

# History of Native America, 1800 to the Present

HIST 157

MW 10:25am-11:40am

Rush Rhees Library 305

**Instructor:** Brianna Theobald

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454 Rush Rhees Library

**Office Hours:** M 12:30-2:00pm and by appointment

## Course Description:

When visitors arrive on Alcatraz Island in the Bay Area today, they are greeted by the words, "You are on Indian land." Written by a participant in Native activists' occupation of the island in 1969, the statement is a reminder that there are Indigenous histories of the land that is currently the United States—and these histories are very much ongoing. This course is an introductory survey of the history of Native America, which consists of hundreds of distinct Indigenous nations. Among other topics, the course will explore how Native peoples navigated forced migrations and attempted genocide; the various ways they responded to efforts to Americanize them; Native activism and leadership on and off reservations across the twentieth century; and more recent developments from Standing Rock to *Reservation Dogs*.

In accordance with the College credit hour policy, which awards 4 credit hours for courses that meet for the equivalent of 3 periods of 50 minutes each week, students are expected to devote at least one hour each week to identifying the main lines of argument in course readings, working alone or in groups.

## Required Reading:

Students will read some combination of articles, book chapters, and/or primary sources before each class session. This weekly reading will be available on Blackboard, so students do not need to purchase this material.

## Grade Breakdown:

94-100% = A	87-89% = B+	77-79% = C+	67-69% = D+
90-93% = A-	83-86% = B	73-76% = C	63-66% = D
	80-82% = B-	70-72% = C-	60-62% = D-

## Assessment:

Participation:	15%
Reading Check-ins:	20% (7 total; drop 2 lowest scores)
Reflection Paper 1:	15%
Reflection Paper 2:	15%

Final Project: 35% (proposal & proposal workshop 5%; supplemental materials 5%; 25% paper)

Participation: Most class sessions will be a mix of lecture and discussion, and in a class of this size, the success of the course depends in part on students' regular attendance and active participation. Students' participation will be assessed both by the consistency of their contributions to class discussions, as well as the thoughtfulness and seriousness of their engagement. If for any reason you need to miss more than one consecutive class session (either in person or online), please let me know, so that we can work together to make sure you stay on track. If you are concerned that you will not be able to make your engagement with course material visible to me during our regular class sessions, please let me know so that we can figure out workable alternatives.

Reading Check-Ins: Course readings constitute a critical component of your learning this semester. Regular reading check-ins will allow me to assess students' comprehension of assigned readings, and the act of being regularly asked to recall the reading's key points will facilitate your long-term learning and retention. Reading check-ins are a relatively low stakes form of assessment. At the beginning of class, I will pose a question (or set of questions) about the reading, and you will have approximately ten minutes to write a one to two paragraph response. We'll do this seven times throughout the semester, and I'll drop the two lowest scores.

Reflection Papers: Students will write two reflection papers, each approximately 4 to 6 pages in length, in which they, as the assignment's name suggests, reflect on the material covered thus far. What conclusions have you begun to draw about this period in Native American history and/or the process of studying the history of Native America? How does your recent learning build on, complicate, or otherwise relate to your knowledge of Indigenous and United States history at the start of the semester? What new questions have been raised for you?

Final Project: Several folks on campus have proposed that the University of Rochester host an exhibit in commemoration of Indigenous Peoples Day 2024, which would educate students, staff, faculty, visitors, and community members regarding the Indigenous histories of this region. Such an exhibit would require significant scholarly research and other forms of preparation. Over the course of the semester, we will engage in a collective endeavor to establish the foundation for a future exhibit of this nature. Each student will complete an individual research project that contributes a piece of this foundation. This will involve identifying a research question that is informed by the historical content that you think the audience of a campus exhibit should know (or would be especially interested to know); the completion of a formal historical research paper (8 to 10 pages in length); and the identification and contextualization of documents, photographs, visual or audio media, or other resources that productively supplement your research paper. We will discuss this assignment—and its various steps—at much greater depth in class.

### **Course Policies and Expectations:**

Late Assignments: This course is designed to have us work through material and hit various benchmarks as a group, so it will be a smoother experience for everyone if we all remain on track. That said, I understand that life happens, so this course's late work policy aims to strike a fair balance. Except in the rare case of real and unforeseen emergencies, reading check-ins cannot be made up, but you can miss up to two of these with no effect on your grade, as the two lowest scores will be dropped. Other assignments incur a 10-point penalty for every 24-hour period or portion thereof that passes from the deadline until the assignment is submitted, but each deadline has a two-day grace period before any late penalty is applied. This is a no questions asked grace period; you're free to take advantage of it if and when you need it, but I ask that you aim for the stated deadline when that's possible.

Accommodation Policies: I'm happy to make accommodations as recommended by UR Disability Services. Should you need accommodations, I encourage you to make these arrangements sooner rather than later.

