

DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES

The American Indian Studies Department at the University of Washington advances and promotes knowledge integral to Native peoples through research, teaching, and community service. It is the largest and most comprehensive program of its kind in the Pacific Northwest.



Education

The American Indian Studies Department offers a major in American Indian Studies, a minor in American Indian Studies, and a master's degree in Native American Documentary Film, Video, and New Digital Media in partnership with the Department of Communication. We will soon offer a minor in Oceania and Pacific Islander Studies (expected Autumn 2017).

American Indian Studies approaches its teaching and research from a decolonized, community based, and global perspective. American Indian Studies faculty and students strive to develop innovative theories and methodologies that increase knowledge about Indigenous Peoples and support the needs of Indigenous communities. The department promotes faculty and student exchange programs with institutions that are committed to a deeper understanding of Indigenous communities and Peoples throughout the world.

Native Voices

Native Voices is the masters degree program in Native American Documentary, Film, and New Digital Media, with Professors Dan Hart and Luana Ross serving as co-directors. Native Voices has been working with Indigenous students and producers for more than fifteen years. Documentaries produced by the students in our program have won awards and have been screened at Sundance, at the American Indian Film Festival—where Native Voices graduate Rosemary Gibbons won the first prize for documentary—at the Museum of Modern Art, at the National Museum of the American Indian, and at many other venues. Native Voices films are used at scores of American and International universities to teach Indigenous education.



Honoring and Nurturing Indigenous Knowledges and Communities

STUDENTS (Winter 2017)

- 19 Undergraduate majors
- 5 Undergraduate minors

DEGREES AWARDED (2015-2016)

- 22 Bachelor of Arts degrees

A SAMPLE OF COURSES OFFERED BY AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES:

- AIS 203 : Introduction to Indigenous Knowledges
- AIS 270: Native Peoples of the Pacific Northwest
- AIS 335: American Indians and the Law
- AIS 340: Indian Children and Families
- AIS 350: Two-Dimensional Art of Northwest Coast Indians
- AIS 377: Contemporary American Indian Literature
- AIS 379: Powwow: Traditions and Innovation
- AIS 443: Indigenous Films: Sovereign Visions
- AIS 466: Producing the Documentary Short
- AIS 480: Indigenous Resistance and Resurgence Movements in the United States, Canada, and Mexico

Research

American Indian Studies faculty, whose scholarship represents a range of academic disciplines, are nationally and internationally known for their work. Books by our faculty include:

- The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*
- Spirits of Our Whaling Ancestors: Revitalizing Makah and Nuu-chah-nulth Traditions*
- Indians in the Making*
- Navajo Kinship and Marriage*
- Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*
- Navajo Weaving: Art in its Cultural Context*
- Rich Indians: Native People and the Problem of Wealth in American History*
- Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights*
- Cherokee Stories of the Turtle Island Liars' Club*
- Deep Waters: The Textual Continuum in American Indian Literature*
- Reasoning Together: The Native Critics Collective*
- The Sea is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs*
- The Truly Diverse Faculty: New Dialogues in American Higher Education*

Outreach and Student Support

When Native American students are in the process of selecting a university, they consistently ask two questions:

- 1) Does the university have a Native Studies program?
- 2) How many Native professors are at the university?

The American Indian Studies Department at the University of Washington allows for positive answers to both questions. Moreover, since cultural support is so crucial to the retention and graduation of Native students, American Indian Studies also plays a vital role in the process from recruitment to graduation for the University's 500+ Native students.

Yearly, American Indian Studies—through advising, staffing, and direct financial contributions—supports two major Native American events:

The Annual University of Washington Powwow. For nearly 35 years, in support of the First Nations student organization, American Indian Studies has helped design and staff a three-day competitive powwow, the second largest in the Northwest. With a yearly budget of over \$80,000 the powwow draws between 10,000 to 15,000 participants and spectators.

The Annual Raven's Feast Native American Graduation Ceremony. Held each year at Daybreak Star on the shore of Puget Sound, Raven's Feast celebrates the achievement of all University of Washington Native American graduates: bachelor, masters, doctorate and professional degrees. Professor Marvin Oliver, a renowned Northwest artist, provides an original framed print to each graduate. Led by Oliver, American Indian faculty and staff at the University host a salmon feast for 500-600 participants, including graduates and their families.

Sacred Breath: Writing and Storytelling Series. This series features Indigenous writers and storytellers at wətəbʔaltx̣ Intellectual House.

The Living Breath of wətəbʔaltx̣: Indigenous Foods and Ecological Knowledge Symposium. This annual event brings together individuals to share their knowledge on topics such as tribal food justice and security, traditional foods, health, community, place, responsibility, climate change, and treaty rights.

FACULTY (Winter 2017)

- 2 Professors
 - Daniel Hart
 - Christopher B. Teuton (Cherokee Nation)
- 4 Associate Professors
 - Charlotte Coté (Nuu-chah-nulth)
 - Dian Million (Tanana Athabaskan)
 - Stephanie Fryberg (Tulalip Tribes)
 - Joshua L. Reid (Snohomish)
- 10 Adjunct Faculty
 - Chadwick Allen (Chickasaw)
 - Megan Bang (Ojibwe)
 - Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse
 - Jean Dennison (Osage)
 - María Elena García
 - Sara L. Gonzalez
 - Tony Lucero
 - Cheryl Metoyer (Cherokee)
 - Cynthia R. Pearson
 - Luana Ross (Salish)
- 4 Lecturers
 - Roger Fernandes (Lower Elwha Klallam)
 - Scott Pinkham (Nez Perce)
 - Michael Tulee (Yakama)
 - Cynthia Updegrave
- 4 Emeritus Faculty
 - Alexandra Harmon
 - James Nason (Comanche)
 - Marvin Oliver (Quinalt/Isleta Pueblo)
 - Gary Witherspoon



Top: AIS students at UW Commencement.
Above: A dancer at a UW Winter Powwow.

last update: January 2017