

Introduction to Native American Philosophy

PHIL 209B Spring 2017

Instructor: Andrea Sullivan-Clarke

Class Meeting: MWF 1:40-2:40 OLN 241

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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)

*Additional Readings Provided on Moodle (see * on the syllabus)*

All videos and movies will be viewed in class.

Requirements:

Participation	18%	90 points
Reading Response Papers (10 @ 7 points each)	14%	70 points
Mid Term	16%	80 points
Final Exam	18%	90 points
Term paper (Draft)	12%	60 points
Peer Review	4%	20 points
Term paper (Final)	<u>18%</u>	<u>90 points</u>

Total: 100% 500 points

Overview of Requirements:

Participation (20%) Students are expected to actively participate in class. This can be accomplished by actively listening, asking good questions, participating in class discussion/exercises/quizzes, 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 (14%) These assignments are intended to get the student to critically engage the assigned readings. For each response, students will submit a maximum of 2 pages (double space, 12 pt. font) 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 printed out and submitted in class, or submitted via Moodle. **Attendance is required for submission- the assignment is not a way of excusing oneself from the class. No drive by submissions!**

Mid Term and Final Exams (36%) The exams test for knowledge of the material presented in readings and lectures. Format: multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, and short answer/essay. The **date for the exam is listed on the schedule. Documented excuses required for make-up exams.**

Peer Review (4%) Each student will edit another student's rough draft in class. I will provide a worksheet to ensure a sufficient review process. However, students should note- **this process cannot be made up in the case of unexcused absences.**

Term Paper (Draft & Final) (12 & 18%) The term paper (3-5 pages, 12 point font, double-spaced) is to be a critical examination of two of the positions (one from a Native American work and the other from Western Philosophy) 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. **Dates for the Draft and the Final Paper submission are listed on the schedule.**

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.

Letter Grade	Total Points Ranges
A	975-1000
A-	960-974
B+	939-959
B	900-938
B-	885-899
C+	868-884
C	850-867
C-	837-849
D+	806-836
D	785-805
D-	765-784
F	0-764

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 F (0.0) or anything in-between.

Class Policies and Etiquette:

1. There are no shortcuts to learning philosophy. The subject demands that students learn in the old-fashioned manner of time-consuming and disciplined study. This means you must spend time reading the classic texts of philosophy (and secondary sources), devote your attention to lectures and involve yourself in critical discussion of the material covered.
2. Attendance is necessary to do well in the course. If you must miss class for any reason, you are responsible for making up any work missed. Find out before coming to class what you missed and make sure you are prepared for the session. Excessive absences will significantly lower your grade and normally results in failure.
3. Attendance alone is not sufficient for passing the class. Prepare for each class carefully and take an active role in discussions. As a general rule, you should spend two hours preparing for each hour spent in class.
4. You are required to sit the exams during the scheduled times. Do not schedule anything that conflicts with the exams. Do not assume that a make-up exam or quiz

- will be given if you miss class. There are no make-up quizzes or exams for unexcused absences. If an absence is excused, prior notification is required. Make-ups are rare and given only under extreme circumstances. Documentation such as a doctor's note or police report will be required for an excused absence.
5. Cell phones, pagers and any other electronic devices should be turned off prior to class sessions. Laptops are permitted, but they should only be used for class. Do not use them to work on the assignments of other courses or to surf (FB, game, e-mail, etc.). To do so can lead to a downgrade on your participation score.
 6. The instructor is committed to upholding the university's policy regarding academic dishonesty. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

Week 1 Introduction to Western Philosophy

M 01/30	Introduction/Syllabus	No Assigned Readings Video: "What is Philosophy?" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY
W 02/01	Philosophical Arguments	No Assigned Readings Video: "Philosophical Reasoning" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKEhdsnKKh8
F 02/03	Western Philosophy	Plato, <i>Crito</i> .pdf* Reading Response 1

Week 2 A Brief Introduction to Indian Country

M 02/06	Overview of Fed. Policy	History-of-Federal-Indian- Policy.pdf*
W 02/08	NA Philosophy	Deloria, "Philosophy and the Tribal Peoples" (AIT) pp. 3-11 Video: "We Are Still Here" < https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnPKzZzSCIM >
F 02/10	NA Philosophy	Hester, "On Philosophical Discourse" (AIT) pp. 263-267 Reading Response 2 Essay Assigned in Class

