

History 354: Native American History since 1865
Fall 2023
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Course Description:

“Contact was not a battle of primal forces in which only one could survive. Something new could appear.”

-Richard White, *The Middle Ground* (1991)

In the 2010 U.S. census, only 0.3% of the population of Kentucky identified as American Indian. Many residents of the commonwealth have never interacted with Indian people. And yet, huge swaths of the United States are sovereign Indian lands. Twelve of the nation’s 310 reservations are larger than Rhode Island. The Navajo Nation alone is larger than ten states, including West Virginia. And the single highest concentration of Native Americans is in New York City, with 111,000 American Indian residents. Far from being the “vanishing race” portrayed in Hollywood, the thousands of enrolled tribal members in the US include doctors, politicians, entrepreneurs, and participants in every other aspect of American society.

This course introduces students to Native American History since 1865. What are the most pressing issues in Indian country today? How can history make sense of those issues? What is the status of Indian nations in relation to state and federal governments? Contrary to stereotypes of indigenous cultures as bastions of traditionalism, a new wave of scholarship has brought to light stories of hybridity, complexity, and change that cast Native American people as important players in shaping the modern world.

Required Texts:

- Philip Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), ISBN 9780700614592
- Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons* (1998), ISBN 9780803264052
- Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation* (2019), ISBN 9781469663167
- Philip Deloria, *Becoming Mary Sully* (2019), ISBN 9780295745046
- Film: *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002). Available at WKU Library or for rental on streaming services.
- Additional readings are available on Blackboard

Course Structure:

This course will be taught asynchronously, which means there is no specific time when everybody will be logged on simultaneously. You should think of this class as a college-level book club where we will analyze, critique, and discuss the readings.

Monday and Tuesday: These days are reserved strictly for reading. On Tuesday night, I will post a set of framing remarks to guide the discussion.

Wednesday: Each student will submit a 500-word post (which can be longer if you wish) to the Blackboard discussion board. This post is due by Wednesday at 11:59pm each week.

Thursday and Friday: Each student will post a minimum of 500 words spread across at least three replies (not including your Wednesday post) responding to the posts submitted by your fellow students. These responses are due by Friday at 11:59pm each week.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Examine multiple frameworks for understanding American Indian history, including law, policy, culture, colonization, religion, and the politics of resistance and accommodation.
2. Identify and utilize primary sources to develop credible interpretations of the past.
3. Investigate the diversity and modernity of indigenous Americans across a range of political, cultural, and social contexts.
4. Articulate how Native American nations participated in global networks of political, economic, and cultural exchange from 1865 to the present.

Technology Requirements:

Students are required to have access to a computer and reliable Internet connection to write and submit your assignments. Please visit the [Orientation for Online Learners](#) before the course begins.

AI Policy:

Artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGTP and Grammarly) are strictly prohibited. I recognize that AI technology holds great potential for making positive and useful contributions to the study of the past, but this class is designed to develop your own graduate-level skills as a historian, including the ability to independently assess the content generated by AI tools.

Late Submissions and Academic Dishonesty:

Timely participation on the discussion board is integral to this class. Late submissions will result in a penalty of 10 points per day. Acts of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty, including violation of the AI Policy, will result in a failing grade. Please consult the [WKU Student Handbook](#).

RSI Statement:

The U.S. Department of Education requires that distance education courses must include regular and substantive interaction between students and faculty. For more information about RSI at WKU, please visit the [Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online and Distance Learning](#) webpage. In this course, regular and substantive interaction will take place in the following ways:

- Assignments and assessment deadlines that are spread throughout the term of the class,
- Announcements that frame weekly discussions and/or follow up on past discussions,
- Timely assessment and explanation of grade for individual weekly discussion posts,
- Detailed and constructive feedback on essay assignments, which identifies specifically what has been done correctly, needs improvement, or guides students to the next steps of learning.

A Note on Language when discussing Native American History:

In general terms, you can't really go wrong with "Native American" or "American Indian." A specific name (Dakota, Diné, Tuscarora, etc.) is appropriate when you're discussing a specific tribe. The term "Indian country" refers to the many self-governing Native communities across the United States. It's helpful—and accurate—to refer to these communities or tribes as "nations" (i.e., the Makah nation). The term "Indian" is not considered derogatory, but it can be confused with people from the Asian nation of India, which is why the terms "Native American" or "American Indian" are generally preferred unless it is clear from context. The word "indigenous" is great for generalizing in a global sense to discuss groups beyond North America. Also, ending each of these terms with "people" is helpful for avoiding dehumanization.

Problems?

If you are struggling or not getting the grades that you want, please contact me. Don't wait until things seem dire. I am here to help you! Also, college can be stressful, but there are resources on campus to help. Your health is more important than this class. Please reach out to the WKU Counseling and Testing Center if you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or depressed: <https://www.wku.edu/heretohelp/>

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

There are a total of 100 points available based on the following breakdown. *The best way to succeed in this class is to do the readings every week.* Our goal is not to memorize facts and arrive at a “right” answer each week, but rather to engage deeply and critically with the readings.

1) Weekly discussion of reading—52 points (52% of grade).

Each week, you must write one 500-word-minimum original post (due by Wednesday at 11:59pm) and three shorter responses to your classmates (due by Friday at 11:59pm) to the Discussion section of Blackboard. Each thread is worth 4 points. Your grade is divided between your main post (2 points) and responses (2 points). Although you can write with a casual, conversational tone, you are expected to proofread all submissions. You will not receive full credit for posts that simply mirror my remarks rather than demonstrating your own thoughts on the readings.

2) “Beyond Plagiarism” certification—worth 4 points (4% of grade)

Please read the “Understanding Sources” and “Using Sources” modules of *Beyond Plagiarism: Best Practices for the Responsible Use of Sources*. Links to the modules can be found in the Content section (week 4) of Blackboard. Each module contains two quizzes. Upon completion of a quiz, you will receive a certificate that you can screenshot and save to your computer. Please upload the certificates to Blackboard. Each of the four quizzes is worth 1 point. **Due 9/15**

3) Carlisle Indian School Digital Archive Project—44 points (44% of grade)

Part 1—Map (10 points): The readings for week 6 include a complete list of all 1,218 students attending Carlisle Indian School during the 1910 United States census. Please create a map showing the tribal affiliation of every student. You do not need to list student names, but every affiliation listed on the census should be present on the map along with a tally of students from that group. Some of these locations will be approximate. **Due 10/13**

Part 2—Map Reflection (6 points): Write a short essay (minimum 500 words) that reflects on the map and what you learned. What were some of the main challenges with creating the map? Did you notice any anomalies or problems with the census? **Due 10/13**

Part 3—Carlisle Student Records (12 points): Select any three students from this list who have records available in the Carlisle Indian School digital archives. Drawing on these records, please write an essay of at least 800 words about their experiences at Carlisle. **Due 10/27**

Part 4—Research on Life after Carlisle (16 points):

The WKU Library grants [free access](#) to Ancestry.com. This includes access to all US Census records in addition to numerous other records to help track family history (birth records, address books, yearbooks, marriage records, military records, death records, and more). For Part 3 of this assignment, you chose three students from Carlisle in 1910. For Part 4, use the research tools on Ancestry.com to track those three students across the US Census for 1920, 1930, 1940, and 1950. Then, in an essay of at least 800 words, share the findings of your census research and reflect on how their lives—both at Carlisle and beyond—might speak to any of the readings this semester. Where did these students end up? Did they return to their home communities? What careers did they enter? Please contact me if you are having trouble locating the students. You are welcome to supplement your census research with outside sources, but this is not required. **Due 12/4**

Schedule

Readings are due the week that they are listed on the syllabus. With the exception of the four required books, all readings can be found in the Content section of Blackboard.

Weekly structure:

Monday and Tuesday: These days are reserved strictly for reading. During this time, Dr. Olson will post a set of framing remarks to guide the discussion.

Wednesday: Each student will submit a 500-word post (which can be longer if you wish) to the Blackboard discussion board addressing the weekly readings. Your post must show evidence that you have done the readings; you cannot simply mirror Dr. Olson's framing remarks.

