

Indigenous Roots in Diasporas
IDS-2045
3 Units
Starr King School for the Ministry – Graduate Theological Union
Fall 2021

Instructor Information:

Lauren Martinez and Leora Cockrell

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Availability: Virtual office hours by appointment. Contact instructors via email.

Meeting Dates and Times: Wednesdays, 2:10-5:00pm

Course Description:

In this discussion, ritual and movement/embodiment-based course we will unravel the im/possibilities of embodying our indigenous roots in our diasporas. The instructors come from the African diaspora and European Jewish diaspora, respectively, and queer identities and strive to hold a container that is welcoming and liberating for all while acknowledging we live on stolen Indigenous land. This course requires reflective journaling, participation in group discussions and a final group project. Pass/No Pass. MASC and MDiv students and the community welcome.

Prerequisite: Eco Core Intensive or equivalent experience. Thresholds: Spiritual Practice and Care of the Soul, Embodied Wisdom and Beauty. MFC Competency: Pastoral Care and Presence and Spiritual Development of Self and Other. Course will be high-residency with limited hybrid participation if covid-situation allows. Enrollment is limited to 18 and requires faculty approval. Please email your interest in the course and relevant experience.

Learning Objectives:

During this course, students will...

- Learn and practice somatic regulation
- Connect with intuitive knowing
- Learn collective emotional processing and decision making techniques
- Deepen awareness of how one is personally and collectively shaped by settler-colonialism, Indigeneity, white-supremacy, racism, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, diaspora, spirituality and land-connection
- Witness, and tease out oppressive systems in the mind-body-spirit complex personally and collectively

Learning Outcomes:

After successfully completing this course, students will be able to...

- Practice somatic regulation
- Connect with their intuitive knowledge
- Process emotions and make decisions collectively
- Tell stories of they personal and collective relationships with settler-colonialism, Indigeneity, white-supremacy, racism, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, diaspora, spirituality and land-connection
- Have tools to tangibly excavate oppressive thinking and relating and have a role in dismantling systems that perpetuate the disconnection from one's own indigeneity

Group/Class Agreements:

- Center Black and Indigenous Voices First
- Non-Black POC & Mixed Race Voices Second
- White Voices Third (All Ethnicities)
- Focus on impact rather than intent*
 - Understanding and unpacking our intentions is an essential part of divesting from harmful systems, and we encourage all of us to do that work. However, we will not do that work with, or in front of, the person/people our actions have harmed unless they explicitly invite us to.*
- Be curious and interrogate your thinking
- Name your race and identity before speaking (To be race and gender forward)
- Presume and allow for healthy, respectful conflict
 - See [Peacemaker's Principles](#) for definitions and tools on conflict resolution
- (Other agreements to be added by students in class)

Course Policies:

See course assignments.

- Academic Conduct
 - <https://www.sksm.edu/current-students/statement-academic-integrity-misconduct/>
- Plagiarism
 - <https://www.sksm.edu/plagiarism/>
- Notice to Students About Your Privacy (FERPA)
 - <https://www.sksm.edu/academics/policy-statements/ferpa-familyeducational-rights-and-privacy-act/>
- Disability Policy
 - <https://www.sksm.edu/resources/student-handbook/starr-kingpolicies/students-with-disabilities-policy/>

Course Assignments:

To pass the class, all students must present a final project, turn in a short reflection paper on their final project, and share with the instructors a portion of their ongoing creative process/journal work from the semester. We expect students to participate in class discussion, be prepared for class by being on time and have read the required and listed material for the week. Students will also be asked to engage in setting up the class container on a day of their choice by a medium of their choice, i.e through a short ritual at the beginning of class, a somatic practice, prayer etc. Listed deadlines are at the end of the semester; therefore, flexibility in turning in work on a later date is limited. Please contact instructors as early as possible if you deem you will need an extension in turning in course assignments.

- Weekly Moodle Post with Creative Agency - reflection on week's material - Due 5pm day before class
- Final Project Proposal (max one page description)- **Due Week 7**
- Facilitate at least one activity to create the class container - Due by Week 12
- Final Reflection Paper (max 2 pages)- **Due 12/15/2021**
- Final Group/Individual Presentations- **Due last two weeks of class (a sign up sheet will be offered a week prior to presentations)**

Grading:

SKSM grades with a Pass/Fail system. If there is a need to be graded by letters please inform the instructors on the first day of class. Deadlines for all the assignments, which are expected to be submitted through Moodle are listed under the course assignment section.

