

CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

APPROVAL PAGE

Proposal Title: Add NAIS 2300 to Core Curriculum

College: Liberal Arts

Department: Department of Sociology and Anthropology

DEPARTMENT CHAIR- Jeremy Slack

I have read the enclosed proposal and approve this proposal on behalf of the department.

Jeremy Slack

10/16/2025

Signature

Date

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR – Selfa Chew-Melendez

I have read the enclosed documents and approve the proposal on behalf of the college curriculum committee.

Signature

Date

COLLEGE DEAN – Anadeli Bencomo

I have read the enclosed documents and approve the proposal on behalf of the college. I certify that the necessary funds will be allocated by the college in support of this proposal.

Signature

Date

CURRICULUM CHANGE MEMO

Date: October 14, 2025

From: Carina Heckert and Olga Lauter, Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carina Heckert *Olga Lauter*

Through: Jeremy Slack, Chair, Department of Sociology and Anthropology *Jeremy Slack*

Through: Anadeli Bencomo, Dean, College of Liberal Arts

To: Selfa Chew-Melendez, Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Proposal Title: Add NAIS/ANTH/SOCI 2300 to Core Curriculum

Select the proposal content (select as many as apply) and provide the rationale.

Content

- ☐ New program or ☐ Program Change
 - ☐ Bachelor's
 - ☐ Master's
 - ☐ Doctoral/Professional
 - ☐ Certificate
 - ☐ Fast Track
 - ☐ Minor
 - ☐ Concentration/Track
- ☐ New Course
- ☐ Closure (program, certificate, minor, concentration)
- ☒ Add Course to Core Curriculum
- ☒ Change
 - ☐ CIP Code
 - ☐ Program/certificate SCH
 - ☐ Course Title
 - ☒ Course Description
 - ☐ Graduate Program Admission Requirements

Rationale

We are proposing to add NAIS/ANTH/SOCI 2300: Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies as a Core Curriculum Component Area option. The course is currently a required course for the NAIS minor and can also be used to fulfill elective degree requirements in the sociology and anthropology degree plans. This addition to the core curriculum responds to a university need for more component area course options, given that these courses fill up quickly and there are often insufficient offerings to meet student demand. One

07.04.25

goal of developing this course is to introduce a wider range of students to Native American and Indigenous Studies at an early stage of their academic journey, with the aim of encouraging more students from the College of Liberal Arts to pursue the Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS) Program that might help expand their employment opportunities. We also seek to enhance STEM students' cultural sensitivity and readiness to participate in interdisciplinary research and industry projects in collaboration with Native American/Alaska Native and Mexican Indigenous tribes. Several NAIS faculty members have participated in creating the course syllabus, they are all ready to teach the course. Thus, the course can be offered at least once annually, and in all likelihood, the NAIS faculty can teach it twice each year. The idea of adding this course to the Core Curriculum Component Area option was expressed by several UTEP advisors from different colleges and departments during their meeting with the NAIS faculty in May 2025.

As a part of adding this course to the Core Curriculum, we are also updating the course description. The current course description is written in a way that may lead some students to think the course is geared primarily toward NAIS students, and we want to ensure that students from a range of majors feel welcome taking the class.

UTEP Core Curriculum Course Addition Proposal

Course Prefix and Number Cross-listed as NAIS 2300, ANTH 2300, SOCI 2300

Course Title Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies

Course Description This interdisciplinary course surveys the histories, cultural traditions, and present-day experiences of Indigenous peoples in North America and around the world. The course highlights Indigenous perspectives while examining themes such as sovereignty, spirituality, environmental justice and sustainability, cultural reawakening, resistance, and adaptation. Students will engage with frameworks of Indigenous activism, decolonization, and collaborative research methods that emphasize ethical and participatory approaches.

Credit hours: 3

Prerequisites: N/A

Terms Offered (Fall, Spring, Fall & Spring): Fall or Spring

Texas Common Course Number (TCCN): N/A

Foundational Component Area (Select one)

- ☐ **Communication** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, TW, PR)
- ☐ **Math** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS)
- ☐ **Life and Physical Sciences** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS, TW)
- ☐ **Language, Philosophy, and Culture** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- ☐ **Creative Arts** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, TW, SR)
- ☐ **American History** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- ☐ **Government/Political Science** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, SR, PR)
- ☐ **Social and Behavioral Sciences** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, EQS, SR)
- ☒ **Component Area** (core curriculum objectives: CT, COM, Element #1, and at least one additional element from #2, #3, or #4. Element requirements on last page.)

