

**Philosophy 451/551: Native American Philosophy**

Fall 2013

Tuesday and Thursday, 10-11:50

117 Global Scholars Hall

Instructor: Professor Scott L. Pratt

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**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an introduction to Native American philosophy. In the first section of the course, we will consider the context of genocide in the Americas and the “Pan-Indian” philosophical tradition that emerged as part of the resistance to white American attempts to acquire native lands and eliminate native culture in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The second section examines the work of contemporary Native philosophers including Vine Deloria, Jr., in his efforts to present a Native philosophical perspective that has the potential to respond to the crises of cultural and environmental destruction; Robert Bunge, a Lakota philosopher whose work develops from a philosophical examination of Sioux cosmology and language; and Thomas Norton-Smith whose work connects Native American philosophy and the philosophy of Nelson Goodman. The third section takes up a critique of postcolonial and poststructuralist philosophy in the work of Gerald Vizenor and considers the implications of an indigenous alternative philosophy in the work Taiaiake Alfred. The methodology of this course will involve close reading of primary texts, classroom discussions and presentations, written work and guest lecturers. The course will satisfy the GRCC requirement for an undergraduate major in Philosophy and will satisfy the ARNL and American tradition course requirements for the MA and PhD programs in Philosophy. The course also satisfies the Group 1, Culture, Language and Education, requirement for the Native Studies Undergraduate Minor.

**Texts:**

The following required and recommended texts are available at the UO Bookstore. Other required and recommended readings will be available on Blackboard.

Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasáse: indigenous pathways of action and freedom*, 2005.

Vine Deloria, Jr., *Evolution, Creationism and Other Modern Myths: A Critical Inquiry*, 2002.

Thomas Norton-Smith, *The Dance of Person and Place*, 2010

Umek (E. Richard Atleo), *Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview*, 2004.

Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners*, 1994.

Graduate Supplementary Reading (Undergraduate Recommended Reading):

David Stannard, *American Holocaust*, 1992

Nelson Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*, 1978.

Jodi A. Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism*, 2011.

Available on Blackboard:

Pratt (ed.), *American Indian Prophecy* (Blackboard Reserve)

Pratt (ed.), *Pan-Indian Resistance and Assimilation* (Blackboard Reserve)

Robert Bunge, *An American Urphilosophie: An American Philosophy BP (Before Pragmatism)*, 1984

**Undergraduate Course Information:**

Readings: You are responsible for all of the required readings listed in the chart below. All readings should be completed by the beginning of the week indicated. Undergraduate students are encouraged to read the graduate supplementary readings as well.

Précises: You will write four précises on the readings, each no more than 700 words. Each précis should summarize the argument assigned in as much detail as possible. State what you take to be the conclusion and be as clear as possible about the premises that support it. Précises must be submitted through Blackboard (see the "Assignments" section) through before class on the day they are due. They will be returned with comments by email.

Paper Proposal: The paper proposal should be no more than 300 words and should include the thesis of your paper and why the topic is important. The proposal must be submitted electronically through Blackboard.

Final Paper: The final paper should be no more than 3,000 words (10 pages) and should include a very brief summary of the argument that you will make. You are not required to use secondary sources, but you may. Papers should have a clear thesis and argument and include a discussion of the importance of the topic either within Native American philosophy or relative to a particular philosophical issue. **Papers are due electronically as indicated in the chart below.**

Attendance and Participation: **Attendance is required.** Roll will be taken. If you miss a class due to extenuating circumstances, contact me as soon as possible. All other absences will be penalized. Interacting with others in conversation is an essential part of the practice of philosophy and so you should try to actively participate in each discussion.

Grading: Class participation (including attendance and participation in discussion) will account for 10% of your final grade. Each précis will count for 10% of your final grade (40% in total). The paper proposal will count for 5% and the final paper will be worth 45% of your grade. Improvement in participation and written work will count positively in calculating your final grade. Students registered P/NP grading must earn the equivalent of a C- grade in order to receive a grade of P.

