



C-ID Descriptor

Federal Indian Law and Policy

Descriptor Details

- **Descriptor Title:** Federal Indian Law and Policy
- **C-ID Number:** 120
- **Units:** 3
- **Date of Last Revision:** 9/2/2025 08:23:52 PM GMT+0000

General Description

This course introduces students to the legal, historical, and political relationships between American Indian tribes and the U.S. federal government. Students will explore the development of federal Indian law and policy from the colonial period to the present, including key legal doctrines, landmark Supreme Court cases, and contemporary issues and policies affecting American Indian nations, communities' lands and futures.

Prerequisites

N/A

Corequisites

N/A

Advisories

N/A

Content

1. American Indian/Native American Studies overview - comparing American Indian traditional cultures and religions in response to the impact of the European invasion.
 - a. Review and comparison of tribal origins and oral traditions; ethnicity, ethnocentrism, and racism
2. The Doctrine of Discovery, Manifest Destiny and the Marshall Trilogy
3. Treaties including California Treaties
4. California
 - a. Missionization, Act for the Government and Protection of California Indians, Gold Rush and militias.
 - b. Contemporary California - AB 275 - PL 280
 - c. IGRA – Indian Gaming Regulatory Act
 - d. Truth and Healing Council
5. Bureau of Indian Affairs – Federal Recognition, State Recognition, non-federally recognized tribes
6. Federal Trust Responsibility
7. Health Policy – Indian Health Service
8. Removal policies and the establishment of reservations/rancherias
9. Assimilation Policies – Dawes Act, Indian Offences, Boarding schools, Indian Child Welfare Act
10. Dual citizenship - Tribal Nations - Not just an Ethnic Group
 - a. Tribal Identity, Blood Quantum, Disenrollment trends in California
11. Reorganization, Termination, Relocation, and urbanization
12. Social resistance, American Indian Religious Freedom Act and the Indian Civil Rights Act
13. Restoration and Self-determination - Tilly Hardwick Case.
14. Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act and California Native American and Graves Protection Repatriation Act

Lab Activities

No information provided

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify and analyze key instances and perspectives in the history and cultural development of American Indians/Native Americans.
2. Explain specific government policies; analyze and assess the policies in the context of institutionalized racism; synthesize those analyses and apply them to identify and evaluate potential bias and racism within the federal government.
3. Analyze and examine the relevance of specific ways that American Indian culture, religion, society, and policy impact one another.
4. Describe historical and contemporary trends and instances within Federal, State and Tribal governance, including treaties and the application of constitutional law.
5. Evaluate the intersectional and transformative aspects of practices of inclusion and equity, and the practices and movements to build a diverse, multi-ethnic, and just society.

Evaluation Methods

Methods of evaluation may include, but are not limited to:

Classroom Discussions

Essay Examinations

Objective Examinations

Problem Solving Examinations

Projects

Field Assignments

Textbooks

Pevar, Steven, The Rights of Indians and Tribes, Southern Illinois University Press

Wilkinson, Charles. Indian Tribes as Sovereign Governments. American Indian Resources Institute

Wilkins, David. American Indian Politics and the American Political System. Rowman and Littlefield. 2007. Second Edition

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