Core Curriculum Objectives

Explain how the course addresses each objective if applicable as determined by the section above. ***All courses must include critical thinking and communication skills.***

Critical Thinking Skills (CT) creative thinking; innovation; inquiry; and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information

One objective of the course is for students to learn to think critically about Indigenous/state relations, and about how globalization have impacted Indigenous Peoples around the world. The course includes interrogation of themes such as cultural loss and reawakening, adaptation and decolonizing strategies. Emphasis is placed on an interdisciplinary perspective to better understand and value diverse knowledge systems. Through instructor and guest lectures, readings, discussions, and assignments, students will engage with complex, open-ended questions challenging them to think creatively and apply their learning toward envisioning potential solutions.

Communication Skills (COM) effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication

Through class discussions, assignments, group projects, and presentations, students will develop skills in presenting their analysis of scientific evidence as well as complex topics such as Indigenous knowledge systems, traditional ecological knowledge, sovereignty, and self-determination.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills (EQS) manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions

Teamwork (TW) ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with other to support a shared purpose or goal

Students will regularly engage in group discussions during class; they will develop and strengthen their teamwork skills by collaborating on a group project, as outlined in the syllabus below.

Personal Responsibility (PR) ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

Social Responsibility (SR) intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

Students will explore decolonizing and interdisciplinary approaches that enable more effective collaboration with Indigenous communities, fostering an understanding of ethical research practices and social responsibility.

Developed by the NAIS faculty, the course emphasizes critical engagement with global issues, aiming to cultivate a sense of responsibility toward both the environment and Indigenous peoples.

Core Curriculum Objectives Specific to Component Area Option

In addition to Communication and Critical Thinking, courses in the Component Area Option must include element #1 and at least one additional element from #2, #3, or #4. ***See last page of document for required criteria for each element.***

1. Cross-Disciplinary Cooperation

By bringing together students and guest lecturers from multiple disciplines and backgrounds, this interdisciplinary course encourages dialogue and the use of research methods that support the co-creation of knowledge among diverse knowledge system holders.

2. Engaging Students in Enriching Experiences that Foster Leadership

3. Contributing to Society

The interdisciplinary course bridges Indigenous Studies, Anthropology, History, Law, Literature and other disciplines emphasizing the value of cultural awareness, exploring and applying ethical research methods that help tackling broader social issues.

4. Developing Global Citizens

By learning about Indigenous histories, realities, traditions, and worldviews, students gain a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and the importance of respecting different ways of knowing.

Course Assessment Plan

Provide examples of the major assignments referenced for each category below, if applicable as determined by the section above. All courses must include critical thinking and communication skills.

Critical Thinking

Refer to the "Sample Exam Questions" and "Sample In-Class Assignment" in the attached syllabus. The essay questions do not have simple and straightforward answers; they require students to integrate their learning and use existing evidence to critically analyze and reflect on the topics discussed throughout the course.

Communication Skills

See "Group Project Assignment" in the attached syllabus. This assignment requires students' collaboration and communication to complete the project and to present it and to answer potential questions in class.

Empirical and Quantitative Skills

Teamwork

See "Group Project Assignment" in the attached syllabus. This assignment requires students' collaboration and communication to complete the project and to present it and to answer potential questions in class.

Personal Responsibility

Social Responsibility

Refer to the "Group Project Assignment" in the attached syllabus. This group project invites students to investigate research topics that emphasize the value of inter- and transdisciplinary, ethical research methods aimed at developing culturally sensitive collaboration skills, ethical awareness, and social responsibility.

Contact

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Course Syllabus

NAIS 2300/ANTH 2300/SOCI 2300: Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies

Course Description:

This survey, interdisciplinary course offers an introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies. It surveys the histories, cultural traditions, and present-day experiences of Indigenous peoples in North America and around the world. Through diverse materials and guest lectures, students will learn how Indigenous communities have been adapting to the challenges of their social, ecological and political environments, and how they have advanced their own visions of self-determination. The course highlights Indigenous perspectives, epistemologies, and ways of knowing while examining themes such as sovereignty, spirituality, environmental justice and sustainability, cultural reawakening, resistance, and adaptation strategies. Students will engage with frameworks of Indigenous activism, decolonization, and collaborative research methods that emphasize ethical and participatory approaches to knowledge co-production. The course invites critical reflection on resilience and identity in both local and global contexts. Students with or without prior exposure to Indigenous studies are encouraged to contribute their unique insights and perspectives.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

