Topics in Native American Literature: History and Life Stories

Course Description

Catalog: (3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Completion of the Core Curriculum requirement in literature. Critical study of a topic in Native American/Indigenous literatures focusing on an author, a genre, a theme, or on traditional and oral literature. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

This course will emphasize Native American voices as we read theoretical discourses surrounding American Indian literary practices. The works will provide historical and practical lenses through which you can examine your world and your interactions with both the real/lived and imagined/stereotyped perceptions of and about American Indians. We will consider the complexities of indigenous identity through a native-centered perspective and consider the importance of self-representation as we examine historical and contemporary representations of Indianness. In addition, this interdisciplinary class (WMST/AMST/ENG) will ask you to complicate and challenge generic and confining disciplinary boundaries by reading these works within their appropriate historical and cultural contexts. We will also read several autobiographies, ethnographies and life stories and consider a wide range of issues raised by these works. What does it mean to tell a life story? Whose stories and histories are valued and legitimized and whose are forgotten. It is my hope that as a collective group we can grapple and work through the material to develop an intellectual community that is able to skillfully and respectfully debate pressing issues. This class will require that you regularly participate in class discussions. And although some discussions might evoke strong emotions and debate about particular subjects, we must remember to respect everyone’s opinions and comments throughout the course. This course does not assume that you will have background in Native American Studies.

Course Objectives

- Provide students the opportunity to effectively write a thesis driven college level essay including form and content as well as successful integration and documentation of secondary sources
- Provide students the opportunity to develop significant interpretations of a wide variety of Native American works
- Provide students the opportunity to effectively gather information and critically analyze social, political, economic and historical aspects of Native American literature and culture
- Provide students the opportunity to review Eurocentric social and cultural constructions of Indianness
- Provide students the opportunity to critically examine historical and contemporary representations of American Indians
Required Texts

Note: The detailed course schedule below lists approximately 30 different books and journals from which we will be reading. You are not required to purchase all of these books, because I will provide most articles and excerpts as PDF documents on Blackboard. Rather than confine our readings to one or two “textbooks” this course will provide the opportunity for you to read material from a wide range of scholars and experts from the field of Native American Studies.

- Florence Connolly Shipek, ed. – Delfina Cuero Her Autobiography An Account of Her Last Years and Her Ethnobotanic Contributions
- Zitkala-Sa -- American Indian Stories
- Raven Eye by Margo Támez
- Linda Hogan -- The Woman Who Watches Over the World
- Sherman Alexie – The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven
- E-Reserves: required readings/articles can be found on Blackboard. I suggest that you maintain a separate binder for this course that includes copies of the readings uploaded to Blackboard.

Recommended Texts

- Devon A. Mihesuah – American Indians: Stereotypes and Realities, Indigenous American Women
- Leslie Marmon Silko – Yellow Woman and a Beauty of the Spirit

Course Requirements and Grading Criteria

No late assignments accepted! You will be given a zero for all late assignments.

Attendance: You are required to attend class regularly and will be graded accordingly. More than three unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered by 15 points, for each absence thereafter. You are responsible for knowing what was discussed in class. It is your responsibility to ensure that I receive advance notification of excused absences. Please see “UTSA Handbook of Operating Procedures” for a more detailed outline of approved excused absences and the process for proper notification to the instructor. http://www.utsa.edu/hop/chapter5/5-9.cfm

Reading Responses: (2p) These responses will provide a space where you can critically analyze the readings. The purpose of the responses is to generate group discussion and enable you to begin formulating your thoughts for a longer essay. If you paraphrase and/or quote from the readings, make sure to cite page numbers! Some examples of what you might write for a reading response are: 1) close reading of a passage(s) that discusses the major themes, characters, setting, etc. 2) respond to one or two of the main themes/ideas of the documentary, film, novel, essay, poem, or short story 3) discuss the narrative style and techniques of the writer 3) respond to the article/creative work by relating it to your own lived experience and/or knowledge of the subject matter 4) respond by asking questions and critically engage in dialogue with the main ideas of the texts/films 5) compare creative works/essays/documentaries to other readings and or secondary sources. [Note: Remember NOT to simply summarize the readings, but rather engage in critical analysis and commentary!] My criteria for grading reading responses will be based partly but not exclusively on the following:
• Your ability to critically analyze and interpret the readings
• Your ability to properly explicate and evaluate socio-historical essays and creative works
• Your ability to NOT simply summarize the articles/readings, but rather, discuss your own ideas and interpretations of a particular text
• Your ability to write well-thought responses and/or questions that are coherent and illustrate proper use of grammar, mechanics, and style (e.g. basic elements of language use; clear, effective, correct sentence structures, word choice, tone, voice)

