

REL 4937 Special Topics: Native American Women

Section: U03-0
In Person
Spring Term 2024

Course Meeting Information

Days and Times: Mondays and Fridays, 11:00 AM -12:15 PM
Room: College of Business Complex (CBC). 142

Instructor Information

Maria-Luisa Veisaga, Ph.D.

Office: DM 210 (MMC)

Phone: 305.348.1201

Office Hours: Thursdays, 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM
or by appointment

E-mail: veisaga@gmail.com

I will make every effort to respond to your email within 48 hours.

Course Description and Purpose

Under the umbrella of “Native American Women”, “Indigenous Women”, and – or – “*Mujeres Originarias*”, this course is design to examine the multifaceted histories, experiences, and situations faced by Native American Women across Latin America, Florida, and the United States in contemporary and historical contexts.

Through an interdisciplinary approach, the central focus of our study is to delve into the rich tapestry of cultural identities, eco-spiritual dimensions, socio-political processes, and the vital connection between Native American women and the concepts of Mother Earth (Turtle Island), and *Pachamama* (Abya Yala). It will address, between others, the relationships of community and family, wellness and health, change and continuity, political participation, self-determination and the tensions with colonization, racialization, class and gender violence that intersect their lives.

This course will draw from religious studies, history, sociology, gender studies, Native American studies and knowledge from *comunidades originarias*, to provide a holistic perspective on the subject matter.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze historical, and social constructions of “Native Women”, “Indigenous Women”, and “*Mujeres Originarias*” at the intersection of racialization, ethnicity, and class.
- Demonstrate knowledge of the various ancestral Communities, Tribes, and Nations in the Americas that women identify as places of belonging.
- Define and identify key concepts, and complexities [major events, perceptions, disparities, struggles] that Native American women experience across time and places.
- Examine the significance of Mother Earth, and *Pachamama* as a major deity, sacred, and source of existence.
- Recognize Native Women’s agency and involvement in the struggles for self-determination and sovereignty.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will demonstrate the following:

- **Global Awareness:** Demonstrate understanding of the interrelatedness of local and international contexts in shaping Native American Women issues.
- **Global Perspective:** Assemble a multi-perspective analysis of how local, global and international issues are interrelated with the disparities, struggles and resistances that Native American Women face.
- **Global Engagement:** Synthesize the experiences of inequalities faced by Native American Women within a local, global, international, and intercultural framework.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Required Textbook and Course Materials

If no materials listed, no items are needed.

No Textbook Required for purchase

Required/Recommended:	No Textbook Required for purchase
Authors:	No Textbook Required for purchase
Publisher:	No Textbook Required for purchase
Publication Date:	No Textbook Required for purchase
Copyright Date:	No Textbook Required for purchase
ISBN 10:	No Textbook Required for purchase
ISBN 13:	No Textbook Required for purchase

All course readings will be posted on our Canvas website.

Expectations for this Course

Students are expected to:

- Read the course syllabus.
- Review the information located on the course content Page.
- Introduce yourself to the class during the first week.
- Regularly check your email.
- Respond to emails, messages, and discussions within two regular business days.
- Attendance is required. Students are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and remain in class until the end of the class period. If you miss class, you will still be responsible for any material disseminated or work assigned or due in your absence.
- Participation: you are expected to participate in class, and interact with instructor and peers, be prepared to discuss the readings due for each class period.
- Complete the weekly readings (textbook, papers, and lectures) and be prepared to engage in class discussions with instructor and peers.
- Complete and submit assignments (discussions, quizzes, group work, etc.) by the corresponding due dates.

The instructor will:

- provide timely course reminders and updates
- respond to emails within two business days
- provide grades within 7-10 days of due date
- provide detailed and clear feedback on your course grades and ways to improve your rates for future assignments.

Course Communication

Messages, Announcements, and Discussion Forums

This course uses both: veisaga@gmail.com and the **Canvas Inbox** as a means of communication. Check out the [Canvas Conversations TutorialLinks to an external site.](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using the Inbox. If you have questions specific to your personal situation or learning outcomes, please do not hesitate to email me to schedule an appointment during my office hours. You can anticipate a reply within two regular business days.

Assignments

Writing Assignments

You will complete three writing assignments in this course: a site visit report, a research paper, and a group presentation. The written assignments will demonstrate that you have understood, thought about, and can apply assigned readings and other course materials.