- To understand key concepts in Indigenous Studies, including sovereignty, self-determination, and decolonization;
- To develop an understanding of the histories and the contemporary realities of the Indigenous peoples;
- To understand the similarities and differences of the Indigenous peoples and cultures, their adaptations to change, and their roles as agents of change;
- To reflect on your own positionality and responsibilities in relation to Indigenous communities;
- To gain an appreciation of interdisciplinary studies, of decolonizing and collaborative research methodologies ;
- To apply critical thinking to the analysis of the historical and contemporary challenges of the Indigenous peoples related to social, environmental and political issues;

Note: Each of you contributes a valuable perspective to this interdisciplinary field and to our course.

Required Texts:

The course does not have a required textbook. The instructor will post selected chapters and scholarly articles on Blackboard; the preliminary reading schedule is provided below.

Course Assignments:

- **Class Discussions and In-Class Assignments (worth 10%):**

The discussion activities will ensure a better understanding of the reading materials, in-class videos and guest lectures.

Each discussion will be graded individually, based on the quality of your contributions and your participation in class and group activities.

- **Weekly Quizzes (worth 15%):**

Weekly in-class quizzes will cover the assigned readings. At the semester's end, your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped, and the average of the remaining quizzes will account for 15% of your final grade.

- **Two (2) Individual Papers (worth 15% each):**

You are required to submit two individual papers, with each paper contributing 15% to your final grade.

- **One (1) Group Project (worth 15%):**

During the semester, you will work on a group project and present it to the class. This project will account for 15% of your final grade.

- **Three (3) Exams (worth 15% each):**

Over the semester, you will take three essay exams, with each exam counting for 15% of your final grade. The exam questions will cover assigned readings, during-class discussions and lectures.

Grading:

90-100 = A

80-89.9 = B

70-79.9 = C

60-69.9 = D

59.9 and below = F

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments
Week 1	Course Introduction	Read: The Syllabus Deloria, V. (1988). <i>Indians Today, the Real and the Unreal. Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto</i> . University of Oklahoma Press. Cervantes, J. M. (2011). <i>What is Indigenous about Being Indigenous? The Mestiza/o Experience</i> . In <i>Latina/o Healing Practices</i> (pp. 37-62). Routledge. Kearney, M., Varese, S. (2016). <i>Latin America's Indigenous Peoples: Changing Identities and Forms of Resistance</i> . In S. Lobo, S. Talbot, T. M. Carlston, (Eds.). <i>Native American Voices</i> . Longman: New York. Weekly Quiz
Week 2	Indigenous/State Relations	Read: Napoleon, H. (2009). <i>Yuuyaraq: The Way of the Human Being</i> . In M.S.T. Williams (Ed.). <i>The Alaska Native Reader: History, Culture, Politics</i> . Durham, Duke University Press. Weekly Quiz
Week 3		Read:

