Culturally Responsive Methods of Teaching Native American Literature

ENT 595, Fall 2015

Thursdays, 4:10-7:00 pm, LA 205

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Office: LA 109; Hours: Tuesday 3:30-4:30 by appointment and Thursday 3:30-4:10

Course Description

In 1999, the Montana legislature encoded the Indian Education for All act into law. This action finished the effort begun in 1972 with the rewriting of the Montana Constitution which guaranteed that Montana’s students would learn about our state’s first peoples. In 2005, funding was provided to districts and through other venues to implement this law. Despite ten years of funding and decades of expectations, some teachers still lack the necessary information and skills to implement it in logical, compassionate ways.

This course will provide legal information, appropriate pedagogy, theoretical approaches and practical guidance for teaching Native American literature in secondary ELA classrooms. Students will consider their own cultural backgrounds, read research related to ethnic identity development and theoretical approaches to multicultural literature, and delve into current readings on Native American literature. We will also read three novels together and students will read one outside novel as part of the course capstone project.

Course Objectives

To provide pre-service and in-service teachers with the knowledge of culturally responsive instruction, including an understanding of and practice in

• leading academic theory on multiculturalism and diversity in education
• diversity issues in literature
• the laws regarding Native American literature and related subjects
• engaging instructional practices

To provide pre-service and in-service teachers with opportunities to

• design, implement, and evaluate a unit plan that reflects current practice in culturally responsive instruction
• investigate more detailed theoretical stances on culturally responsive instruction
• experience different ways to organize students for effective whole-class, small group, and individual work
• explore a variety of effective instructional strategies and materials appropriate to diverse cultural groups
• design and use literature to promote and assess students' thinking, learning, and communication skills

To develop in pre-service and in-service teachers the professional behaviors and dispositions that

• all students can learn and are worthy of a teacher’s attention and assistance
• all learners and languages/dialects have value and worth
• teachers need to take informed stands on professional issues
• teachers need to create communities of learners and encourage all students to become literate, creative, and responsible individuals
• teachers need to model the value of reading as a way to learn and develop personally as well as a way to communicate with others

Course Topics
• legal backdrop of Indian Education for All
• theory on culturally responsive instruction
• theory on Native American literature
• state and national standards for reading and language (Montana Standards)
• practical approaches for classroom instruction

Required Texts


Course Assignments

Cultural Inventory
Write a description of your own cultural background. Consider ethnicity, traditions, geography, cultural features of all of these. Do you claim your cultural background or reject parts? Do you claim a cultural background that perhaps you did not grow up in? 1000 words.

Book Talk
Present the outside novel (or other significant literary component) from your capstone. These book talks should last 10-15 minutes and include at least one interactive feature. Describe how this literature addresses the features of this course (consider Moore’s theoretical underpinnings of NA lit, Goebel’s perspectives, the Essential Understandings about Montana Indians, etc.). Be sure not to give away the end of the book!

Course Capstone
This assignment offers a choice of an academic paper or a unit plan for use in the classroom. All capstones require the reading of at least one outside novel and an in-class presentation.
Capstone option one: Academic Paper
This option represents a scholarly approach to culturally responsive instruction and Native American literature. You are drawing on the scholars we have read and expanding to other scholars. You’ll also address a significant literary work, preferably a novel, write a rationale for teaching this text, and address significant components such as sovereignty, community, identity, history and/or contemporary aspects. At least four citations are required beyond the literature you select; 4000-5000 words.

Capstone option two: Unit Plan
Your unit plan implements your learning about culturally responsive instruction. This unit must center on a Native American novel (or collection of poetry), but it could also include short stories or film. It could be the opening or closing lessons of a larger unit. The unit will consist of four consecutive lessons, each of which must include some meaningful literature component. The Essential Understandings must be incorporated.