Week 3 Logic and Reasoning

M 02/13	Creation Stories	Yuchi.pdf*, Iroquois.pdf*, Ute.pdf*
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W 02/15 Western Origin Stories Video: *Great Human Odyssey*,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jALNCPeoqTw>
1:09:44-1:25:28

F 02/17 Native Am. Logic Waters, "That Alchemical Bering Strait Theory" (AIT)
pp. 72-83
Reading Response 3

Week 4 Epistemology

M 02/20 Western Epistemology **Essay Peer Review**

W 02/22 Western Epis., cont. Descartes, Meditations I & II* (begin pages 6 & 8)

F 02/24 Western Epis., cont. Descartes, Meds. III* (begins page 12)
Reading Response 4

Week 5 Epistemology, cont.

M 02/27 Feminist Epistemology FemEpistemology.pdf*
Essay Due in Class (Hard Copy)

W 03/01 Native Epistemology Burkhart, "What Coyote and Thales Can
Teach Us" (AIT)
Reading Response 5

F 03/03 Native Science Review
Video: "Indigenous Knowledge and Western
Science: Dr. G. Cajete"
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFeNIOgIbzw>>
Essay Final Draft Due

Week 6 Western and Native American Philosophy of Science

M 03/06 MidTerm

W 03/08 Western Science-Overview MachamerOverview.pdf*

F 03/10 Western Science Popper, "Conjectures & Refutations"*

Week 7 Native American Philosophy of Science

M 03/13 Native Am. Science Cajete, "Philosophy of Native Science" (AIT)
Reading Response 6

W 03/15 Native Am. Science, cont. Cordova, "Ethics from an Artist's Point of
View" (AIT)

F	03/17	Philosophy Paper Assigned	
Week 8		Metaphysics and Being—Identity	
M	03/20	Philosophy and Race	Root.pdf*
W	03/22	Visit- Dr. Shay Welch, Spelman College	
F	03/24	Identity	Weaver.pdf * Reading Response 7
Week 9		Spring Break!	
Week 10		Metaphysics and Being, cont.	
M	04/03	Video: Miss Navajo	No Assigned Reading
W	04/05	Authenticity	Verney, “On Authenticity” (AIT)
F	04/07	Religious Practice	Smith, “Crippling the Spirit, Wounding the Soul” (AIT) Reading Response 8
Week 11		Metaphysics and Being, cont.	
M	04/10	Identity	Jojola, “Notes on Identity, Time, Space, and Place” (AIT)
W	04/12	Paper Edit (Peer Review)	Submitted via Moodle TRAVEL NO Assigned Readings
F	04/14	Video: A Good Day to Die*	NO Assigned Readings TRAVEL
Week 12		Social & Political Philosophy	
M	04/17	Western Political Theory-Property	LockeProperty.pdf*
W	04/19	Post Modern Social Theory	Marx&Engels.pdf* Post Modern Phil.pdf*
		Video: Foucault	< https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BBJTeNTZtGU >
F	04/21	Philosophy of Law	Russell, “The Jurisprudence of Colonialism” (AIT) FINAL PAPER DUE
Week 13		Social and Political Philosophy, cont.	
M	04/24	Respect	Whitt, “Biocolonialism and the Commodification of Knowledge” (AIT)

W 04/26	Respect	Lindsay, "Representing Redskins: The Ethics of Native American Team Names"*
F 04/28	Recognition	Turner, "Oral Traditions and the Politics of (Mis)Recognition" (AIT) Reading Response 9
Week 14	The Examined Life (Values)	
M 05/01	Virtue Ethics	Pojman.pdf* Plato.pdf*
W 05/03	Ethics, cont.	Aristotle, <i>Nichomachean Ethics</i> (excerpts)*
F 05/05	Ethics	Hester, "Choctaw Conceptions of the Excellence of the Self, with Implications for Education" (AIT) Reading Response 10
Week 15	Course Wrap Up	
M 05/08	Ethics, cont.	Cordova.pdf* Cordova, "Ethics: The We and the I" (AIT)
W 05/10	Course Wrap Up, Review	Video: "Being Indigenous in the 21 st Century"*
Week 16	Finals Week	
Th 05/18	Final Exam 1:40-2:40	