	Indigenous Oral History	<p>Simpson, L. B. (2014). Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious Transformation. <i>Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society</i>, 3(3).</p> <p>Justice, Daniel Heath. (2018) <i>Why Do We Learn To Be Human? Why Indigenous Literatures Matter</i>. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.</p> <p>Weekly Quiz</p> <p>Individual Paper #1 Due</p>
Week 4	Indigenous Spirituality	<p>Read:</p> <p>Bomberry, V. (2016) Battling for Souls: Organizing the Return of the Sacred Textiles to the Community of Coroma, Bolivia. In S. Lobo, S. Talbot, T. M. Carlston, (Eds.). <i>Native American Voices</i>. Longman: New York.</p> <p>Adekson, M. O. (2016). Similarities and differences between Yoruba traditional Healers (YTH) and Native American and Canadian Healers (NACH). <i>Journal of religion and health</i>, 55(5), 1717-1728.</p> <p>Weekly Quiz</p>
Week 5	Indigenous Values and Worldviews	<p>Read:</p> <p>Bodenhorn, B. (2000). It's Good to Know Who Your Relatives Are But We Were Taught to Share With Everybody: Shares and Sharing Among Inupiaq Households. <i>Senri Ethnological Studies</i>, 53, 27-60.</p> <p>Justice, Daniel Heath. <i>How Do We Learn To Live Together? Why Indigenous Literatures Matter</i>. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2018.</p> <p>Weekly Quiz</p> <p>Exam #1 Due</p>
Week 6	Cultural and Language Reawakening (Revitalization)	<p>Read:</p> <p>Kelly, P., & Russell, C. C. (2023). Northern Arapaho language revitalization with virtual reality. <i>Native American and Indigenous Studies</i>, 10(1), 60-77.</p> <p>De Costa, P. I. (2021). Indigenous Language Revitalization: How Education Can Help Reclaim "Sleeping" Languages. <i>Journal of Language, Identity & Education</i>, 20(5), 355-361.</p> <p>Weekly Quiz</p>
Week 7	Indigenous Rights, Self-Determination and Sovereignty	<p>Read:</p> <p>Lightfoot, S. R. (2021). Decolonizing Self-Determination: Haudenosaunee Passports and Negotiated Sovereignty. <i>European Journal of International Relations</i>, 27(4), 971-994.</p> <p>Schmidt, R. W. (2011). American Indian Identity and Blood Quantum in the 21st Century: A Critical Review. <i>Journal of Anthropology</i>, 2011(1), 549521.</p> <p>Weekly Quiz</p> <p>Individual Paper #2 Due</p>
Week 8	Urban Indigenous Peoples	<p>Read:</p> <p>Forbes, J. (1998). The Urban Tradition Among Native Americans. <i>American Indian Culture and Research Journal</i>, 22(4), 15-27.</p>

		Fine-Dare, K. (2016). Hidden Histories of Indigeneity in Urban Andean Ecuador. Transubstantiation, Ceremony and Intention in Quito. <i>Anthropological Forum</i> (26)4: 376-396. Weekly Quiz
Week 9	Indigenous Literatures	Read: Roberts, C. A., & Fitz, E. E. (2020). Indigenous Literatures. <i>The Routledge Handbook to the Culture and Media of the America</i> . Routledge. Weekly Quiz
Week 10	Indigenous Peoples and Environmental Justice	Read: Ulloa, A. (2017). Perspectives of Environmental Justice from Indigenous Peoples of Latin America: A relational Indigenous environmental justice. <i>Environmental Justice</i> , 10(6), 175-180. Nuttall, M. (2019). Indigenous Peoples, Self-Determination and the Arctic Environment. In T.V. Callaghan, M.Nuttall (Eds). <i>The Arctic..</i> Routledge. Weekly Quiz Exam #2 Due
Week 11	Indigeneity in the Borderlands	Read: Leza, C. (2019). <i>Introduction. Divided Peoples: Policy, Activism, and Indigenous Identities on the US-Mexico Border</i> . University of Arizona Press. Weekly Quiz
Week 12	Indigenous Education and Methodologies	Read: Merculieff, L. (2013) <i>The Way of the Real Human Being</i> . In L. Merculieff, Roderick, L. (Eds.). <i>Stop talking: Indigenous Ways of Teaching and Learning and Difficult Dialogues in Higher Education</i> . University of Alaska Anchorage. Kovach, M. (2021). <i>Story as Indigenous Methodology. Doing Indigenous Research in a Good Way. Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts</i> . University of Toronto press. Weekly Quiz <u>First discussion of class materials, and how to locate good and viable sources for your group, how to construct research models.</u>
Week 13	Decolonizing Research Methodologies/Museums and Indigenous Representation	Read: Rivera Cusicanqui, S. (2012). Ch'ixinakax utxiwa: A Reflection on the Practices and Discourses of Decolonization. <i>The South Atlantic Quarterly</i> 111 (1): 95-109. Yellowbird, W.A., Waziyatawin. (2012) <i>Introduction. Decolonizing Our Minds and Actions</i> . In W. A., Wilson, M. Yellowbird (Eds.). <i>For Indigenous Minds Only: A Decolonization Handbook</i> . Sante Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press. Graham, M., Murphy, N. (2010). NAGPRA at 20: Museum Collections and Reconnections. <i>Museum Anthropology</i> ,

