

NATIVE AMERICAN RELIGIONS

Spring 2005 - Thursdays 6:25 to 9:05 PM

Florida International University - University Park Campus – PCA 150

Undergraduate Course

Anthropology (ANT 4211- U05), Religious Studies (REL 3380), or Liberal Studies (IDS 4920-U03)

See web page for more information: <http://www.fiu.edu/~wiedmand/nareligions>

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Father Sky / Mother Earth - Navajo

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to Native North American religions and spirituality. The course highlights the sacred ecology of people, plants, animals and the environment. Special emphasis is placed on myths, rituals, and beliefs ranging from individual practices to organized religions among a diverse array of Native American communities. These different ways of seeing, sensing and listening form entire life ways that are reflected in the arts, music, dance, poetry, narrative, architecture and social organizations. Of importance will be the historical, economic, health, environmental, political and legal issues that influence the present and future ways that Native Americans practice their religious traditions. Attention will be given to contemporary issues and Native cultures of South Florida.

COURSE OBJECTIVES On completion of this course the student should:

- 1) Recognize the diverse cultures and religious traditions of Native America.
- 2) Understand the importance of spirituality in the everyday lives and communities of contemporary Native Americans.
- 3) Identify tribal arts, music, dance, poetry, literature and architecture within the social, cultural, environmental, and spiritual context of Native American communities.
- 4) Appreciate the economic, political, environmental and legal restrictions that have been and continue to be placed upon the practice of Native American religions and culture.
- 5) Be able to compare similarities and differences among tribal religions.

READINGS

Joseph Epes Brown and Emily Cousins

2001 *Teaching Spirits: Understanding Native American Religious Traditions.*

New York: Oxford University Press.

Lawrence E. Sullivan, Editor

2003 *Native Religions and Cultures of North America: Anthropology of the Sacred.*

New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Vine Deloria, Jr.

1999 *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion, 30th Anniversary Edition.*

Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing.