

# American Indian Studies



The American Indian Studies Department at the University of Washington advances and promote knowledge integral to Native peoples through research, teaching, and community service. It is the largest and most comprehensive program of its kind in the Pacific Northwest.

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American Indian Studies alumni  
Jonathan Tomhave and Carol  
Warrior.

## A SAMPLE OF COURSES OFFERED BY AIS

- AIS 203  
Introduction: Philosophical and Aesthetic Universes of American Indian Cultures
- AIS 230  
Contemporary Indian Gaming and Casinos
- AIS 335  
American Indians and the Law
- AIS 340  
Indian Children and Families
- AIS 350  
Two-Dimensional Art of Northwest Coast Indians
- AIS 360  
American Indians in Cinema
- AIS 375  
Powwow: Traditions and Innovation
- AIS 443  
Indigenous Films: Sovereign Visions
- AIS 466  
Producing the Documentary Short
- AIS 503  
Documentary Theory, Form, and Practice

## Education

The American Indian Studies Program offers a major in American Indian Studies, a minor in American Indian Studies, and a master's degree in Native American Documentary Film, Video, and New Digital Media in partnership with the Department of Communication.

American Indian Studies approaches its teaching and research from a decolonized, community based, and global perspective. American Indian Studies faculty and students strive to develop innovative theories and methodologies that increase knowledge about Indigenous Peoples and support the needs of Indigenous communities. The department promotes faculty and student exchange programs with institutions that are committed to a deeper understanding of Indigenous communities and Peoples throughout the world.

Department of American  
Indian Studies faculty.



## Native Voices

Native Voices is the masters degree program in Native American Documentary, Film, and New Digital Media, with Professors Dan Hart and Luana Ross serving as co-directors. Native Voices has been working with Indigenous students and producers for more than fifteen years.

Documentaries produced by the students in our program have won awards and have been screened at Sundance, at the American Indian Film Festival—where Native Voices graduate Rosemary Gibbons won the first prize for documentary—at the Museum of Modern Art, at the National Museum of the American Indian, and at many other venues. Native Voices films are used at scores of American and International universities to teach Indigenous education.



Rosemary Gibbons, center,  
with her first prize trophy  
(documentary category) at the  
American Indian Film Festival.

## Research

American Indian Studies faculty, whose scholarship represents a range of academic disciplines, are nationally and internationally known for their work. Books by our faculty include: *The Power of Promises: Rethinking Indian Treaties in the Pacific Northwest*; *Honoring the Spirit of Our Whaling Ancestors*; *Indians in the Making*; *American Indian Novelists*; *The Encyclopedia of North American Indians*; *Navajo Kinship and Marriage*; *Language and Art in the Navajo Universe*; *Navajo Weaving: Art in its Cultural Context*; and *Wealth, Indians, and Morality in American History* (in press).

## Outreach and Student Support

When Native American students are in the process of selecting a university, they consistently ask two questions:

- 1) Does the university have a Native Studies Program?
- 2) How many Native professors are at the university?



A dancer at a UW Winter Powwow.

The American Indian Studies Program at the University of Washington allows for positive answers to both questions. Moreover, since cultural support is so vital to the retention and graduation of Native students, American Indian Studies also plays a vital role in the process from recruitment to graduation for the University's 500+ Native students.

Yearly, American Indian Studies—through advising, staffing, and direct financial contributions—supports two major Native American events.:

- **The Annual University of Washington Powwow.** For nearly 35 years, in support of the First Nations student organization, American Indian Studies has helped design and staff a three-day competitive powwow, the second largest in the Northwest. With a yearly budget of over \$80,000 the powwow draws between 10,000 to 15,000 participants and spectators.
- **The Annual Raven's Feast Native American Graduation Ceremony.** Held each year at Daybreak Star on the shore of Puget Sound, Raven's Feast celebrates the achievement of all Native American graduates: undergraduate, grad, and professional. Professor Marvin Oliver, a renowned Northwest artist, provides an original 3' x 5' framed print to each graduate. Led by Oliver, American Indian faculty and staff at the University host a salmon feast for 500-600 participants, including graduates and their families.

## Fiscal Information (fiscal year ending June 30, 2009)

### Sources

State support (less benefits and tuition):	\$782,923
Gifts:	\$5,710
Self-sustaining revenue:	\$45,907
Total:	\$834,540

American Indian Studies  
Professor Marvin Oliver.



### FACULTY (AUTUMN 2009)

Tom Grayson Colonnese (Dakota) PhD, English
Charlotte Cote (Nu-Chan-Nulth) PhD, American Ethnic Studies
Deana Dartt-Newton (Chumash/California) Ph.D. Anthropology
Alexandra Harmon PhD, History
Daniel Hart MFA, Film and Television
Cheryl Metoyer (Cherokee) PhD Library Science - Adjunct
Dian Million (Tanana Athabaskan) PhD, American Ethnic Studies
Marvin Oliver (Quinault/Isleta Pueblo) MFA, Art and Sculpture
Scott Pinkham (Nez Perce) MA, Education
Luana Ross (Salish) PhD, Sociology -Adjunct
Gary Witherspoon PhD, Anthropology
Mary Wright PhD, History

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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