		33(2), 105-124. Weekly Quiz <u>Students should be prepared to discuss their group research topics.</u>
Week 14	Co-Production of Knowledge	Read: Lilian Na'ia Alessa What is Truth? Where Western Science and Traditional Knowledge Converge. In M.S.T. Williams (Ed.). <i>The Alaska Native Reader: History, Culture, Politics</i> . Durham, Duke University Press. Yua, E., Raymond-Yakoubian, J., Daniel, R. A., & Behe, C. (2022). A framework for co-production of knowledge in the context of Arctic research. <i>Ecology and Society</i> , 27(1). Weekly Quiz
Week 15	Final Group Presentations	Student group projects will be presented in class.
Week of Finals		Exam #3 Due

SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS

Sample Exam Questions (these types of questions will be used for all the course exams)

1. In what ways do Indigenous arts and crafts serve as a vehicle to preserve and reclaim Indigenous identity? In your answer, you should rely on the readings and the examples from class lectures and discussions.
2. Describe how the Indigenous communities we studied in class understand and relate to the surrounding environment. Do the perspectives and values of the Indigenous populations regarding animals and environment compare or contrast with your own views? What lessons, if any, might mainstream American society gain from the Indigenous perspectives on the environment?
3. Explain the blood quantum principle that is used by the federal government, and most contemporary tribal governments to determine Native American and Alaska Native tribal identity in the United States. Does the Canadian government use a similar principle? How do such principles impact Indigenous communities in North America? How does this principle differ from the way that Indigenous communities have traditionally determined tribal belonging?
4. Describe the sharing tradition and value of the Indigenous populations discussed. How can they organize to preserve the tradition of sharing that was so important to cultural survival while successfully integrating their society into the modern market economy?
5. What advice would you give to ensure that the new structures of public government supported the cultural values and goals of Indigenous peoples, while, at the same time, being fair and equitable to their non-Indigenous neighbors?
6. Although traditional knowledge is fundamental to Indigenous societies and their cultural identities, how does one validate the information and understandings that are being transmitted to new generations? Is it important to validate such fundamental information and understandings?
7. What do the terms "tradition" and "traditional" mean to you? How is tradition formed, and how does it change? Use examples from the readings and lectures discussed in class as well as from your own culture.

Sample In-Class Assignment

Based on the following reading: Kearney, M., Varese, S. (2016). Latin America's Indigenous Peoples: Changing Identities and Forms of Resistance. In S. Lobo, S. Talbot, T. M. Carlston, (Eds.). Native American Voices. Longman: New York.

1. What are "the four fundamental forms of ethnic resilience and opposition" that have occurred in Indigenous Latin American history?
2. As demonstrated by the demands of the Mayan rebels of Chiapas, Mexico, in 1994, what are the two central concerns of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America?

Group Project Assignment Sample:

Step 1: Form Your Groups. Groups should be comprised of three to four students. Select Your Research Topic. You are required to choose a topic and to transform it into a research question. Be sure to follow the guidelines that explain how to create a research model.

Step 2: Do Your Research. Research facts about your topic. Clearly outline the scientific evidence that helps answer the research question you asked.

Step 3: Develop a 7-minute Power Point Presentation that summarizes the scientific evidence that supported your answers to the research question.

Note: Be sure that every group member plays an equally important role in developing and presenting your research.

COURSE CHANGE FORM

COPY OF CATALOG PAGE NOT REQUIRED

All fields below are required

College : Liberal Arts Department : Sociology and Anthropology
Effective Term : Fall 2026

Rationale for changing the course:

We are updating the course description so that it is clear that students from a variety of majors are invited to take the course.

All fields below are required

Subject Prefix and number NAIS/SOCI/ANTH 2300

Course Title Intro to Native American and Indigenous Studies
(Course descriptions are limited to 600 characters)
(Course titles are limited to 29 characters)

Change	From	To
Course Description	This required course serves as a foundation for the Minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS). Drawing upon the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, where Indigenous Peoples have lived for millennia, and moving outward to North and South America, and then the World, this course provides an introductory overview of key concepts, themes, theories, and ideas relevant for understanding Indigenous Peoples confrontations with modernity.	This interdisciplinary course surveys the histories, cultural traditions, and present-day experiences of Indigenous peoples in North America and around the world. The course highlights Indigenous perspectives while examining themes such as sovereignty, spirituality, environmental justice and sustainability, cultural reawakening, resistance, and adaptation. Students will engage with frameworks of Indigenous activism, decolonization, and collaborative research methods that emphasize ethical and participatory approaches.

These changes will be reflected in Banner, Goldmine, and the catalog