

**AIS/ReligSt 106: Anishinaabe Ethnobotany: Plants in Anishinaabe Philosophy**  
**Fall 2015/Spring 2016**  
**Course Meets: TBA**  
**Place: TBA**

**If you want to learn more about becoming an American Indian Studies Major go to:**  
<http://ais.uwm.edu/>

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides students with an introduction to Anishinaabe culture and philosophy as they pertain to botanical knowledge.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Geniusz, Mary Siisip. 2015. *Plants Have So Much To Give Us All We Have To Do Is Ask*. Ed. Wendy Makoons Geniusz. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Geniusz, Wendy M. *Our Knowledge is Not Primitive: Decolonizing botanical Anishinaabe teachings* (Iroquois and Their Neighbors). Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2009. (listed as Geniusz in Course Outline)

Peschel, Keewaydinoquay. *MukwahMiskomin or Kinnickinnick, Gift of Bear*. N.P.: Miniss Kitigan Drum, 1977. (listed as Keewaydinoquay in Course Outline)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The objectives of this course are as follows: to introduce students to Anishinaabe philosophy teachings as connected to botanical knowledge; to introduce students to the benefits of supporting the continuing existence of diverse worldviews and philosophies; to learn skills that will aid students when listening, reading, and speaking in an informed and articulate manner on important political, cultural, and/or social topics.

**COURSE LEARNING GOALS:** By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Give examples of basic Anishinaabe botanical knowledge and explain how those examples are linked to key concepts in Anishinaabe philosophy;
- To articulate the value of diverse worldviews and philosophies and give examples of how diversity can be supported, revitalized, and maintained by members of diverse cultures and by their allies.

**GER MINORITY CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN AMERICA COMPLIANCE:** This course is appropriate for minority cultural diversity in America GER designation as it centers on the worldview and philosophy of the Anishinaabe people, one of the diverse minority cultural groups of this region. In learning about the Anishinaabe, students also will learn

important skills that can be applied when analyzing the meaning of race, class, gender, and culture in America. The learning goal associated with this requirement is that students “understand and analyze the perspectives, world views, methodologies, and philosophic constructs that the Anishinaabe and others use to describe, explain, and evaluate their life experiences over time.” This goal will be assessed in class examinations. In addition, in our class discussions, students will be asked various questions (some of which are listed on the course outline) that will help them to “investigate critically the social, intellectual, and political structures that support oppression based on race, ethnicity, and other human differences.” An examination of the specific areas of weakness in students’ short answer essays on examinations will point to the topics that need to be communicated better or further reinforced.

**UW-SYSTEM SHARED LEARNING GOALS:** The material and examinations in this course address the University of Wisconsin System Shared Learning Goals of “Intercultural Knowledge and Competence” and “Effective Communication Skills including reading, writing, and information literacy.” Both of these learning goals are defined here for reference:

Intercultural knowledge and competence including the ability to interact and work with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures; to lead or contribute support to those who lead; and to empathize with and understand those who are different than they are.

Effective Communication Skills  
including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and information literacy.

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:** In this class we will use a variety of instructional strategies, including audio-visual exercises, class discussions, hands-on in class projects, and lectures.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Students are expected to attend and participate in every class and complete all reading assignments before the class for which they are due. Students also are required to take all exams during scheduled times.

**COURSE GRADING POLICY:** Final grades will be calculated as follows:

1. Midterm Exam 30%
2. Formulating Discussion Questions 20%
3. Final Exam 30%
4. Effort, Attendance, Participation, and Respect 20%

Formulating Discussion Questions: Beginning the third week students will be required to write two discussion questions every week on readings due that week and lectures delivered in class the week before. The questions must be submitted on D2L by 9 AM of Monday before first class of week. Instructor will select discussion questions for class from those submitted, and post the weekly questions on D2L before the second class. Students will be expected to download the questions and be prepared to discuss them in

class. Part of final exam will be chosen from the questions thus submitted for class discussions.

Here is how the Discussion Questions will be graded:

- 4 - excellent, thoughtful question submitted on time.
- 3 - good question, but a UWM student could do better and it was submitted on time
- 2 - late but thoughtful question and/or question was not very thoughtful
- 1 - student hardly tried but there is something to grade/ late assignment without a thoughtful question
- 0 - nothing was handed in or there is simply nothing to grade.

Exams: There will be a midterm and a final exam for this class. They must be taken during the times assigned on the Course Outline.

Effort, Attendance, Participation, and Respect: This is an important part of your grade. You need to attend all class (2 sick days are allowed) and come to class prepared (including having completed readings). You also need to participate in each class, by asking and answering questions, listening attentively, and participating in all discussions and hands on activities. If students are repeatedly disrespectful of the professor, other students, any guests, or the Anishinaabeg, they will receive an automatic O for this component of their final grade. Attendance is part of your “effort, attendance, and participation” grade. If you are late to class, or leave class early, it will be counted as missing ½ of the class. Otherwise, this portion of your grade will be calculated as followed:

- A (4) Student attended all classes (2 sick days are allowed), eagerly participated and was prepared for most classes.
- B (3) Student attended most class (missed more than 2), and eagerly participated and was prepared for many classes.
- C (2) Student did not attend most of the time, but when s/he did attend, s/he participated eagerly and was prepared.
- D (1) Student did not attend most of the time, and when s/he did attend, s/he only eagerly participated and was only prepared for some of the time.
- F (0) Student made no effort to attend or participate in class.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Attendance will be taken during all classes. It is not a separate grade; it makes up part of your Effort, Attendance, Participation, and Respect grade. See that section for more details.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS:**

