

# RELS 115 RELIGION AND SOCIETY

## Lakota / Sioux Religion

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Office Hours: Mon & Weds 2:00-4:00  
(or by appointment)

**Course Description:** In this course, we will explore the nature of Native American Religions using one particular group as our primary example, the Lakota/Sioux Indians. We will begin with the pre-European contact period of the 1760s and track the development of Lakota society and religion through the period of forced removal into the present day. We will cover the following topics: ritual, cosmology, social structure, oral traditions, religious and communal leadership roles, missionization, colonization, reservation life, religious repression, modern political movements, women's rights, burial rights, cultural appropriation, peyote, and federal laws pertaining to native peoples. We will also discuss the differences between native and non-native points of view on all these subjects.

### Books:

John Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks* (NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2000).  
Peter Catches [Lakota], *Sacred Fireplace: Life and Teachings of a Lakota Medicine Man* (NM: Clear Light Publications, 1999).  
Mary Crow Dog [Lakota] and Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman* (NY: Harper Perennial, 1991).  
Winona LaDuke [Lakota]. *Recovering the Sacred: The Power of Naming and Claiming* (South End Press, 2005)

**E-Reserve articles** ON-LINE at: Library Homepage (click on) ➤ E-reserves ➤ Electronic Reserves and Reserve Pages ➤ Pages by Department, Religious Studies ➤ RELS 115, Irwin ➤ (password).

### Recommended:

Donovin Arleigh Sprague. *Pine Ridge Reservation (Images of America: South Dakota)* (Arcadia Publishing, 2004)

### Requirements:

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in class discussions, missing more than three classes can result in a lower grade. The assignments in this course include the following: four quizzes (15 minute each, 5% each = 20%), two response papers (2-3 pages, 15% each = 30%), a Mid-Term (25%), and Final (during final exams, 25%). No excuses will be accepted for missed assignments or exams, such as oversleeping, lost books, or being stuck out of town. If you have a legitimate excuse, please talk to me before the scheduled assignment. All missing assignments will receive a failing grade. All Honor Code rules apply in this course; plagiarism can result in expulsion from the College.

### Honor Code:

Lying, cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the Honor Code and are not permitted at the College. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Dean of Students. A student responsible for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure based on dishonesty. Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating.

**Grading:** Numerical curve: A+ = 100-97; A = 96-93; A- = 92-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D+ = 69-67; D = 66-63; D- = 62-60; F = 59.

**Reading Assignments:** Readings should be done before the class for which they are assigned. Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

- I. Week One: August 26, 28 Introduction to Native American Religions
  - A. E-Reserve article: Vine Deloria, "Religion and the Modern American Indian"
  - B. Reading Assignment: Black Elk Speaks, pp. 1-36.
  
- II. Week Two: September 2, 4
  - A. Reading Assignment: Black Elk Speaks, pp. 37-99.
  - B. Video: The Yankton Sioux (Hanktonwan Dakota)
  
- III. Week Three: September 9, 11
  - A. Reading Assignment: Black Elk Speaks, pp. 100-156.
  - B. **QUIZ ONE, September 11**
  
- IV. Week Four: September 16, 18
  - A. Reading Assignment: finish Black Elk Speaks, pp. 157-210.
  - B. E-Reserve Article: Frances Kaye, "Just What is Cultural Appropriation, Anyway?"
  
- V. Week Five: September 23, 25
  - A. **Paper One Assignment , due September 23**
  - B. Reading Assignment: Sacred Fireplace, pp. 1-69.
  
- VI. Week Six: September 30, October 2
  - A. Reading Assignment: Sacred Fireplace, pp. 71-127.
  - B. **QUIZ TWO, October 2**
  
- VII. Week Seven: October 7, 9
  - A. Reading Assignment: Sacred Fireplace, pp. 129-187.
  - B. **MIDTERM EXAM, OCTOBER 9**
  
- VIII. Week Eight: October (14) 16
  - A. **FALL BREAK OCTOBER 13, 14**
  - B. Reading Assignment: Sacred Fireplace, pp. 189-221.
  - C. E-Reserve Article: Damian Costello, "Redescribing the Lakota World."

- IX. Week Nine: October 21, 23
- A. Video - Spirit of Crazy Horse
  - B. Reading Assignment: Lakota Woman, pp. 1-92.
- X. Week Ten: October 28, 30
- A. Reading Assignment: Lakota Woman, pp. 93-169.
  - B. **QUIZ THREE, October 30**
- XI. Week Eleven: November 4, 6
- A. Reading Assignment: Lakota Woman, pp. 170-263
- XII. Week Twelve: November 11, 13
- A. E-Reserve article: Chris & Todd Wise, "A Conversation with Mary Brave Bird"
  - B. **QUIZ FOUR, November 13**
  - C. Reading Assignment: Recovering the Sacred, pp. 11-46
- XIII. Week Thirteen: November 18, 20
- A. Reading Assignment: Recovering the Sacred, pp. 67-112
  - B. **Paper Two Assignment, due November 20**
- XIV. Week Fourteen: November 25
- A. Reading Assignment: Recovering the Sacred, pp. 113-149
  - B. Video: The Dance to Souls Departed: Return to Wounded Knee
  - C. **THANKSGIVING BREAK (November 26-30)**
- XV. Week Fifteen: December 2, 4
- A. Reading Assignment: Recovering the Sacred, pp. 213-225, 237-253
  - B. **FINAL EXAM: DECEMBER 11 12:00-3:00 AM, ECTR 103**