Academic Integrity: Academic honesty is at the core of the historical discipline, and you'll find that it is something I care deeply about. All work submitted must be your own, prepared especially for this course. I will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the University's Board on Academic Honesty. That said, I am happy to discuss any questions you may have about what does and does not constitute plagiarism, provided this conversation occurs *before* you submit the assignment. For helpful discussions of plagiarism (including subtle instances), see the American Historical Association's "Defining Plagiarism," <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism>.

### **Schedule:**

#### **PART 1: Setting the Stage**

##### Week 1:

W Aug 30: Introductions—to this land, this course, and one another

*Optional but encouraged reading:* Goeman, "The Land Introduction"

##### Week 2:

M Sep 4: Labor Day – NO CLASS

W Sep 6: Ideas about Indians

*Reading:* Chaat Smith, "Lost in Translation"

O'Brien, "Historical Sources and Methods"

##### Week 3:

M Sep 11: Native America in 1800

*Reading:* Ablavsky and Allread, “We the (Native) People?,” pp. 243-86 (intro, part I, & part II)

W Sep 13: Haudenosaunee Histories

*Website:* Spend some time exploring the official website of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

\*\*This class session will take place in Rare Books and Special Collections. Meet in our regular classroom, and we will walk down together.

Week 4:

M Sep 18: Haudenosaunee Histories

*Reading:* Appeal from Deskaheh (1923)

*Watch:* "Teyohake and Covenant Chain"

*Optional but encouraged reading:* Boots, “On the Iroquoian Use of Wampum”

Guest Speaker: Dalton LaBarge, MD (Mohawk)

## **Part 2: Surviving Elimination**

W Sep 20: Displacement and Dispossession

*Reading:* Ablavsky and Allread, “We the (Native) People?,” part III

John Ridge to Albert Gallatin Letter (1826)

Week 5:

M Sep 25: Violence and Genocide

*Reading:* Madley, “California’s Yuki Indians”

W Sep 27: Remembering and Collective Memory

*Podcast:* This American Life, “Little War on the Prairie”

## **PART 3: Surviving Assimilation**

Week 6:

M Oct 2: Reservation Lands

*Reading:* Stremlau, “To Domesticate and Civilize Wild Indians”

W Oct 4: Indian Boarding Schools

*Reading:* Fear-Segal and Rose, *Carlisle Indian School*, introduction (excerpt)

Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling”

Week 7:

M Oct 9: Indigenous Peoples Day

\*\*We will not meet in our regular classroom but instead will attend some of the city’s IPD events. Details to come!

*Reading TBA*

W Oct 11: Proposal Workshop

Week 8:

M Oct 16: Fall Break—NO CLASS

W Oct 18: Indian Boarding Schools & Their Afterlives

*Reading:* Child, “The Boarding School as Metaphor”

**Proposal due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

Week 9:

NO CLASS THIS WEEK: This is dedicated time for you to focus on research related to your final project. Be mindful, too, of the upcoming Reflection Paper deadline.

Week 10:

M Oct 30: The Society of American Indians

*Reading:* Deloria, “4,000 Invitations”

Smithers, “The Soul of Unity”

**Reflection Paper 1 due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

W Nov 1: The Reign of Terror in Oklahoma

*Reading:* Bonnini et al., *Oklahoma’s Poor Rich Indians*

*Extra Credit:* Go see the new film *Killers of the Flower Moon*. Details about an optional class field trip to the Little Theater to come.

**Part IV: Toward Self-Determination**

Week 11:

M Nov 6: Indian New Deal

*Reading:* Meriam et al., *The Problem of Indian Administration*, pp 3-21

W Nov 8: Oral Histories

*Reading:* Guise, “Who is Doctor Bauer”

Guest Speaker: Dr. Holly Guise (Iñupiaq)

Week 12:

**\*\*Sign up for individual meetings to meet with me about your final project this week.**

M Nov 13: Termination

*Reading:* Deloria, *Custer Died For Your Sins*, ch. 3

W Nov 15: Indian Cities

*Reading:* Miller, “There is No Such Thing as an Urban Indian”

Week 13:

M Nov 20: Red Power

*Reading:* Warrior, “Which One Are You?”

Warrior, “To Survive as a People”

W Nov 22: NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break

Week 14:

M Nov 27: Red Power

*Reading:* Brave Bird, *Lakota Woman*, ch. 6

W Nov 29: Indigenous Feminisms

*Listen:* 1978 interview with Pat Bellanger: <https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll171:2435>

*Reading:* Shanley, “Thoughts on Indian Feminism”

Week 15:

M Dec 4: Indigenous Futures

*Reading TBA*

Guest Speaker: Dr. Janine Pease (Crow/Hidatsa)

W Dec 6: At the Supreme Court

*Reading:* *McGirt v. Oklahoma* (syllabus/headnote & Gorsuch opinion)

*Optional:* *McGirt* dissents

*Optional but encouraged:* Deer, “Reclaiming Our Reservation”

Week 16:

M Dec 11: Final Projects Discussion

No reading.

W Dec 13: Wrapping Up and Winding Down

*Reading TBA*

**Final Project due via Blackboard at the start of class.**

**Reflection Paper 2 due via Blackboard Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 8am.**