In-Class & Blackboard Discussions: Active participation/discussion in class and online is required. For each class you should be prepared to discuss the material and address the comments/questions of your peers. You should also come to class with at least two prepared questions to address to the class. The issues raised in this class are by no means resolved. It is thus expected that as a class we will often disagree and rarely come to a consensus about the material. This should be seen as positive rather than negative. Your participation is key to creating a more dynamic class, one that allows us to learn from each other. I expect everyone to be respectful of their fellow peers and come to class with open minds that will allow for constructive debate and discussions about the material presented in class, especially during student presentations. I encourage you to continue your in-class discussions online through Blackboard. In order for me to maintain a record of your participation, I will regularly grade both your in-class and online discussions.

Blackboard Discussion: We will be using Blackboard frequently throughout this course, so please become familiar with the basic tools (i.e. Discussion Board, Assignments, Announcements, Mail, Course Content, Calendar, Weblinks, etc.). The following link has tutorials on various aspects of BB. https://elearning.utsa.edu/Tutorials/BB/Index.aspx. You will be required to submit at least two questions per week covering the readings and you will need to respond/answer at least two of your peers’ questions and respond to at least one student’s response. This will take the form of “dialogue”; similar to an in-class discussion. Thus, you are encouraged to respond back and forth with a peer who has answered one of your questions (and/or has commented on your in-class presentation, etc.). I expect that ALL of these answers and responses to peers be substantial.

My criteria for grading discussions will be based partly, but not exclusively on the following:

• Your ability to critically analyze another student’s comments and give critical feedback
• Your ability to engage in meaningful and substantial dialogue with your peers that focuses on the readings
• Your ability to bring in examples of lived experience that are relevant to the main topic of discussion
• Your ability to ask questions that engage your peers to think critically about a particular work

Please see the following websites for universal practices of online “netiquette”:
http://www.csustain.edu/Blackboard/Netiquette.html
http://www.netmanners.com/

Final Essay: (3-5p) All essays are to be turned in electronically via Blackboard as well as in person. Your essays will require that you formulate your own original, creative thesis on a
reading from class. Any essay written on a non-related topic/text will require my approval. All papers should be double-spaced and typed in 12-point font with a one-inch margin on all sides. (MLA Style) My criteria for grading ALL essays will be based partly but not exclusively on the following:

- Your ability to produce a coherent, well thought-out essay that includes secondary sources
- Your ability to produce an original, creative thesis
- Your ability to critically analyze and interpret the assigned articles, creative works and documentaries
- Your ability to do extensive research on a particular writer, novel, and literary tradition by utilizing the library databases; note: all secondary sources must be from peer-reviewed journals and/or books
- Your ability to submit an MLA style paper with proper documentation

Reference websites for proper MLA style (also refer to latest edition of the MLA Handbook): http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/

- Coherence: thesis clarity and creativeness; paragraph topic-sentence clarity and cohesion with thesis; ideas are clearly stated; supporting evidence is appropriate to chosen topic; addresses the target audience
- Structure: the order around which the paper is organized; degree to which introduction and body develop towards conclusion; overall soundness of structure
- Thematics: creative use of topic (as opposed to simple summary); relevance of paper to the given assignment suggestions; level of engagement of the author(s)
- Grammar and Mechanics: basic elements of language use; clear, effective, correct sentence structures
- Stylistics: word choice, tone, voice

Presentations: Everyone will be responsible to present one of the weekly assigned readings in order to facilitate class discussion. Although it is not required you can utilize any of the following multi-media formats to aid in your presentations: film/documentary clips, visual slides, PowerPoints, material objects, music, visual art, youtube clips, and current news events that relate to the course readings. As a presenter you may synthesize the main points of the day’s reading and evaluate the author’s main arguments or narrative style, theme, etc. You may also provide historical background, biographical information of the author, or review current literary/historical criticism of the works. Please see me in office hours at least one week before your presentation. Remember that your presentation must include questions that you present to the class.

Reflection Essay: (1-3p) This essay should be a well thought out reflection of the course and its major objectives.