Presentation requirements, both options: Plan a 20-minute presentation on your capstone project. If you wrote the paper, share your readings and your findings. If you created the unit plan, share your methodology and include features of the course that you applied to the plan. You must include at least one interactive feature. Do not repeat your book talk but rather build on it.

Participation
Throughout the course

Discussion Forums
Regular participation is expected as these are assigned. Each forum includes discussion prompts. Participants are expected to post detailed, thoughtful and respectful posts that address the prompts and respond to other students. Comments such as, “I agree,” or “I don’t know,” are not sufficient responses. If you agree or disagree with a statement, theme or idea, explain why you agree or disagree. Participants are also expected to respond to their classmates’ forum posts. In general, a response to a classmate could be structured as, “I agree/disagree and here is why . . .” or “Your comment helped my understanding because . . .” or “Your reflection is interesting. It led me to wonder if . . .” Links to outside readings, articles, or other resources are strongly encouraged.

Class Discussion & Attendance
Regular attendance and respectful, curious participation in class discussions are expected.

Evaluation
Cultural Inventory: 25 points, or 5%
Book Talk: 75 points, or 15%
Course Capstone: 300 points (250=written portion, 50=presentation), or 60%
Participation: 100 points total, or 20%

Grading

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<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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Grammar Policy
All formal work in this class has a grammar/spelling component built into the evaluation. As current or future English Language Arts teachers, you are held to a higher grammatical standard. I will point out persistent problems in your written work as I see them. Try to see this as a method of strengthening yourself as a teacher.

Schedule of Topics and Activities

Week One: Cultural Diversity; Selecting Appropriate Literature
Cultural inventory due Sept. 10 by 11:55 pm on moodle
Read Phinney, Richardson & Molinaro, Banks, and Banks
Read Wind from an Enemy Sky by McNickle for Sept. 24

Week Two: NO CLASS
Watch The Color of Fear by Lee Mun Wah. It is available online via the Mansfield library with your login. 90 mins.

Week Three: Ethnicity and Diversity
Guest instructor: Dr. Tammy Elser
Read Legal and Support Documents and finish Wind from an Enemy Sky for Sept. 24

Week Four: Legal Backdrop of Indian Education for All
Guest speaker: Mike Jetty
Read Moore: Introduction, Chapters 1-2 for Oct. 1

Week Five: Sovereignty & Community
Guest speaker: Troy Felsman
Read Moore: Chapters 3-5 for Oct. 8

Week Six: Identity, Authenticity, & Humor
Guest speaker: Dr. David Moore
Read Fools Crow by Welch for Oct. 22; Read Goebel, Chaps. 1, 2, 4 for Oct. 22

Week Seven: NO CLASS

Week Eight: Fools Crow
Read poetry resources for Oct. 29

Week Nine: Poetry
Guest speaker: Heather Cahoon
Read *The Round House* by Erdrich for November 12

**Week Ten: Culturally Responsive Instruction**  
Guest instructor: Dr. Beverly Chin  
November 5

**Week Eleven: *The Round House***  
November 12

**Week Twelve: Conclusions and Questions, Presentation Planning**  
Course capstone due December 10  
November 19

**Week Thirteen: NO CLASS NOVEMBER 26**  
November 26

**Week Fourteen: Book Talks**  
December 3

**Week Fifteen: Capstone Presentations**  
December 10

**Week Sixteen: Final Class Meeting**  
Reflections  
TBA

### Academic Policy

Academic honesty is expected. Students should complete their own work. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will be addressed directly by the instructor. References should be cited in discussion posts and any other written work submitted, using APA or MLA format. Please see the section on Academic Conduct from the University of Montana Student Conduct Code.

### Disability Services

“The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.”

### Other Requirements

Students in the English Teaching Program are required to join National Council of Teachers of English, [www.ncte.org](http://www.ncte.org). Students are also encouraged to join NCTE’s state affiliate, Montana Association of Teachers of English Language Arts, [www.opi.mt.gov/MATELA](http://www.opi.mt.gov/MATELA).