

# Introduction to Native American Philosophy

## PHIL XXX Quarter 20XX

Instructor: Andrea Sullivan-Clarke

Class Times and Location:

Office hours:

Office:

E-mail: [weebs@uw.edu](mailto:weebs@uw.edu)

### Course Description:

This course is an introduction to the basic issues, arguments, and methods of traditional and contemporary Native American philosophy. As we examine different areas in philosophy, we will learn about the similarities and differences between the Western and Native American traditions. The areas to be covered in class include (but are not limited to): logic, metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, and ethics. While covering these areas, we will actively engage issues affecting Indian Country today. Course objectives include:

1. Demonstrating a general knowledge and comprehension of how the experience of the Indigenous people of North America differs from those of the colonizing and immigrant peoples.
2. Developing critical reasoning skills through the study of Western and Native American philosophical frameworks.
3. Improving formal expression of philosophical positions through writing and speaking assignments.

### Required Texts:

Waters, Anne. *American Indian Thought: Philosophical Essays*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2004.

(AIT)

Cordova, V. F. *How It Is*. Tucson, AZ: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2007. (HII)

*Additional Readings Provided on the Course Site* (see \*)

### Requirements:

Participation	10%	50 points
Reading Response Papers @10 points each	10%	50 points
Class Discussion	20%	100 points
Final Exam	20%	100 points
Term paper (Draft)	10%	50 points
Term paper (Final)	30%	150 points
Total:	100%	500 points

### Overview of Requirements:

**Participation (5%)** Students are expected to actively participate in class. This can be accomplished by actively listening, asking good questions, participating in class discussion/exercises, and attending office hours. Group work cannot be made up and the

use of electronics, such as phone/computer/music players during class, may result in a lower participation grade. Our class is a philosophical community. In order to promote scholarly discussion, **mutual respect is key**. Discussion only works, when people are willing and able to share their beliefs and arguments – even if those beliefs are unpopular. Thus, **participation includes respecting people even if they disagree with you**.

**Reading Responses (5%)** These assignments are intended to get the student to critically engage the assigned readings. For each response, students will submit 225-300 words on what they take to be the author’s thesis and his/her support. In addition, students should summarize the key concepts and offer a reflection upon the main ideas of the reading. Reading Responses should be submitted in class or on the course discussion board, as directed by the instructor.

**Class Discussion (10%)** Students lead a discussion on a chapter from V.F. Cordova’s *How It Is*. The format of these discussions will be discussed early in the quarter. The length of the discussion is for half of the allotted class time.

**Exams (60%)** The exams test for knowledge of the material presented in readings and lectures. Blue books are not necessary. Format: multiple choice, true/false, and short answer/essay. **Dates for the exams are listed on the schedule. Documented excuses required for make-up exams.**

**Term Paper (Draft- Final) (5-15%)** The term paper (3-5 pages, 12 point font, double-spaced) is to be a critical examination of one of the positions presented in the assigned readings. The assignment is intended to be primarily an independent piece of scholarship; some additional readings may be necessary, but comprehensive knowledge of the literature is neither expected nor desired. The point is to struggle through the issue you choose in a philosophically sophisticated way, making sense of the issues involved and the arguments that surround them, and defending a position that you find tenable on the basis of those arguments. The draft will be subject to peer-review in class (5%) and the final draft will be submitted for (15%). **Dates for the peer-review and the final submission are listed on the schedule. There are no make-ups for the peer-review.**

*If you have any further questions about these class requirements please see me.*

### **Scales and Criteria for Grading**

When converting total points to decimal grades the following scale will be used. To determine your overall class grade, add up all of the points you earned for each assignment, **double that total**, and then use the following chart.

<b>Total Class Points</b>	<b>Decimal Points</b>
1000-930	1000-965 = 4.0,      964-930 = 3.9
929-900	929-920 = 3.8, 919-910 = 3.7, 909-900 = 3.6
899-870	899-890 = 3.4, 889-880 = 3.3, 879-870 = 3.2
869-830	869-860 = 3.1, 859-840 = 3.0, 839-830 = 2.9
829-800	829-820 = 2.8, 819-810 = 2.7, 809-800 = 2.6

799-770	799-790 = 2.4, 789-780 = 2.3, 779-770 = 2.2
769-730	769-760 = 2.1, 759-740 = 2.0, 739-730 = 1.9
729-700	729-720 = 1.8, 719-710 = 1.7, 709-700 = 1.6
699-670	699-690 = 1.4, 689-680 = 1.3, 679-670 = 1.2
669-630	669-660 = 1.1, 659-640 = 1.0, 639-630 = 0.9
629-600	629-615 = 0.8, 614-600 = 0.7
599-0	599-0 = 0.0

**There will be no curves and no extra credit in this class.** You will not be graded relative to your fellow students. What this means is that it is possible for *everyone* to get an A (4.0) or an E (0.0) or anything in-between. ***In order to pass this course, you must complete all of your assignments with an additive percentage of 60% or higher.***

### Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

#### Week 1 Introduction to Western and Native American Philosophy

<b>M</b>	Introduction/Syllabus	No Assigned Readings Video: "What is Philosophy?"
<b>T</b>	Western Philosophy	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> *
<b>W</b>	Native Am. Identity	Horse, "Native American Identity" (AIT) <b>Reading Response 1- Class</b>
<b>TH</b>	Native Am. Philosophy	Deloria, "Philosophy and the Tribal Peoples" (AIT)
<b>F</b>	Native Am. Philosophy	Hester, "On Philosophical Discourse" (AIT)

#### Week 2 Logic

<b>M</b>	Argument Clinic	Basham, <i>et al.</i> "Recognizing Arguments"*
<b>T</b>	Argument Clinic	Basham, <i>et al.</i> "Basic Logical Concepts"*
<b>W</b>	Native Am. Logic	Waters, "That Alchemical Bering Strait Theory" (AIT)
<b>TH</b>	Native Am. Logic	Cordova, "Approaches to Native American Philosophy" (AIT)
<b>F</b>	<b>Instructor Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Windows on Native Am Philosophy"

#### Week 3 Epistemology

<b>M</b>	Western Epistemology	Descartes, Meditations I & II*
<b>T</b>	Native Am. Epistemology	Burkhart, "What Coyote and Thales Can Teach Us" (AIT) <b>Reading Response 2-Post</b>
<b>W</b>	'Truth' and 'truth'	Hester and Cheney, "Truth and Native American Epistemology" * 319-326
<b>TH</b>	'Truth' and 'truth'	Hester and Cheney, "Truth and Native American Epistemology" * 326-332
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Matrix: A Context for Thought" "Method: A Search for Fundamental Concepts"

#### Week 4 Western and Native American Philosophy of Science

<b>M</b>	Native Am. Science	Cajete, "Philosophy of Native Science" (AIT)
<b>T</b>	Western Science	Popper, <i>Conjectures and Refutations</i> (excerpts)*
<b>W</b>	Feminist Science	Hankinson-Nelson, "Epistemic Communities"
<b>TH</b>	Collaborative Practice (?)	Mazzocchi, "Western Science and Traditional Knowledge"*
		<b>Reading Response 3-Post</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Language as Window" "The Philosophical Questions"

#### Week 5 Metaphysics and Being

<b>M</b>	Identity	Weaver, Hilary "Indigenous Identity: What Is It and Who Really Has It?"*
<b>T</b>	Identity	Jojola, "Notes on Identity, Time, Space, and Place" (AIT)
<b>W</b>	Authenticity	Verney, "On Authenticity" (AIT)
<b>TH</b>	Religious Practice Soul"(AIT)	Smith, "Crippling the Spirit, Wounding the Soul"
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: " <i>Usen</i> : The Unidentifiable Is" "Mother Earth"

#### Week 6 Ethics

<b>M</b>	Ethics	Aristotle, <i>Nichomachean Ethics</i> (excerpts)*
<b>T</b>	Ethics, cont.	Aristotle, <i>Nichomachean Ethics</i> (excerpts)*
<b>W</b>	Ethics, cont.	Cordova, "Ethics: The We and the I" (AIT)
		<b>Response Paper 4- Class</b>
<b>TH</b>	Ethics, cont.	Hester, "Choctaw Conceptions of the Excellence of the Self, with Implications for Education" (AIT)
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b> Paper Topic Handout	HII: "What is the World?" "Windows on Academics"

#### Week 7 Respect

<b>M</b>	Respect	Whitt, "Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge" (AIT) 188-199
<b>T</b>	Respect	Whitt, "Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge" (AIT) 199-213
<b>W</b>	Respect	Lindsay, "Representing Redskins: The Ethics of Native American Team Names"*
		<b>Reading Response 5-Post</b>
<b>TH</b>	Movie: Reel Injuns	NO Assigned Readings
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Time and Universe" "Credo: This I Believe"

## Week 8 Social & Political Philosophy

<b>M</b>	Identity	Russell, "The Jurisprudence of Colonialism" (AIT)
<b>T</b>	Recognition	Turner, "Oral Traditions and the Politics of (Mis)Recognition" (AIT)
<b>W</b>	Membership	Garoutte, "Enrollees and Outalucks: Law"*
<b>TH</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Becoming Human" "Time, Culture, and Self"
<b>F</b>	<b>Peer Review</b>	NO Assigned Readings

## Week 9 Esthetics

<b>M</b>	Ethics of Art (AIT)	Cordova, "Ethics: from an Artist's Point of View"
<b>T</b>	Esthetics (AIT)	Martinez, "Along the Horizon a World Appears"
<b>W</b>	Western Aesthetics	Plato, <i>Republic</i> (excerpts)*
<b>TH</b>	Esthetics and Ethics	Runde, "The Return of Wampum Belts"*
<b>F</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Cowboys and Indians: A Story" "What is the Role of a Human Being?"

## Week 10 The Examined Life

<b>M</b>	<b>Student Lead Discussion</b>	HII: "Biodiversity: The Human Factor" "A New Reverence"
<b>T</b>	Video: John Trudell	"Introducing Coherency to the Reality of Energy"
<b>W</b>	Video: Wilma Mankiller	"Memorial Video Part 1 Living the Good Life" "Being Indigenous in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century"*
<b>TH</b>	Review	NO Assigned Readings
<b>F</b>	<b>Paper</b>	NO Assigned Readings

## Week 11 Final Exams Week