Point Distribution
Blackboard Discussion ............20pts x 8=160
In Class Discussion/Participation ..........10pts x 7=70
Reading Responses .................. 40pts x 3 = 120
Presentation .................................. = 30
Final Essay .................................=100
Reflection Essay ..............................=20
Total Points .................................. 500

Final Grading Scale
A 450 points and above
B 400-449
C 350-399
D 300-349
F 299 and below

**Students with Disabilities**

The University of Texas at San Antonio is committed to providing students, faculty, staff, and visitors access to all university programs, activities, and facilities in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. The university prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in all programs, services and activities. Disability Services (DS) coordinates support services, accommodations, and equipment for students with disabilities. DS certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for the implementation of accommodations. The DS director also assists students in the informal resolution of complaints. Information regarding support services, accommodations and equipment for students may be found at the website:
http://www.utsa.edu/disability/students.htm
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator assists faculty, staff, and visitors in the certification process and in the informal and formal resolution of complaints related to accommodation requests. The Human Resources Department serves as liaison for faculty and staff with disabilities in ensuring reasonable accommodation by the university. The procedure to request an accommodation under this policy can be found at: http://www.utsa.edu/hr/EmployeeRelations/ada.cfm

**Scholastic Dishonesty (Plagiarism)**

You will automatically receive a “0” for any assignment that has been plagiarized. The Office of Student Judicial Affairs or faculty may initiate disciplinary proceedings against any student accused of scholastic dishonesty. “Scholastic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty. For a more detailed overview please see the student code of conduct bulletin: http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html

Refer to following websites for avoiding plagiarism and read “plagiarism handouts thoroughly”:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/
http://cambridge.cic.tsinghua.edu.cn/reading/plagiarism.html
http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-AvoidDishonesty.html
http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/students/writing/plagiarism.pdf

**Student Code of Conduct**
Please Note: This course will foster an environment that instills dignity, respect, tolerance, appreciation of diversity and positive regard for all members of our college community. It will nurture an atmosphere free from racism, religious intolerance, sexism, ageism, homophobia, harassment, discrimination against those with disabling conditions, or discrimination based upon an individual’s political views or beliefs. Hate speech of any type in class or online (i.e. Blackboard, e-mail correspondence, etc.) will not be tolerated.

By enrolling at The University of Texas at San Antonio, a student neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. All students are expected to obey federal, state, and local laws, the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System, the rules and regulations of The University of Texas at San Antonio, and directives issued by an administrative official in the course of his or her duties. A student who enrolls at the University is charged with the obligation to conduct himself or herself in a manner compatible with the University’s function as an educational institution; consequently, conduct which interferes with the use or utilization of University facilities by other persons may be punished regardless of whether such conduct is specifically proscribed by the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct.

According to the UTSA “Information Bulletin” section regarding student code of conduct, Sec. 202. Specific Conduct Proscribed, disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student for acts or violations including, but not limited to the following: advocacy, either oral or written, that is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action; engaging in conduct, either alone or in concert with other people, that is intended to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with, or that in fact obstructs, disrupts, or interferes with any scheduled class, etc. For more details of this university policy please see:
http://www.utsa.edu/infoguide/appendices/b.html

Violations of these guidelines will result in a significant lowering of the student’s class participation grade at the instructor’s discretion, and may lead to other sanctions, including administrative removal from the class if necessary.

