



# Indigenous Ecologies

## Syllabus

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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 TU3 (50362)  
RLST 494 Section TG4 (50363)  
ANTH 499 Section JT1 (51032)  
GEOG 390 Section JT3 (40518)  
GEOG 594 Section JT4 (49204)  
NRES 598 Section IE (51396)

Spring 2009  
Friday 2:00-4:30  
1112 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, focusing especially on ecological traditions among native North Americans.

Assigned readings present 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.**



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## Required Textbooks

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

Winona LaDuke, *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2005).

Fikret Berkes, *Sacred Ecology*, 2nd ed. (New York, NY: Routledge, 2008).

Melissa K. Nelson (ed.), *Original Instructions: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future* (Rochester, VT: Bear and Company, 2008).

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





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## Course Schedule

<b>January 23</b>	Introductions
<b>January 30</b>	LaDuke, preview & chapters 1-4
<b>February 6</b>	LaDuke, chapters 5-8
<b>February 13</b>	LaDuke, chapters 9-13 PROPOSAL DUE
<b>February 20</b>	Berkes, preview & chapters 1-4
<b>February 27</b>	Berkes, chapters 5-8
<b>March 6</b>	Berkes, chapters 9-12 ABSTRACT DUE
<b>March 13</b>	Nelson, preview & chapters 1-10
<b>March 20</b>	Nelson, chapters 11-17 BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE
<b>March 27</b>	[ <a href="#">Spring Break</a> ]
<b>April 3</b>	Nelson, chapters 18-27
<b>April 10</b>	<a href="#">Planet U: The Human Story of Climate Change</a> OUTLINE DUE
<b>April 17</b>	Nelson, chapters 28-33
<b>April 24</b>	Presentations HANDOUT DUE
<b>May 1</b>	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 FEBRUARY 13

**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 MARCH 6

**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 MARCH 20

**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 APRIL 10

**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 APRIL 24

**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 MAY 1