



Indigenous Ecologies

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University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
School of Literatures, Cultures, and Linguistics
Department of Religion

RLST 494 Section JT3 (51202)
RLST 494 Section JT4 (51211)
ANTH 499 Section JT (51572)
ENVS 398 Section JT3 (51897)
ENVS 398 Section JT4 (51899)
GEOG 390 Section JT3 (51778)
GEOG 595 Section JT4 (51779)
NRES 499 Section JT3 (51624)
NRES 499 Section JT4 (51626)

Fall 2008
Friday 2:00-4:30
G48 Foreign Languages Building
(707 S. Mathews Ave., Urbana)

Prof. James Treat
treaty@illinois.edu
3023 Foreign Languages Building
(707 S. Mathews Ave., Urbana)

Welcome to the course!

This is an interdisciplinary seminar exploring the relationship between human experience and natural environment in indigenous communities, with particular attention to the religious basis for ecological traditions among native North Americans.

Assigned readings focus on historical and contemporary case studies, including noteworthy examples of adaptation in the context of settler colonialism and in response to the dominant paradigm of scientific ecology.

Class discussions are supplemented by audiovisual materials, guest speakers, campus events, and web-based assignments.

Students have the opportunity to gain a basic understanding of indigenous ecologies; to conduct research on a relevant theme, issue, region, or community; and to develop their critical skills for use in educational, professional, and personal settings.

Follow the links above, at left, or below for more information about the course.



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Required Textbooks

The course textbooks can be purchased at the [Illini Union Bookstore](#):

Michael E. Harkin and David Rich Lewis (eds.), *Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

Gilbert L. Wilson, *Waheenee: An Indian Girl's Story* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1981 [1921]).

Gilbert L. Wilson, *Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden: Agriculture of the Hidatsa Indians* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1987 [1917]).

Ken Zontek, *Buffalo Nation: American Indian Efforts to Restore the Bison* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

Gary Paul Nabhan, *Enduring Seeds: Native American Agriculture and Wild Plant Conservation* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1989).

These books are also available from the [Media & Reserve Center](#) at the [Undergraduate Library](#).



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Course Schedule

August 29 Introductions

September 5 Harkin & Lewis, *Native Americans and the Environment*

September 12 Harkin & Lewis (continued)

September 19 Harkin & Lewis (continued)

September 26 INHS Sesquicentennial Symposium
PROPOSAL DUE

October 3 Wilson, *Waheenee*

October 10 Wilson, *Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden*

October 17 Zontek, *Buffalo Nation*
ABSTRACT DUE

October 24 Zontek (continued)

October 31 Nabhan, *Enduring Seeds*
BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

November 7 Nabhan (continued)

November 14 [Research Project]
OUTLINE DUE

November 21 Presentations
HANDOUT DUE

November 28 [Fall Break]

December 5 Conclusions
PAPER DUE

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Grading Criteria

All course work is governed by the Student Code—please make sure you understand your rights and responsibilities as an Illinois student, especially the policy on Academic Integrity (including the Definitions of, and Penalties for, Infractions of Academic Integrity).

Each course assignment is evaluated according to the Grading System. Special circumstances are handled in accordance with the Policy for the Provision of Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities.

Course grades are determined according to the following schedule:

Class Participation – 50%

Research Project – 50%

In the event that you are unable to attend a class meeting, you can receive PARTIAL CREDIT by submitting a written response to the assigned readings within one week. Exceptions will be made only for the excused absences specified in paragraphs (c) and (d) of section 1-501 of the policy on Class Attendance, in which case you can receive FULL CREDIT by submitting supporting documentation along with a written response to the assigned readings within one week.



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Research Project

Proposal Informal discussion of potential research projects:
at least one substantive paragraph on each of three distinct topics,
typed and double-spaced.
DUE SEPTEMBER 26

Abstract Formal description of research topic:
at least three hundred (300) words detailing the focus, methodology, and
significance of your project,
accompanied by a working bibliography of relevant sources you have accessed,
typed and double-spaced with an original and fitting title.
DUE OCTOBER 17

Bibliography Penultimate list of research sources:
at least ten (10) relevant books, articles, and websites you have studied,
cited in an appropriate bibliographic style,
typed and double-spaced with an original and fitting title.
DUE OCTOBER 31

Outline Tentative organization of research paper:
at least one (1) page specifying main points and subpoints,
typed and double-spaced with an original and fitting title.
DUE NOVEMBER 14

Presentation Oral synopsis of research project:
eight to ten (8-10) minutes of extemporaneous comments summarizing your
findings,
supported by a one-page handout bearing your name and project title.
DUE NOVEMBER 21

Paper Written results of research project:
at least three thousand (3,000) words of polished prose
[at least five thousand (5,000) words of polished prose if enrolled for four hours
credit],
with citations and bibliography in an appropriate style,
typed and double-spaced with an original and fitting title.
DUE DECEMBER 5