**Detailed Course Schedule**

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Weekly Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 11th</td>
<td>• Introductions&lt;br&gt;• Review Syllabus&lt;br&gt;• Sign Up for Presentations&lt;br&gt;• Submit an essay from a previous English course to Sample Essay (Blackboard)</td>
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<td>Jan 13th</td>
<td>• Continue Introductions&lt;br&gt;• Video: “Native Voices” from American Passages Series</td>
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<td>Jan 18th</td>
<td>• “Columbus, The Indians and Human Progress 1492-1992” by Howard Zinn (p.1-22)</td>
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<td>Jan 20th</td>
<td>• “The Man Made of Words” (p. 36-46) by N. Scott Momaday&lt;br&gt;• Video: N. Scott Momaday (screen on Blackboard)</td>
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<td>Jan 25th</td>
<td>• “Interior and Exterior Landscapes: The Pueblo Migration Stories” (p.25-47) “Language and Literature from a Pueblo Indian Perspective” (p.48-59) by Leslie Marmon Silko and&lt;br&gt;• Reading Response #1 Due</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Reading Assignments</td>
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<td>Jan 27th</td>
<td>- from <em>American Indian Women Telling Their Lives</em> by Gretchen Bataille and Kathleen Sands - Chp. 1 “Literary Tradition” (p.2-26)  *Recommended *from <em>Native American Autobiography</em> ed. Arnold Krupat “Introduction” (p. 3-17)</td>
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<td>Feb 3rd</td>
<td>- <em>Delfina Cuero Her Autobiography</em> (p. 41-80) *Recommended *from <em>Strangers in a Stolen Land</em> by Richard Carrico, Chp. VII (p.60-74) *Reading Response #2 Due</td>
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<td>Feb 8th</td>
<td>- from <em>Kill the Indian Save the Man</em> by Ward Churchill “Genocide by Any Other Name,” (p.1-33)</td>
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<td>Feb 10th</td>
<td>- Video: “In the White Man’s Image”</td>
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<td>Feb 15th</td>
<td>- <em>American Indian Stories</em> by Zitkala-Sa (All Sections: “Impressions of an Indian Childhood”) *Recommended *“Zitkala-Sa’s Autobiographical Writings: The Problems of a Canonical Search for Language and Identity” by Martha Cutter (p. 31-44)</td>
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<td>Feb 22nd</td>
<td>- <em>American Indian Stories</em> by Zitkala-Sa (All Sections: “An Indian Teacher Among Indians”)</td>
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<td>Feb 24th</td>
<td>- <em>No-Face-to-Face Class (Midterm Conferences)</em></td>
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<td>Mar 1st</td>
<td>- <em>No-Face-to-Face Class</em> *Extra Credit: *Attend Walter Mignolo Lecture: Crossing Gazes and the Silence of the Indians: Theodor De Bry and Guaman Poma de Ayala ; Art Gallery (Art Building) 7-9 pm *AAHHE Conference</td>
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<td>Mar 2nd</td>
<td>- *Extra Credit: *Attend Walter Mignolo Lecture: Decolonial Aesthetics: On Geopolitics of Knowing and Sensing; University Room, BB 2.06.04, 2-4 pm</td>
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<td>Mar 3rd</td>
<td>- <em>No-Face-to-Face Class</em> *AAHHE Conference</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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| Mar 8th  | • *Raven Eye* by Margo Támez  
Recommended  
• “Restoring Lipan Apache Women’s Laws, Lands, and Strength in El Calaboz Ranchería at the Texas-Mexico Border” by Margo Támez  
/interview-conspiring-with-poet-margo-tamez/ |
| Mar 10th | • *Raven Eye* by Margo Támez  
Selected essays and interviews  
• Militarization and Indigenous Women  
• Censored News – Earth Cycles  
http://www.earthcycles.net/journal/index.php?43  
• No One Is Illegal Radio  
http://emma2.radio4all.net/pub/files/jaggisingh@gmail.com/2840-1-20080208-MargoTamez-FINAL.mp3  
• Conspiring With Margo Támez  
http://blogcritics.org/books/article  
• Reading Response #3 Due |
| Mar 15th-Mar 17th | Spring Break |
| Mar 22nd | Women’s History Month  
**Guest Speaker:** Dr. Margo Támez, Lipan Apache/Jumano Apache  
Assistant Professor, Gender-Women’s Studies and Indigenous Studies, Community, Culture and Global Studies  
Irving K. Barber School of Arts and Sciences  
University of British Columbia Okanagan  
Location/Time: TBA |
| Mar 24th | Attend COLFA Research Conference:10a-4p  
http://colfa.utsa.edu/English/2011_COLFA_Conference_Flyer.pdf  
• Begin Reading: *The Woman Who Watches Over the World* by Linda Hogan |
| Mar 29th | • *The Woman Who Watches Over the World* by Linda Hogan (p. )  
• Video: “Sand Creek Massacre” |
| Mar 31st | • *The Woman Who Watches Over the World* by Linda Hogan (p. )  
• “Genesis of Removal” by Wilma Mankiller (p.45-58) |
<p>| Apr 5th  | • <em>The Woman Who Watches Over the World</em> by Linda Hogan (p. ) |
| Apr 7th  | • <em>The Woman Who Watches Over the World</em> by Linda Hogan (p. ) |</p>
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| Apr 12th| • Librarian guest speaker Tara Schmidt  
• Brainstorming for Final Essays  
(come prepared with your written ideas/preliminary thoughts for final essay)  
• **Individual conferences to discuss final essays** |
| Apr 14th| • **Essay Draft Due** (bring two typed copies for peer review)  
• **Individual conferences to discuss final essays** |
| Apr 19th| **No-Face-to-Face Class**  
• Library Research Day! Continue Working/Revising Essays. |
| Apr 21st| • **Final Essay Due** (also submit electronically under Assignments Link)  
• **Reflections on course** |
| Apr 26th| • **Reflection Essay Due:** (submit electronically under Assignments Link) |
| Apr 28th| • **Study Day** |
| May 4th | • Final Exam (10:30-1p) |