

**Course Objectives/Course Outline**  
**Spokane Community College**

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**Course Title:** Native American History  
**Prefix and Course Number:** HIST& 219

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**Course Learning Outcomes:**

**By the end of this course, a student should be able to:**

- This survey will provide students with a basic understanding of the history of Native North America from antiquity to the present. It focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on areas that became the United States. Students will examine and discuss significant cultural, economic, and political developments among diverse populations of indigenous peoples. They will explore and compare many of the distinct cultures that existed in North America prior to European contact. They will examine conflicts that Indian Nations faced after contact, their significant and diverse contributions to the American nation state, and their unique methods to maintain aspects of their cultures in an often hostile environment.
- The course will be divided into three eras and peoples will be approached on the basis of geography. Students are encouraged to center Native worldviews, political constructions, and social norms in their work.

**Course Outline:**

- I. **Full Sovereignty and Conflict: Antiquity to 1763.** This unit surveys a wide array of Native American worldviews; social, cultural, and political practices that formed prior to contact with Europeans; and conflicts that emerged during and after contact.

Topics:

1. Overview of Native Worldviews.
  2. Creation Stories and their significance to Indian Nations
  3. Berengia Theory and its significance to Indian Nations
  4. Cultural Diversity in Native America
  5. Ancient Civilizations – Northwest Coast, Southwest, and Eastern Mound Builders
  6. Trade and trade networks
  7. Contact – Benefits, Conflict, and Warfare
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- II. **Colonialism, Resistance, and the Curtailment of Native Sovereignty, 1711 to 1871.** This era is marked by intensive colonization of Native lands by Spain, Britain, France, and the United States. As the ascending power, the influence of the United States on indigenous societies was astounding. Between 1776 and 1871 American Indian policy was fueled by expansionism and enabled by treaty making. Ultimately, the goal of the United States in its first century was the “Physical acquisition of valuable western and southern lands and the physical subjugation of its peoples.”<sup>1</sup> Sovereignty was deferred to the conquerors.

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<sup>1</sup>John R. Wunder, *“Retained by the People”: A History of American Indians and the Bill of Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 17.

## Topics:

1. Colonialism and Genocide
2. American Indian Policy
3. Resistance and Pan-Indian Movements
4. Indian Removal and Indian Territory
5. Beyond the pale of European Settlement: Great Plains and Great Basin Cultures

- III. **Dependence, Attempted Assimilation, Revitalization, and the Quest for Renewed Sovereignty, 1871 to 2008.** Between 1871 and 1934, the policies of treaty making and containment were replaced by efforts to assimilate Native Americans into mainstream society. Despite often dire circumstances, Indians maintained essential aspects of their heritages. After 1934, sovereignty and self-determination were generally acknowledged as appropriate goals, and the uneven process of cultural revitalization was underway.

## Topics:

1. Military Service
2. Assimilation Efforts – Allotment, Education, Relocation, Termination
3. The Indian New Deal
4. Identity Issues – Blood Quantum, Citizenship
5. Resistance and Revitalization
6. Native American Film and Literature
7. Urbanization
8. Gaming and its Significance in Indian Country