Required Texts:

One mandatory book: Braiding Sweetgrass, by Robin Wall Kimmerer
ISBN-13 : 978-1571313560 \$15.97

One mandatory personal choice book that relates to the ancestral, spiritual or land lineages and/or futures you are tending (choose one):

- The Red Tent, Anita Diamant | ISBN-13 : 978-0312427290 \$17.78
- Remnants: A Memoir of Spirit, Activistim, and Mothering, Rachel Harding | ISBN-13: 978-0822358794
- The Fifth Sacred Thing, Starhawk | ISBN-13 : 978-0553373806 \$17.59
- Beloved, Toni Morrison | ISBN-13 : 978-1400033416 \$9.98
- Secrets of the Talking Jaguar, Martin Pretchel| ISBN-13 : 978-0874779707 \$16.95
- The Wild Edge of Sorrow, Francis Weller | ISBN-13 : 978-1583949764 \$14.36
- Ritual, Malidoma Some | ISBN-13 : 978-0140195583 \$13.99
- The Parable of the Sower, Octavia Butler | ISBN-13 : 978-1538732182 \$11.26
- These Wilds Beyond Our Fences, Bayo Akomolafe | ISBN-13 : 978-1623171667 \$17.89
- The Dragons the Giant the Women, Wayetu Moore | ISBN-13 : 978-1644450314 \$15.78
- Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History, Michel-Rolph Trouillot | ISBN-13 : 978-0807080535 \$18.99
- Deep Liberation, Langston Kahn | AISN: B082739GDT \$13.99

Course Schedule:

Each week we will focus on a reading from either one of the identities the instructors hold (Black, Jewish, white or Queer) or of someone ancestrally Indigenous to Turtle Island. We have chosen to root deep in the specificity of who we are, the places we live and the people ancestrally Indigenous to them. Rooting in specificity is an antidote to violent generalizations and normalizations of whiteness and settler-colonialism. And, we recognize that these readings, identity categories, places and people ancestrally Indigenous to those places may not align with you and your experiences. We encourage you to seek out your own specific readings in addition to what is offered within the category of the week and post to the source book in Moodle. **Post your 500 word max reflection on the week's readings/podcasts/material on moodle by 5pm the day before class.**

Section 1: "Who are our people?"

Week 1 (Sept 8) - No readings this week

Purchase Braiding Sweetgrass and One Personal Choice from list

Week 2 (Sept 15) (Ethnicity/Race) - Copied pages from "Silencing the Past"- A certain Idea of Man, pgs 70-108 and/or "The Warmth of Other Suns", Isabel Wilkerson, Part 1, pgs 3-15

Read "[Peacemaker's Principle Doc](#)"

Week 3 (Sept 22) (Religion/Spirituality)- Dori Midnight "[Jewish Ancestral Plant Magic](#)" Jewish Ancestral Healing Episode 2

Read "[Council](#)" doc

Week 4 (Sept 29) (Diaspora/Indigenous)-  [Intersectional Indigeneity Feminism.pdf](#)

Braiding Sweetgrass: Preface - Pg.32

Optional: Lyla June "[Reclaiming our European Indigenous Roots](#)"

Personal Book: 1/10th

Week 5 (Oct 6) (Gender/Sexuality)- Aberrations in Black: Toward A Queer Color Critique, 110-119.

Kim Tallbear [Reviving Kinship and Sexual Abundance](#) Podcast on *For the Wild*

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg. 33 - 59

Personal Book: 2/10ths

Section 2: "Where do we live?"

Week 6 (Oct 13) (Settler Fragility) - [Settler Fragility](#) article

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg. 60-96

Personal Book: 3/10ths

Week 7 (Oct 20) (Becoming Guests) - Corrina Gould "[On Settler Responsibility and Reciprocity](#)" podcast

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg. 97-127

Personal Book: 4/10ths

Midterm Assignment: turn in 1-page final project proposal

Week 8 (Oct 27) - No class, reading week

Week 9 (Nov 3) (Black-Indigenism) - "[I had never been at home in the world](#)" 1: A case for Black-Indigenism

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg. 128 - 201
Personal Book: 6/10ths

Section 3: "Touching pain & living into liberated futures"

Week 10 (Nov 10) - (Embodying the Connections) Podcast

[Bespoken Bones: Episode 74](#) "On eldership, ancestral work, blackness, and healing arts practice" [Bespoken Bones: Episode 77](#) "The relationship between the body, the nervous system work and the ancestor work" Podcast

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg 202 - 240

Personal Book: 7/10ths

Week 11 (Nov 17) (pleasurable surrender) - Bronte Valez ["On the Pleasurable Surrender of White Supremacy"](#) podcast

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg 240 - 292

Personal Book: 8/10th's

Week 12 (Nov 24) - Queer Nature on [Reclaiming Wild Safe Space](#) podcast

Braiding Sweetgrass: Pg 293 - 386

Personal Book: complete

Storytelling and Final Sharing Projects

_____ Final Projects due, make-up any missed readings

Week 13 (Dec 1)- This week is devoted to student project sharing.

Week 14 (Dec 8)- This week is devoted to student project sharing.

Dec 15th - Final Reflection Paper due (2 page max)

*The instructor reserves the right to modify the schedule and assigned readings to achieve course objectives. In this case, please send the updated syllabus so we can replace it in the course description at SKSM website.