The Politics and Conditions of Indigeneity

Spring 2015
Department of Anthropology, The University of Texas at Austin
Thursday 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM, SAC room 5.118

Professor Circe Sturm
Office: SAC 5.122  (232-1561), circe@austin.utexas.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 am-Noon, and by appointment.

Course Description

This course explores the history, politics and conditions of indigenous people throughout the world. One organizing theme of the course will be the ongoing relationships between indigenous people and their respective settler-states, relationships that have been characterized by equal parts continuity and change. Though our primary focus will be on Anglophone indigenous peoples in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, we will also bring in other examples from around the globe when relevant. Our goal is to understand how indigeneity, as both a theoretical concept and a lived experience, intersects with ideas about sovereignty, citizenship, race, culture, gender, nationalism, colonialism and authenticity. Students will be exposed to a range of voices, including native and non-Native writers, scholars and activists. Course content will cover key issues and topics critical to indigenous communities, including defining the indigenous and the Fourth World; comparative histories of colonialism; the various forms of legal inclusion and exclusion in the polities of indigenous people and their settler states; the relationship between sovereignty and citizenship; the politics of indigenous political recognition and identification; and the image of the “native other” as it is appropriated and understood by settler-states.

Requirements

1) Weekly notes on the required reading (MAXIMUM 2 pages, single-spaced) that include a brief summary of the main points along with a constructive, critical appraisal. These reading notes are due in class on the day of the discussion. No late notes will be accepted, but each student may skip two sets of notes over the semester.

2) Each student will lead at least one classroom discussion, for which some background reading is strongly recommended. The student leader must circulate copies of their reading notes to the rest of the class and provide a handout of their “talking points.”

3) Students will prepare one research paper (20-30 pages in length), the due date of which is noted in the body of the syllabus.

You will be evaluated on the basis of your weekly reading notes (35%); the final research paper (35%); and active participation in classroom presentations and discussions (30%). This means that readings are absolutely mandatory. Since this is a seminar, students must be prepared to exchange ideas and to respectfully engage one another in the classroom setting.
Required Readings

Books

The following books have been ordered through the campus bookstore:


In addition to these books, the required reading for the course will also include a selection of shorter works (articles and chapters) that will be made available to you on Blackboard and/or in electronic reserves.

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss the necessary accommodations to ensure your full participation in the class and to facilitate your educational opportunities.

*** I reserve the right to change or amend the course syllabus as necessary, primarily due to any unforeseen circumstances that may arise during the course of the semester. However, any changes in the syllabus should not adversely affect your grade or your workload.
Course Schedule

Jan.  22  Introductions

29  Who and What is “Indigenous?” Framing the Debates.

Required Reading:


Feb.  5  Colonialism/Settler Colonialism

Required Reading:


12  Indians and Anthropologists

Required Reading:

and the Critique of Anthropology, Thomas Biolsi and Larry Zimmerman (eds.), Tuscon: University of Arizona Press, conclusion.

19 **Sovereignty, Self-Determination, and Autonomy**
*Required Reading:*

26 **The “Conditions” of Cultural Authenticity**
*Required Reading:*

***Research Paper Topic Due***

Mar. 5 **The “Conditions” of Political Recognition and Citizenship**
*Required Reading:*

12 NO CLASS MEETING

19 NO CLASS MEETING, Spring Break

26 **The “Conditions” of Poverty**
*Required Reading:*

***One-page Abstract and Working Bibliography Due***
Race/Indigeneity/Whiteness

Required Reading:

Race/Indigeneity/Blackness

Required Reading:

Indigenous Feminisms, Gender, and Sexuality

Decolonizing Methodologies

Required Reading:

Narratives of “Survivance”

***Individual Research Project Presentations Due in Class***

May 7 Critical Reassessments

***Individual Research Project Presentations Due in Class***

May 11 ***Final Research Paper Due by 5:00 p.m. in Faculty Departmental Mailbox, SAC 4.102***