Spring 2027 Course Descriptions – Native American & Indigenous Studies

NAIS 1101 – Native America: Introduction

Who are the first peoples of North America? Despite the European conquest of the continent and the genocide of the Indigenous people of the Americas, native people are a vibrant force in society. In this class we will learn about the Indigenous people of North America, their history, and the issues they face today through group projects and presentations, weekly reading assignments, and viewing popular media. We will read from key texts by Indigenous writers such as Custer Died For Your Sins (Vine Deloria Jr.), Our History is the Future (Nick Estes), and The Serviceberry (Robin Wall Kimmerer); and watch excerpts from the groundbreaking television show Reservation Dogs.

NAIS 1810 – Beginner Choctaw Language

Special Topic Long Title: Chahta Anumpa 1: Beginner Choctaw Language

Step into the rich heritage of the Gulf South with Introduction to Choctaw, a dynamic 4-credit journey into a vibrant Indigenous language. Spoken by thousands across the nation, Choctaw is the proud ancestral tongue of multiple federally and state-recognized tribes. In this immersive course, you will build foundational speaking and writing skills, primarily focusing on the Oklahoma dialect while exploring fascinating regional variations from Mississippi and Louisiana. More than just a language class, this is a hands-on opportunity to help sustain a threatened linguistic treasure and connect deeply with a rich cultural legacy. Ready to bridge the past and the future? What specific aspect of Choctaw culture or history are you most excited to explore in this class? A 4th credit of asynchronous work is required.

NAIS 3810 – Native Am Lit & Criticism

Special Topic Long Title: Native American Literature and Criticism

How did Turtle get its shell? Should we listen to our elders? Is it "traditional" to write in English? You'll examine novels, poetry, fiction, and criticism by Native authors, ranging from the late 18th century to the present. Through discussion, research, and writing assignments, you will consider the influence of major thinkers in the field but also attend to some Native writers who have been overlooked.