



Indigenous Ecologies

Syllabus

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University of Illinois
Program for the Study of Religion
Spring 2008
Wednesday 11:00-1:30
1040 Foreign Languages Building
(707 S. Mathews Ave., Urbana)

AIS 490 Sections UG1/G2
ANTH 499 Section JT
GEOG 390 Section JT3
GEOG 594 Section JT4
NRES 499 Sections IE3/IE4
RLST 494 Sections JT3/JT4

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

Welcome to the course!

This interdisciplinary seminar explores the relationship between human experience and natural environment in native North America. Assigned readings survey historical and contemporary case studies in New World ethnoecology, 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, and campus events relevant to the course. Students have the opportunity to gain a basic understanding of ecological traditions among American Indians; to conduct a research project focusing on a particular theme, issue, region, or community; and to develop their critical skills for use in academic, 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:

Marsha C. Bol (ed.), *Stars Above, Earth Below: American Indians and Nature* (Niwot, CO: Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1998).

Winona LaDuke, *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 1999).

Richard K. Nelson, *Make Prayers to the Raven: A Koyukon View of the Northern Forest* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

Gary Paul Nabhan, *Singing the Turtles to Sea: The Comcáac (Seri) Art and Science of Reptiles* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003).

Gilbert L. Wilson, *Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1987).

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

These books are also available from the Media & Reserve Center at the Undergraduate Library.

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Course Schedule

January 16 Introductions

January 23 Bol, *Stars Above, Earth Below*

January 30 Bol, *Stars Above, Earth Below*

February 6 LaDuke, *All Our Relations*

February 13 LaDuke, *All Our Relations*

February 20 Nelson, *Make Prayers to the Raven*

February 27 Nelson, *Make Prayers to the Raven*

March 5 Nabhan, *Singing the Turtles to Sea*

March 12 Nabhan, *Singing the Turtles to Sea*

March 19 SPRING BREAK

March 26 Wilson, *Buffalo Bird Woman's Garden*

April 2 Zontek, *Buffalo Nation*

April 9 Zontek, *Buffalo Nation*

April 16 Research

April 23 Presentations

April 30 Conclusions



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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 a UIUC 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 [UIUC Grading System](#). Special circumstances are handled in accordance with the [Policy for Accommodation and Provision of Auxiliary Aids for Students with Disabilities](#).

In the event that you are unable to attend a class meeting, you can receive partial credit by submitting a written response to the assignment 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 assignment within one week.

Course grades are determined according to the following schedule:

Class Participation – 50%

Research Project – 50%