Course Syllabus
Anthropology Through Film
Native American Issues, Voices and Perspectives
ANT 4930 – B51 Topics in Anthropology - Anthropology Through Film
Fall 2004
Thursdays 2:00 to 4:45 PM
Biscayne Bay Campus
Version of August 2, 2004

What It’s About:

Through films and Internet media this course explores major issues of contemporary indigenous peoples of America. Each week we will view award-winning films made for theaters, television and as documentaries. Modern media written, produced or acted in by native peoples portray to the public the issues Natives consider important, in Native voices, and from Native perspectives.

Readings written by indigenous peoples complement the films and focus our discussion on the issues of ethnic identity, tribal sovereignty, environmental pollution, economic development, health disparities, human rights, spirituality, religious freedom, sacred lands, language retention, music, art and dance.

Anthropological perspectives highlight the use of cross cultural comparisons for understanding myth, ritual, traditional healing, kinship, gender, social stratification, racism, commodification of ethnicity, culture change, religious revitalization, artistic innovation, modernization, globalization, and sustainable communities.

READINGs

eHRAF. Electronic Human Relations Area Files.

This is a WebCT assisted course.
Web page at: http://www.fiu.edu/~wiedmand/courses/anthrofilm

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Informed awareness and sensitivity to human diversity and an appreciation of its scope and complexity. Recognition of the richness of experience and potential that it provides.
Familiarity with a range of methods of representing data including primary and secondary texts, film and other visual media, oral sources, statistical data and multimedia.

Awareness of ethical issues concerned with the study of social worlds and the representation of others.

Self-reflection regarding the nature of knowledge and the role of multimedia in presenting Indigenous views.

Awareness of social and historical change, and paradigms for explaining it.

Required Readings:

Lobo, Susan, and Steve Talbot

Class Meetings:
While most of the class time will be spent watching films, our efforts to interpret and critique them will be conducted as much as possible in participatory form. This requires that assignments be completed in an informed, thoughtful and constructive manner before each class session. It also requires that students arrive on time and contribute to a classroom ambience of mutual respect, support, exploration, and learning.

On-Line Discussions and Participation

Assignments & Grades:
Final grades will be based on the following components, all of which must be completed/fulfilled in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade:

Active and courteous class and on-line participation (worth up to a total of 25 points)

One-page essay assignments submitted via WebCT by Sunday at 5:00, and printed copies at the start of each class session (graded pass/fail and worth up to a total of 25 points).

Two equally weighted film reviews (five double-spaced pages each and worth up to a total of 150 points [that is, up to 75 points each]). A guide to preparing the reviews will be distributed in class.

These assignments sum to a possible 200 points. Final grades will be pegged to the following scale: “A” (178+ points); “B” (140-177 points); “C” (110-139 points); “D” (83-109 points); “F” (82 points or less).
Your grade will be based on the successful completion of eight (8) assignments: seven short papers and a final paper or video project—worth 12 points each, 96 points total. Four points for attendance totals 100 points.

Course Schedule

Week One: September 2. First Day of Class
Native American Issues and Voices
   The Native Americans: The Tribes of the Southeast  1994.  48 min. FIU Owns
   Lakota Women: Siege at Wounded Knee. 1994. 100 min.

Readings:

Week Two: September 9
   Spirituality
   Dream Keeper

Week Three: September 16
   Colonization and Assimilation
   The Mission

Week Four: September 23
   Music and Dance
   World of Native American Dance

Week Five: September 30
   Religious Freedom
   Peyote Road: Ancient Religion In Contemporary Crisis. 61 minutes
   Your Humble Serpent – Recommended by Dan Swan. 60 min. 1995

Week Six: October 7
   Land, Sacred Sites
   In Light of Reverence

Week Seven: October 14
   Identity - Map of the Heart

Week Eight: October 21
   Family, Reservation Issues - Smoke Signals

Week Nine: October 28
   Youth – Education
   Moccasin Flats. 22 minutes
   Seminole Education Production. 20 minutes

Week Ten: November 4
Modernization, Entrepreneur - Naturally Native. 108 minutes

Week Eleven: November 11 – Veterans Day Holiday – No class

Week Twelve – November 18 – DW at AAA
   Contemporary Life - Fast Runner

Week Thirteen – November 25 – Thanksgiving – No Class

Week Fourteen – December 2
   NAGPRA
   A Thief of Time  90 minutes
   Thieves of Time  30 minutes. FIU Owns

Week Fifteen: December 9 – Last Day of Class.
   Environment
   Drumbeat for Mother Earth: How Persistent Organic Pollutants Threaten the Natural Environment and the Future of Indigenous Peoples. 1999  56 minutes

Week Sixteen: December 13 through 18 Final Exams