Thursday and Friday: Each student will post a minimum of 500 words spread across at least three comments responding to the posts submitted by your fellow students. These response posts cannot be written within 12 hours of your original post on Wednesday. You are encouraged to check back several times on Thursday and Friday to keep up with the discussion.

Readings:

Week 1 (August 21-25): Introduction to Native American History

- Philip Deloria, "Introduction," *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), 3-11.
- David Treuer, *Rez Life* (2012), 1-9.
- Watch: "Richard Oakes and the Occupation of Alcatraz" (2019).
- Listen: "Native Fashion" *All My Relations Podcast* (2019).

Week 2 (August 28-September 1): Blood Quantum and Indian Identity

- Charles Wilkinson, *Indian Tribes as Sovereign Governments* (2004), 29-36.
- Kim TallBear, "20th Century Tribal Blood Politics," *The Great Vanishing Act* (2017), 129-139.
- Justin Wingerter, "For Cherokees, the Elizabeth Warren dispute goes to the heart of their identity," *The Oklahoman*, October 17, 2018.
- Sarah Viren, "The Native Scholar Who Wasn't," *New York Times Magazine*, May 25, 2021.
- Listen: "Can a DNA test make me Native American?" *All My Relations Podcast* (2019).

Week 3 (September 4-8): Assimilation, Modernity, and Family History

- Philip Deloria, "Athletics," in *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), 109-135.
- Paul Chaat Smith, "Every Picture Tells a Story," *Everything You Know about Indians Is Wrong* (2009), 1-6.

Week 4 (September 11-15): Wide Open Spaces

- Philip Deloria, "Technology," in *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), 136-182.
- Primary Source: Dawes Act (1887).
- *Beyond Plagiarism* module #2 ("Understanding Sources") and module #3 ("Using Sources").
 - **Deadline:** Beyond Plagiarism quiz certificates due Friday, Sept. 15th, at 11:59pm.

Week 5 (September 18-22): The Red Power Movement

- Paul Chaat Smith and Robert Warrior, *Like a Hurricane* (1996), 1-35.
- Philip Deloria, "Conclusion," in *Indians in Unexpected Places* (2004), 224-240.

Week 6 (September 25-29): Boarding Schools

- Brenda Child, "To Honor Our Ancestors, Get Their History Right" (2021).
- Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons* (1998), v-xx, 1-25, 43-68, and 87-100.
- Primary Source: Complete list of students in attendance at Carlisle Indian School in 1910.

Week 7 (October 2-6): Fall Break (Oct. 2-3) and Carlisle Indian School research project (Oct. 4-6)

- Please use this time to create the map for your Carlisle Indian School research project.

Week 8 (October 9-13): Carlisle Indian School

- Browse: Carlisle Indian School Digital Archive: <http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/>
 - **Deadline:** Part 1 & 2 of Carlisle Indian School project due Friday, Oct. 13th, at 11:59pm.

Week 9 (October 16-20): Settler Colonialism

- Watch: *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (2002).
- Nancy Shoemaker, "A Typology of Colonialism" (2015)

Week 10 (October 23-27): Reproduction on the Reservation

- Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation* (2019), 1-98.
 - **Deadline:** Part 3 of Carlisle Indian School project due Friday, Oct. 27th, at 11:59pm.

Week 11 (October 30-November 3): Sovereignty and Self-Determination

- Brianna Theobald, *Reproduction on the Reservation* (2019), 99-183.

Week 12 (November 6-10): Genealogies

- Philip Deloria, *Becoming Mary Sully* (2019), 3-89.

Week 13 (November 13-17): Indian Modernisms

- Philip Deloria, *Becoming Mary Sully* (2019), 93-187.

Week 14 (November 20-24): Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 (November 27-December 1): The Politics of Indigenous History

- Philip Deloria, *Becoming Mary Sully* (2019), 191-280
 - **Deadline:** Part 4 of Carlisle Indian School project due Monday, Dec. 4th, at 11:59pm.