work has been “submitted.” This confetti effect is set as the default in student settings controlled by students on their end on Canvas.
3. When you see this confetti effect and the work showing it was “submitted” on the upper right of the page, **please take a screenshot of your confirmed submission page** showing this confirmation showing the word “submitted.” You don’t have to worry about capturing the confetti effect in your screenshot. Your screenshot should show the entire screen of your computer, which will include the date and time of the screenshot in the lower right corner. Please save this screenshot either in a MS Word document or as a .jpeg file. The image with date and time must be clearly visible. Here are instructions on how to take a screenshot\*\*:

<https://www.pcmag.com/news/how-to-take-a-screenshot-on-any-device>

<https://www.wired.com/story/how-to-take-a-screenshot-on-any-device/>

4. These steps do NOT apply to discussion board posts, which are currently exempt from this policy and around which there have been no problems. The policy remains in effect for ALL other graded work.

\*Note: If you have difficulty using any of the instructions above, there are many additional resources you can find through a search on Google and YouTube. You can also get help from a friend, relative, a colleague from class, and our IT support. You should practice and familiarize yourself with taking screenshots and working through submissions before any work is due.

\*\*Please be sure to allow yourself sufficient extra time before the due date and time to complete this submission confirmation process. These confirmation screenshots are needed and required for me to help you in the event of any unforeseeable submission issues. Please keep a copy of all of your confirmation page screenshots for all of your submitted work until after the semester is

over and after final grades have been submitted. These confirmations do not need to be submitted to me. Just keep these as proof for yourself.

Note: for work that has already been submitted, please go through the steps above to obtain proof of submission confirmation for your work and keep a copy of these submission confirmations as described above. Canvas should say your work was “submitted” on the top right corner of each assignment itself for all work submitted regardless of how long ago the work was submitted.

\*\*\*It is your responsibility to submit the correct work on time following the guidelines above. Failure to do so will result in a score of zero. This policy is designed to protect your work and to help guard against cheating and abuse. It is therefore imperative that you follow these guidelines and ensure that you submit the correct work on time. If you have any questions or need help, please contact me as soon as possible.

### ***Technology Issues***

Please note that I am not able to provide any technical support. If you encounter any technology issues, such as with email, using Canvas, etc., it is your responsibility to report these issues to me and to our university technology services and work to resolve these issues immediately. You can find tech support here: <https://www.technology.pitt.edu/247-it-help-desk>

## **WHERE TO FIND AND SUBMIT EVERYTHING**

Delivery of course content, assignments, exams, announcements, etc., will be administered and delivered using a combination of Canvas as well as Google Docs.

- **Class announcements** will be posted on Canvas. You can find these by clicking the “Announcements” tab on the left side of the screen after log-in.
- **Readings** from the Ferguson textbook are found in our assigned textbook and additional readings not in the Ferguson textbook can be found on Canvas. You can find any readings not in the Ferguson textbook by logging into Canvas, clicking the “Files” tab on the left side of the screen after log-in, then clicking to open the “Readings” folder.
- **Lecture notes** can be found by logging into Canvas, clicking the “Files” tab on the left side of the screen after log-in, and then by clicking the “Class Notes” folder.
- **Submission forms for exams and short reflective essays** are on Canvas. You must write your responses separately using MS Word and submit your work online using Canvas. You can find these under by clicking the “Assignments” tab at the left of the screen on Canvas.
- **Discussion posts** will be posted on Canvas. Prompts for the discussion posts can be found by clicking the “Discussions” tab on Canvas, on the left side of the screen after log-in. You should submit your discussion post underneath each respective discussion

post prompt by scrolling down after reading the prompt and clicking “reply” and “post reply.” Your discussion posts should be posted here. (Do not try to post your discussion posts under the “assignments” tab on Canvas as that page on the system is used to record the grades of your assignments, not for submitting the posts themselves).

