American Indian and Indigenous Studies Concentration

Introduction

A concentration in American Indian and Indigenous Studies (IDS-AIIS) within the Interdisciplinary Studies major has been established. This AIIS concentration is an extension of the minor (see AIIS Minor) for students who have interest in American Indian topics and would like to take their studies further with writing a senior thesis. This concentration is open to all students. The AIIS concentration will offer courses which cut across all disciplines such as anthropology, religion, Latin American studies, and history. This concentration deals with the issues and concerns of indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere while seeking to understand historical, political, social, and religious structures from an indigenous perspective.

Rationale

Students have taken a keen interest in the study of American Indian and Indigenous Peoples over the past years. As seen across the interdisciplinary landscape a variety of courses are being offered which deal with American Indian and Indigenous topics. Secondly, this concentration brings together a set of diverse and interconnected classes while also allowing students to go further in researching Indigenous Peoples of the World. Current students who are taking the AIIS minor, or have interest in American Indian topics, will have the opportunity to pursue research and prepare themselves for graduate work in the field of American Indian and/or Indigenous Studies.

Requirements for Concentration

The requirements for the IDS-AIIS concentration are equivalent with those found in the IDS major within CLAS. A 3.0 GPA and approval by the CLAS IDS committee are required to enter the major. Students select two UF faculty members from two different departments (one of whom must be a member of CLAS) to serve as primary and secondary advisors. Students are to produce a senior thesis under the guidance of their primary and secondary faculty advisors. A minimum of 7 hours is also required for the thesis (IDS 4906 Interdisciplinary Thesis Research).

- [Download the application form (PDF)]

Students may choose from disciplines such as Anthropology, History, Art and Art History, Religion, Latin American Studies and History, Geology, Botany, and Wild Life Sciences to design the core of a concentration (21 hours at the 3000 level and above) that culminates in a thesis. Through taking these courses over several semesters, students acquire knowledge and an understanding, which helps them in their formulation of a senior thesis. As part of acquiring academic knowledge of American Indian culture, students will be encouraged to spend time in the particular tribe of their interest to have a greater understanding of the current issues which the tribe faces. This part of the concentration will not be mandatory but will be encouraged by the professors who take part in mentoring the student for their senior thesis. One of the opportunities to study abroad currently is the trip to Merida, Mexico. Students on this study abroad trip can take ANT 4956 Anthropology of the Yucatan and work amongst Indigenous
Peoples. Such trips to Latin American or North American Indigenous Nations will prepare them for graduate work and will help them develop relations with tribal members that may help them in future research.

The concentration requires a minimum of 30 hours at the 3000 level or above in American Indian and Indigenous Studies and related courses with a C or better.

Special topics courses in other departments may be counted toward the major provided they include substantial coverage of material relevant to American Indian and Indigenous Studies.

In the case when a course needed for the completion of the concentration is not available and all other course choices have been exhausted, Dr. Wright will work with the student to provide them a means to do independent study.

**Required Courses for the IDS Concentration**

- AMH 3660 American Indian History to 1815
- AMH 3661 Native American History since 1806
- REL 2388/ANT 3930 Indigenous religious traditions of the Americas

**Thesis**

Senior Thesis is to be pursued under faculty sponsorship, and should be related to the student's interest in any of the disciplines which incorporate American Indian & Indigenous Peoples’ topics. The senior thesis can also be pursued as field research in the student's tribe of choice. A proposal of what will be accomplished must be drawn up and approved (by the mentor) the semester before the student embarks for field research.

**Focus of the Concentration**

The program may serve as preparation for graduate work in American Indian and Indigenous Studies, as background for a career in American Indian education or community service, or as an area of special interest that will enrich the undergraduate experience. Students may combine the AIIS Concentration or minor with other majors and go on to professional careers in law, medicine, journalism, business or other professions.

American Indian and Indigenous Studies focus on

1. North, Central, and South American Indigenous History
2. North, Central, and South American Indigenous Beliefs and World View
3. Indigenous Religious Traditions of the World
5. Shamanisms of the World
6. Environmental and Conservation Issues and Efforts *
*(Students choosing this focus for their concentration must be sure that there is no duplication of the BA in Environmental Studies in the School of Natural Resources and the Environment.)*

**List of Courses**

*History, Art and Art History, Anthropology*

- AMH 3569 Women in the American West
- AMH 3444 The Far West
- ANT 3241 Anthropology of Religion
- ANT 3162 Aztec Civilization
- ANT 3164 Incas and their Ancestors
- ANT 3332 Peoples of Latin America
- ANT 4168 Maya Civilization
- ANT 4392 Peoples of the Arctic
- ANT 4323 Peoples of Mexico and Central America
- ANT 4331 Peoples of the Andes
- ANT 4336 Peoples of Brazil
- ANT 4930 Plains Indians
- ANT 4956 Anthropology of the Yucatan (Study Abroad)
- ARH 2500 Non-Western Art
- ARH 3513 Art, Culture and Power in Africa
- ARH 3522 Contemporary African Art
- ARH 3652 Ancient Andean Art
- ARH 3585 The Arts of Oceania
- ARH 3653 MesoAmerican Art
- LAH 3130 Colonial Latin America
- LAS 4935 The Postcolonial Maya

*Religion*

- REL 3930 Religion and Anthropology
- REL 3103 Religion and Nature in North America
- **REL 2388 INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS OF THE AMERICAS**
- REL 3022 Myth and Ritual
- REL 3098 Religion, Medicine and Healing
- REL 3370 Religions of Africa
- REL 3938/ANT 3930 Special Topics in Religion. Courses given in the past have included: **INTRODUCTION TO VODOU; INDIGENOUS RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE WORLD; INDIGENOUS COSMOLOGIES; INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND CHRISTIANITIES;**
- REL 4168 Religion, Nature and Society
- REL 4936 Special Topics in Religious Studies
- **REL 5937 CONTEMPORARY SHAMANISMS**
- REL 6137 Indigenous Religions of the Americas
Environmental Relations and Analysis

ANT 4403 Environment and Cultural Behavior
ANT 4930 Health, Contamination and Culture
BOT 2800 Plants in Human Affairs
GEO 3427 Plants, Health and Spirituality
LAS 4935 Ecotourism in Latin America
WIS 2552 Biodiversity from a Global Perspective
WIS 4523 Human Dimensions of Natural Resource Conservation
WIS 3434 Tropical Wildlife

Contact

For further information please consult:
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