Note on Writing and Research Resources

For information on professional writing, visit the [FIU Center for Excellence in WritingLinks to an external site.](#), which offers personalized online tutoring sessions to help you improve your writing. To make an appointment with a trained peer consultant, go to the FIU Library website. You can always contact FIU's Distance Learning Librarian, [Sarah HammillLinks to an external site.](#)

- email: hammils@fiu.edu
- phone: 305.348.3009

Grading

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Attendance	40	0.5	20	20%
Participation	20	1	20	20%
Site visit Report	1	20	20	20%
Group Presentation	1	20	20	20%
Research Paper	1	30	20	20%
Total	34	N/A	100	100%

Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %	Letter	Range %
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A -	90 - 94	B -	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B +	87 - 89	C +	77 - 79	F	0 - 59

Your grade for each assignment will be recorded via the Canvas Grade Center. (Please keep in mind that the Grade Center cannot link a letter grade for Grading Schemas using points, only percentages).

EVALUATION CRITERIA	
A (90-100)	Excellent work that is engaged, insightful, and demonstrates that you are able to apply the concepts from class for critical reflection and evaluation of new content.
B (80-89)	Above-average work that demonstrates your understanding of class concepts by using course material to support your argument. Work develops meaningful ideas.
C (70-79)	Average, Passable work that considers the themes of the class, but lacks focus and does not develop class material effectively or in a sustained fashion.
D (60-69)	Below average work that fails to consider the class themes in any substantial way.
F (0-59)	Work fails to meet minimum assignment requirements.

Course Content Note

This course explores potentially controversial issues. One objective of Women's and Gender Studies courses is to encourage and enable students to think critically about and engage with issues and concepts. No assertion or claims in this class, from the assigned texts, the professor, or classmates should be construed as persuading, expecting, or requiring agreement. You are expected to consider the ideas and evidence presented in this class and to critically examine and respectfully discuss them to deepen your understanding, regardless of personal or political beliefs.

Course Policies

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy

While the advances in AI and AI language generators are exciting and can be used for many things, they fail in responding to assignments in this course, which require you to demonstrate your comprehension, analysis, and application of our course concepts based on our course readings, lectures, and discussions. This policy covers any text and artwork/graphics/video/audio produced by generative AI tools, including but not limited to ChatGtP and BingAI.

1. The use of AI tools is **not permitted** in this course UNLESS under direct instruction from your professor to do so. Please contact your professor if you are unsure or have questions BEFORE using AI for any assignment.
2. For assignments where your instructor explicitly permits the use of AI, as with all citations, you must indicate what part of the assignment was written by AI and what was written by you. No more than 25% of an assignment should be created with AI if the instructor gives permission for its use.

Academic Integrity and Turnitin

In support of Academic Integrity at Florida International University, Turnitin will be used to review the papers that you submit in this course. Turnitin does not determine whether plagiarism has taken place or not. Turnitin will also not be used as a punitive tool or measure. The instructor of this class will use the reports that Turnitin generates as a basis for thoroughly evaluating the authenticity and originality of your work and the work of your classmates.

Lateness

All assignments have to be completed/submitted on the dates they are due. If you fail to complete a Quiz/ Activity or submit a written assignment within the allotted time, you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment in question.

No late work will be accepted, except under extreme circumstances.

To excuse a missed assignment, I require formal documentation of extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical emergency; jury duty; etc.).

Your computer being down, or having no Internet connection, will not be accepted as an excuse.

Course Changes

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus and will communicate any changes to the syllabus in a timely fashion through email. You will be responsible for making the necessary adjustments to be prepared for class. In addition, the instructor reserves the right to use class documents (quizzes, papers, presentations, and communication) for academic purposes.

University Policies and Resources

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Policies](#)
- [Netiquette](#)
- [Inclusivity Statement](#)
- [Copyright Statement](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
 - Review course tools' accessibility statements.
 - Note that certain videos from external sources are not closed-captioned. If you need closed-captioning, you may use [Google Chrome's live caption feature](#)[Links to an external site.](#) or reach out to the professor for additional assistance.
- [Technical Requirements and Skills](#)
 - Review course tools' privacy policies.
- [Software Resources](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- [Center for Excellence in Writing](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- [Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)

Technical Support: [FIU Canvas Help Team](#). If you encounter an issue, please contact the Help Team immediately.