- **Assignment prompts** can be found by clicking the “Files” tab on Canvas, on the left side of the screen after log-in, and then clicking the folder “Assignments.”
- The **course syllabus** will be posted as a MS Word file on Canvas and can be found by clicking the “Files” tab on Canvas, on the left side of the screen after log-in.

### **CLASS CONTACTS (REQUIRED)**

The space below is provided for you to write down the contact information of two fellow classmates. If you are unsure whom to ask, simply check the class roster or discussion boards. These are people to whom you may turn for help, such as to ask questions about textbook materials, to obtain lecture notes or announcements, to form study groups, etc. The names you place below do not have to be friends or people you already know (though you may well find in them a new friend or study partner). Please obtain names and e-mail addresses for *at least two* fellow classmates by the end of the first week of class. There will be an ungraded discussion board on Canvas that you can use to get names and contacts from your colleagues.

Name

E-mail address

Classmate One: \_\_\_\_\_

Classmate Two: \_\_\_\_\_

\*note: This list of contacts is for your personal use and is not to be submitted.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **When Should I Start My Work?**

Students sometimes ask how soon they should start their readings, exams, projects, and other assignments, and my recommendation is always to start the moment your work is assigned or as soon as possible. You may not need all of the time available, but I encourage you to start all work as soon as possible because in my experience this approach best minimizes stress and gives you the best opportunity to take maximum advantage of the time available to you. You never know when unexpected circumstances might pop up, and it is extremely easy to underestimate



the amount of time that might be required for a given task, so it is always best to start as soon as possible.

## **Discussion Boards**

Participation in discussion boards will be a critical way of interacting and engaging with the material. All students will need to take an active role in this form of participation. There are required and graded discussion board activities corresponding to each week's classes and lecture material as shown in the schedule below.

Each week, I will post some material, such as a link or article, along with one or more questions or prompts drawing on the content I post. Every week, you will then be required to compose and post one original reply to either a) my original post OR b) an original reply to the post of one of your classmates.

Posts are worth 10 points and are graded pass (10 points) or fail (5 points) based on the criteria below. Those students who fail to post a discussion post on time or who fail to post a response post at all will receive zero points, as appropriate.

Your discussion posts should extend, critically evaluate, or question the content posted. Be sure that your posts are informed by the readings and lecture notes and that you support your arguments with examples. Your responses and posts should go beyond summary, giving opinion, or simply saying you agree or disagree or like something is not enough. Support and elaborate on your points or argument. Your posts should demonstrate critical thinking and be 100 to 200 words in length.

Material presented each week is to be covered on the discussion post due the Sunday that falls immediately after the lecture that week. Example: A discussion post due on 11/13 would cover material course content covered the week prior, covering 11/7 to 11/11.

Generally speaking, and considering the very short length, these discussion posts should take only about 10 to 20 minutes to complete. If you find yourself spending more time than this, you may want to make adjustments. Be aware, however, that your particular needs and circumstances may vary, so do not wait until the last minute to complete your work.

Please understand that I am only one person working without teaching assistants. I have to get through many hundreds of these discussion posts for this class, in addition to the many hundreds of posts and other written assignments in this class and my other classes. This is literal, not figurative. For this reason, I am not able to post comments on discussion posts.

\*Special Note: Due to the vagaries of the Canvas system, discussion board post deadlines may not automatically appear in any calendar or online to-do list you may have access to on Canvas or beyond. For this reason, please be sure to monitor the schedule at the end of the syllabus very carefully and create personal alerts for these.

## **Short Reflective Essays**

Each student will write one short reflective essay. These will challenge you to apply course materials to explain or make sense of a real-world problem that connects your personal experiences to the sociology of Native Americans. Further details will be posted separately. These short reflective essays are designed to take no more than two or three hours to complete. Be aware, however, that your particular needs and circumstances may vary, so do not wait until

the last minute to complete your work. Specific dates and points possible for each exam are provided for the exams in the schedule below.