### **Graduate Course Information:**

Readings: You are responsible for all of the required readings and the graduate supplementary readings listed in the chart below. All readings should be completed by the beginning of the week indicated. In addition to these readings, you are expected to pursue secondary readings on the course material in support of your own interests, the précis, and the final paper.

Additional Readings: Graduate students will complete additional readings as described in the outline above. These readings will provide additional background to the topic at hand and should be used to enhance the presentations on the primary readings. These additional works may also be used in the final paper.

Précis: You will write two précis on the readings. The first précis will be about one or more works by American Indian writers working before 1940. The second précis will be on the text you will present during class discussion (see below). Each précis should summarize the argument of the work and place it in relation to its context and larger philosophical questions that emerge in the American Indian philosophical tradition (e.g. the idea of agency or sovereignty, conceptions of land or community, issues of colonization and decolonization). The first précis should be no more than six pages in length. The second précis should be no more than eleven pages in length and is due on the day of discussion leadership (see below). Material developed in the précis can be used in the final term paper as well.

Reading Presentations: Each student will present one of the listed readings in class and lead discussion. To prepare for this presentation, the graduate student will prepare a précis of the work (see above) that will be turned in after the presentation. In some cases, more than one student will present on the same set of readings and so should coordinate their presentations so that they discuss different parts or issues.

Term Paper: Your term paper may be on a topic of your choice and should be about fifteen pages long (a little longer than standard “conference” length). Although you will develop your own paper topic, I strongly encourage you to talk with me about the topics you are considering. Paper proposals (of one or two pages with a draft bibliography) will be due on as indicated in the chart of assignments and readings below. I will provide comments on your proposals. In general, papers should focus on materials read for class. In addition to the required readings, your papers should make use of sources beyond the course readings as well. Since it is important for you to work on papers with a more far-reaching purpose, I encourage you to think of these papers as works-in-progress toward a possible conference paper or journal submission. **Final papers are due electronically on the date indicated on the chart below.**

Attendance and Participation: **Attendance is required.** For every unexcused absence after one, you will lose 1/3 of a grade. You are also expected to arrive on time and prepared to discuss the assigned material.

Grading: Your participation in discussion will count for 10% of your final grade and your Reading Presentation for 10%. Each précis will count for 30% of your final grade and your final paper will count for 40%. Improvement in graded work will count positively in calculating your final grade. Students registered P/NP grading must earn the equivalent of a B+ grade in order to receive a grade of P.

#### **General Course Information:**

Note that the schedule of readings is subject to change during the quarter. All changes will be announced in advance during class. If you have questions about the assignments, requirements, or subject matter, please let me know.

Incomplete Grades: Incompletes must be arranged for in advance in accordance with University policy: [http://registrar.uoregon.edu/incomplete\\_policy](http://registrar.uoregon.edu/incomplete_policy).

Academic Misconduct Policy: All students are subject to the regulations stipulated in the UO Student Conduct Code (<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx>). This code represents a compilation of important regulations, policies, and procedures pertaining to student life. It is intended to inform students of their rights and responsibilities during their association with this institution, and to provide general guidance for enforcing those regulations and policies essential to the educational and research missions of the University.

Statement on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course. For more information, see: <http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>.

Accessibility: If you encounter barriers to full participation due to the design of lectures, web-based information, in-class activities, format of exams, program timelines or curriculum, please make arrangements to meet with me to discuss ways of addressing these barriers. You may also contact the Accessible Education Center, which responds to requests from students to help facilitate access in individual classes and academic programs. Please go to <http://aec.uoregon.edu/> for more information.

