

**AMERICAN INDIAN POLITICS**  
**POLS/AIS 250**

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**Course Description:** This course is designed to familiarize you with the primary political issues and debates within the American Indian community. We will focus on issues that are a concern nationally, rather than examining the individual issues that concern specific tribes. We will begin the course with a brief historical lead-in to the formation of the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the other organizations that re-ignited American Indian politics in the 1960s and 1970s.

When the course is completed, students should meet the following goals:

- 1--Students will be able to critically analyze the structure of American Indian political institutions;
- 2--Students will be able to discuss the current issues facing American Indians in the political arena;
- 3--Students will have a clear understanding of the bases of American Indian political culture.

**Course Requirements:** There are two examinations in the course and two writing assignments. The exams, a midterm and a final, that will require you to synthesize the broader themes we discuss in class.

The written assignments consist of two short issue analysis papers. The papers will be 4-5 page discussions of several of the major political topics. Possible topics include: gaming issues, fishing rights, Wisconsin's Act 31, economic development issues (nuclear waste disposal, strip mining, etc.), education policy (K-12 or college), sovereignty issues, health care, tribal membership questions, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or elections. **The first short paper is due 3/4. The second short paper is due 4/22.**

Each student will submit one of the two issue papers to me electronically (Microsoft Word format or .html format). These papers will be posted on my website and you will be responsible for reading AT LEAST 2 of the papers and writing summaries and critiques of these papers. **The website review is due 5/11.**

<b>Issue Papers</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>In-Class Discussion</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Website Review</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>30%</b>

**Texts:** We will use two texts in the course. The texts should all be available through the bookstore.

Lytle, C. & Deloria, V. (1998). The Nations Within : The Past and Future of American Indian Sovereignty. University of Texas Press.

Wilkins, D. (2002). American Indian Politics and the American Political System, Rowman & Littlefield (RENTAL)

Other readings will be put on reserve during the semester.

**Attendance:** Students are expected to attend class, but no formal attendance will be taken. Be warned, a substantial portion of the exam will be based on material covered ONLY in class and a large portion of your grade is based on in-class participation. Consistent failure to attend will lower your grade dramatically. You are responsible for ALL information covered in lecture, including changes in the reading assignments, changes in test dates, and in-class homework assignments.

**Students With Disabilities:** Any student who has a disability that will in any way impede his or her completion of the course needs to speak to me as soon as possible about alternative arrangements. All possible arrangements will be made to accommodate students in need of assistance.

**Cheating and Plagiarism:** Do it and you run the risk of failing the course. This should seem obvious, but it must be made clear--if you are caught cheating, every remedy made available to the instructors on this campus will be pursued. Cheating is defined as attempting to improve your grade through any method considered unethical by the university, including copying another student's test, bringing crib sheets for exams, writing notes on your hands or on the brim of your baseball cap, etc.

Plagiarism is defined as claiming any other author's intellectual work as your own. This can include copying parts of another written work and not giving the original author credit for it; using summaries of work written by others and claiming it as your own, etc. Plagiarism is NOT limited to copying another author's work word-for-word. If you use the author's IDEAS without giving the author credit for them, you are just as guilty as if you had Xeroxed the statements and put yourself down as author.

The instructor reserves the right to ask for any written assignment in electronic format. The submitted electronic version MUST be an exact match for the paper version. All papers may be submitted to turnitin.com and/or any other website addressing

plagiarism issues. Failure to provide the electronic copy of any assignment is grounds for disciplinary action in the course.

## **STANDARDS FOR GRADING**

### **Geoff Peterson**

**A:** designates work of extra-ordinarily high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; arguments are clearly organized with supporting ideas.

**B:** designates work of high quality; reflects a clearly organized but less than comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; presents organized arguments that are supported by ideas.

**C:** Designates work which meets the minimal requirements of the assignment; written work reflects adequate organization and development of ideas, but arguments are communicated in a superficial or simplistic manner.

**D:** Designates work of poor quality which meets the minimum requirements of the assignment, but demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that the student has not read assignments thoroughly.

**F:** Designates work of poor quality that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or task; fails to reflect an understanding of the issues at hand; fails to present organized arguments or fails to adequately support arguments with ideas; or which is not handed in on time.

**Course Schedule**  
**Readings; L=Lytle & Deloria, W=Wilkins**

Date	Topic	Readings
1/26	Introductions	
1/28-1/31	Who Are American Indians?	W 1-2
2/2-2/7	American Indian Rights: 1787-1900	L 2-4, W 4
2/9-2/11	American Indian Rights: 1900-1960	L 6-11
2/14-2/16	The Beginnings of the American Indian Movement & Alcatraz	L 12-14
2/18-2/21	From Alcatraz to Wounded Knee	Reserve
2/23	The Current State of Indian Activism	Reserve
2/25-2/28	Sovereignty: What Does It Really Mean?	L 1, W 5 (Read 2 case studies from W 5)
<b>***Midterm Exam—3/2***</b>		
3/4-3/9	Understanding Indian Political Culture	W p. 185-191
3/11-3/18	Indian Economic Development	W 6
3/30-4/4	Tribal Gaming: The Law and Policy	Reserve
4/6-4/8	The Structure of Tribal Governments	W 3
4/11-4/13	Tribal Elections: Who Votes and Why?	W p. 191-200
4/15-4/22	Issues of Representation	Reserve
4/25-4/27	Images of Indians In The Media	W 9
4/29-5/2	Indian Health Care Policy	Reserve
5/4-5/9	Indian Interest Groups and Activism	W 8
5/11-5/13	Epilogue—What Do We Know?	W 10

**\*\*\*FINAL EXAM—1PM Wednesday May 14\*\*\***