## Exams

**EXAM ONE:** The first exam will be a multiple choice/matching/fill-in the blank type exam. Methods for studying for this type of exam vary by individual needs, but generally include review of major terms and theories and authors. Some also find flashcards or working with a colleague or forming a study group to be useful. Note that my multiple choice exams do not cover dates, statistics, or figures but instead focus more on terms, theories, and authors, including how terms, theories, etc., may be applied to different situations. Details about the exam will be posted on the exam when the exam opens. This exam is designed to take only about 40 to 50 minutes to complete, but students will be given two hours as well as two attempts to complete the exam. If a student takes the exam twice, the best of the two scores will be the final score. Active class attendance, participation, reading, and studying are vital to performing well on this exam. This exam covers all material covered up until the time the exam opens. We will discuss the exam when the time gets close.

**EXAM TWO:** The second exam consists of a short written response examining and applying course content to a real-world event, pattern, circumstance, etc. This exam is designed to take two or three hours to complete. Be aware, however, that your particular needs and circumstances may vary, so do not wait until the last minute to complete your work. Details about the exam will be posted on the exam when it is opened. Methods for preparing for this type of exam vary by individual needs and may not be the same as those used for other types of exams. This exam will require understanding of selected terms and theories and authors and course content. Active class attendance, participation, reading, and studying terms, theories, and authors discussed are vital to performing well on this exam. This exam covers all material covered up until the time the exam opens. We will discuss the exam when the time gets close.

**NO FINAL EXAM.** Please note that the university automatically assigns final exams to all classes to ensure that all faculty members using final exams have the time and space available for them. This class does not have a final exam. We have only the exams listed above. Therefore please ignore anything in the university system suggesting we have a final exam.

## Grading

\*\*\*\*\*As mentioned above, please try to understand that I am required to adhere to this course syllabus and to apply course policies and conduct grading and evaluation evenly for all students to maintain fairness. Please do not lie, cheat, ask for bending or breaking of rules, favoritism, unfair treatment, bumping up of grades, extra work, etc., as it would be unfair to the rest of the class.\*\*\*\*\*

Each graded item is worth a set number of points that count towards your final grade.

Item	Points Possible
Discussion Board Posts	100 points, ten points each
Reflective Essay	80 points
Exam 1	100 points

Exam 2	100 points
<i>Total</i>	380 points

Based on the above point system, your grade will be determined by the total points you earn as follows:

<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>	<i>Total Points</i>	<i>Letter Grade</i>
367-380	A	278-292	C
342-366	A-	266-277	C-
331-341	B+	255-265	D+
315-330	B	240-254	D
304-314	B-	228-239	D-
293-303	C+	0-227	F

Please be sure to note that grades in the course are not determined by percentages, as is the case in some courses, but rather by **total points**. This is to add clarity and remove the need for rounding. If you want to know your grade, add up your total points. Please also be aware that we use total points with the grade levels assigned above and not any grades or percentages shown on Canvas or any other university record system.

Please understand that grades are arrived at dispassionately and are determined by the quality of the work submitted. To be fair to everyone, I cannot consider the amount of time invested, performance in other classes or on other assignments, or what a student wants or feels they deserve. I have to go strictly by the quality of the work on the page. I also grade work relative to others in class to help ensure fairness.

In arriving at a grade, please understand, too, that I have to go not just by what is explicitly noted in any provided instructions on various graded works, but also the overall quality of the work and any issues not foreseeable that may not be mentioned explicitly in the instructions that speak to the core requirements of an assignment. This is because details covered in instructions simply can't foresee every possible problem or be comprehensive of every possible outcome and an atomistic approach would overlook the overall quality of the work that is more than just the sum of its parts. This policy is designed to foster a holistic approach that ensures fairness, transparency, and equal treatment for everyone.

**\*\*Special note on grading:** I will do my absolute best to grade your work as quickly as possible, but please understand that I am only one person. Please understand that I, too, have to deal with uncertainties, difficulties, and chaos due to the pandemic. Please also understand that I do not have teaching assistants to help me get through the many hundreds of discussion posts, assignments, exams, and essays I must grade this semester in addition to my other research, teaching, and administrative duties. Such a large workload requires me to balance multiple competing priorities and therefore I am not able to provide comments on discussion board posts and I must be very concise in commentaries on other written work or no one will get their grades and comments in time for them to be useful. I appreciate your patience and understanding.

## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS AND READINGS

Your learning is my principal concern, so I may modify the schedule or content if it will facilitate your learning. We may also discover that we want to spend more time on certain topics and less time on others. I'll consider changing our schedule if it will help most students in the class. Changes will be announced. Please be sure to carefully monitor the schedule of assignments, exams, etc. posted here. "NAV" = "Native American Voices."

Readings should be completed BEFORE the week they will be discussed in class lecture.

### **Week 1 (Aug. 29 – Sept. 2)**

Course introduction, review of syllabus

Read the syllabus, Julian Go's "For a post-colonial Sociology" and John Trudell's speeches "Black Hills Survival Gathering" and "American Indian Community House"

- No discussion posts this week

### **Week 2 (Sept. 5 – Sept. 9)**

Read Vine Deloria "Custer Died for Your Sins" Preface – p.53

- Discussion post 1 due 9/11 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

### **Week 3 (Sept. 12 – Sept. 16)**

Read NAV p. 2-50, "Part I: Peoples and Nations: Following in the Footsteps of the Ancestors"

- Discussion post 2 due 9/18 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

### **Week 4 (Sept. 19 – Sept. 23)**

Read NAV p. 51-93, "Part II: The Hidden Heritage"

- Exam 1 due 9/25 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight). Exam opens 9/18 at 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts this week

### **Week 5 (Sept. 26 – Sept. 30)**

Read NAV p. 94-150, "Part III: The American Indian Story (History)"

- Discussion post 3 due 10/2 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

### **Week 6 (Oct. 3 – Oct. 7)**

Read NAV p. 151-198, "Part IV: 'The Only Good Indian...': Racism, Stereotypes, and Discrimination"

- Discussion post 4 due 10/9 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

### **Week 7 (Oct. 10 – Oct. 14)**

Read NAV p. 199-236, "Part V: Native Representations: Media and the Arts"

- Discussion post 5 due 10/16 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

### **Week 8 (Oct. 17 – Oct. 21)**

Read NAV p. 237-299, “Part VI: Community Wellness: Family, Health, and Education”

- Reflective essay due by Oct. 23, by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts this week.

**Week 9 (Oct. 28 – Oct. 28)**

Read NAV p. 302-342, “Part VII: The Sacred: Spirituality and Sacred Geography”

- Discussion post 6 due 10/30 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

**Week 10 (Oct. 31 – Nov. 4)**

Read NAV p. 343-397, “Part VIII: Native Sovereignty: Self-Governance, Culture, and Sustainable Development”

- Discussion post 7 due 11/6 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

**Week 11 (Nov. 7 – Nov. 11)**

Read NAV p. 398-454, “Part IX: Urbanism: Ancient and Contemporary”

- Discussion post 8 due 11/13 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

**Week 12 (Nov. 14 – Nov. 18)**

- Film TBA
- Exam 2 due 4/10 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight). Exam opens 4/3 at 11:59 p.m. (midnight)
- No discussion posts

**Week 13 (Nov. 21 – Nov. 25)**

NO CLASS THIS WEEK

**Week 14 (Nov. 28 – Dec. 2)**

Read NAV p. 455-495, “Part X: Indigenous Rights: Struggle and Revitalization”

- Discussion post 9 due 12/4 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

**Week 15 (Dec. 5 – Dec. 9)**

Read “Indian Humor” pp. 146-167 in Vine Deloria, “Custer Died for Your Sins,” “Enduring Laughter” by Marianne Kongslev, and “Laughing it up: Native American Humor as Spiritual Tradition” by Garrett et al.

- Discussion post 10 due 12/11 by 11:59 p.m. (midnight)

**\*\*Reminder: There is no final exam for this course.**

**\*\*Note: Final grades are due at midnight, December 20<sup>th</sup>, and will be posted by this date and time.**