PHIL 451/551—Native American Philosophy, Fall 2013, Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Week	Topic	Readings/Assignments
Week 1	Agency and Sovereignty	<p>Luther Standing Bear, <i>Land of the Spotted Eagle</i>, Chapters 8 &amp; 9, 1933 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>Vine Deloria, Jr., Power, Sovereignty and Freedom from <i>We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf</i>, 1970 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>George Tinker, Spirituality, Native American Personhood, <i>Sovereignty, and Solidarity: Liberation Theology and Socialism from Spirit and Resistance</i>, 2004 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p><b>Additional Grad Reading:</b> Lorraine Mayer, Ástam ánimotahtak (Come, let's talk, have a discussion) in <i>Philosophy and Aboriginal Rights</i>, 2013.</p> <p>Dale Turner, What is American Indian Philosophy? Toward a Critical Indigenous Philosophy, (Blackboard Reserve).</p>
Week 2	Genocide and Philosophy	<p>Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Anti-Indianism and Genocide from <i>Anti-Indianism in Modern America: A Voice from Tatekeya's Earth</i>, 2001 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart, "The American Indian Holocaust: Healing Historical Unresolved Grief" (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>Jodi Byrd, "Living My Native Life Deadly": Red Lake, Ward Churchill, and the Discourses of Competing Genocides, 2007 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>Pratt (ed.), <i>Pan-Indian Resistance and Assimilation</i>, read Hewitt (Orenda and the Definition of Religion), Hewitt (The Iroquoian Concept of the Soul), Jones (The Algonkin Manitou).</p> <p><b>Additional Grad Reading:</b> David Stannard, <i>American Holocaust</i>, Chapters 1 – 4.</p> <p><b>Undergraduate Précis 1 due</b> in week 2.</p>
Week 3	American Indian History and Pan-Indian Philosophy	<p>Eastman, <i>The Soul of the Indian</i> and <i>The Indian Today</i> (Blackboard)</p> <p>Pratt (ed.), <i>Pan-Indian Resistance and Assimilation</i>, read Cornelius (Industrial Organization for the Indian), Parker (The Philosophy of Indian Education) and Parker (Problems of Race Assimilation) (Blackboard)</p> <p>Deloria, <i>Spirit and Reason</i>, Chapters 1-4 and Chapters 24 and 25 (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p><b>Additional Grad Reading:</b> Pratt (ed.), <i>American Indian Prophecy</i> (Blackboard Reserve)</p>
Week 4	Agency, Land and Science	<p>Deloria, Selections from <i>For This Land</i> (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p>Deloria, <i>Evolution, Creationism and Other Modern Myths</i>, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9.</p> <p><b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____</p> <p><b>Graduate Précis 1 Due</b></p> <p><b>Undergraduate Précis 2 due</b> in Week 4</p>
Week 5	Agency, Land and Science	<p>E. Richard Atleo, <i>Tsawalk: A Nuu-chah-nulth Worldview</i>.</p> <p><b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____</p>
Week 6	Sioux Philosophy	<p>Robert Bunge, <i>An American Urphilosophie: An American Philosophy BP (Before Pragmatism)</i> (Blackboard Reserve)</p> <p><b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____</p>

		<b>Undergraduate Précis 3 due in Week 6.</b>
Week 7	Ontological Pluralism	Thomas Norton-Smith, <i>The Dance of Person and Place</i> . <b>Additional Grad Reading:</b> Nelson Goodman, <i>Ways of Worldmaking</i> . <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____ <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____
Week 8	Colonization and Poststructuralism	Gerald Vizenor, <i>Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance</i> <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____ <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____ <b>Undergraduate Précis 4 due in week 8</b> <b>Undergraduate and Graduate Final Paper Proposals Due in week 8</b>
Week 9	Colonization and Poststructuralism	Vizenor Continued. <b>Additional Grad Reading:</b> Jodi A. Byrd, <i>The Transit of Empire</i> , Introduction and Chapters 1, 2, 6 and Conclusion. <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____
Weeks 10	Colonization and Decolonization	Taiaiake Alfred, <i>Wasáse: indigenous pathways of action and freedom</i> , Sections "Rebellion of the Truth" and Colonial Stains on Our Existence." <b>Reading Presentation:</b> _____
Finals Week		<b>Final Papers due at noon, Monday, December 9, using Blackboard.</b>