*Students with disabilities.* Verification of disability, class standards, the policy on the use of alternate materials and test accommodations can be found at the following:

<http://www4.uwm.edu/sac/SACltr.pdf>

*Religious observances.* Policies concerning accommodations for absences due to religious observance can be found at <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>

*Students called to active military duty.* Accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty can be found at the following sites:  
Students: [http://www4.uwm.edu/current\\_students/military\\_call\\_up.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/current_students/military_call_up.cfm)

*Incompletes.* A notation of "incomplete" may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantiated cause beyond the student's control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or to complete some limited amount of term work. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S31.pdf>

*Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment).* Discriminatory conduct will not be tolerated by the University. It poisons the work and learning environment of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff. Find UWM policy details here:  
<http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S47.pdf>

*Academic misconduct.* Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University.  
[http://www4.uwm.edu/acad\\_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm)

*Complaint procedures.* Students may direct complaints to the head of the academic unit or department in which the complaint occurs. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the head of the department or academic unit in which the complaint occurred or to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S49.7.htm>

*Grade appeal procedures.* A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow the established procedures adopted by the department, college, or school in which the course resides or in the case of graduate students, the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School. <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S28.htm>

*Academic Advising:* All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have earned in excess of 45 credits and have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so. If you either are interested in declaring a major (or certificate) in American Indian Studies or require academic advising in American Indian Studies, please visit the American Indian Studies web page at <http://ais.uwm.edu/> for information on how to proceed.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**\*NOTE: All readings are due on the first class of the week on which they are listed!**

**Week 1:** Introductions to: Course, Anishinaabe Plant Knowledge Explaining differences between material taught in: Plants and Philosophy vs. Plants and Culture Courses

- *In Class:* Lectures on Intro to course, Anishinaabe Plant Knowledge, Detailed description of Four Orders of Life.
- *Discussion:* How are these pieces of Anishinaabe philosophy similar or different from other philosophies (either those of which students are apart or those of which students have studied)?

**Week 2:** Seven Sacred Directions and Plants As Animate Beings

- *In Class:* Lectures on: Seven Sacred Directions and Gathering Ethics
- *Discussion:* What does the world gain from embracing and listening to diverse worldviews? How do we all lose if these diverse worldviews are lost?
- *Readings Due:* *Our Knowledge:* Chapter 2

**Week 3:** Anishinaabe Concepts of Story

- *In Class:* Lectures on “Stories as Living Beings,” Connections Between Stories and Botanical Knowledge
- Traditional teaching story: “The Year the Roses Died”
- *Discussion:* How is listening to a story different from reading it? What do we mean when we say “Stories Are Alive and They Go Where They Wish”?
- *Readings Due:* Selected Readings from *Plants Have So Much*

**Week 4:** Cedar, Anishinaabe Tree of Life.

- *In Class:* Lectures on Tree of Life and White Cedar Tree.
- Traditional teaching story: “The Creation of Nookomis Giizhik”.
- *Hands on:* Make Cedar Lemon Balm
- *Discussion:* Universality of the Tree of Life concept in human societies. In the “The Creation of Nookomis Giizhik” and in the “Cedar Song” presented in class, Nookomis Giizhik is said to “Save the People.” How does she do that?
- *Readings Due:* *Our Knowledge:* Preface, xi-xv. Introduction, pp. 1-12. Conclusion, pp. 158-161.

**Week 5:** Spiritual Medicine

- *In Class:* Lectures on Asemaa: Sacred Tobacco, and Sweetgrass.
- *Discussion:* How does learning about Anishinaabe botanical knowledge give us key examples of and windows into Anishinaabe worldview?
- *Readings Due:* Selected readings from Keewaydinoquay: pp. 1-18

**Week 6:** Kinnikinnick

- *In Class:* Lectures on Kinnikinnick.
- *Hands On:* Make Kinnikinnick.

- *Discussion:* Consider the relationship and teaching style of Nojimaaqway and Keewaydinoqway, Walks with Bears Girl, in *Kinnickinnick, Gift of Bear*. Is it the image that media, movies, TV, printed material, etc. has portrayed as the “Medicine-Man”/ “Medicine Woman”?
- *Readings Due:* Selected readings from *Bearberry*: pp. 18-31 and Appendix

**Week 7:** Interconnectedness and Grandfather Birch

- *In Class:* Lectures on: “Grandfather Birch,” “Abbreviated Cedar and Birch lecture,” “Concepts of Interconnectedness”
- *Discussion:* How is the concept of “Interconnectedness” similar or different from other worldviews, either those of which you are a part or those of which you have studied?
- *Readings Due:* selected readings from *Directions We Know*

**Week 8:** Midterm

- *In Class:* Review of lectures and readings
- **Oct: Midterm Exam**

**Week 9:** Other Spiritual Medicines

- *In Class:* Lectures on: yarrow and the Waabano Religion, Bearberry, Mullein
- Traditional teaching story: Healing Stories About Yarrow
- *Hands On:* Make Yarrow, Mint, and Catnip cold medicine
- *Readings Due:* Selected readings from *Plants Have So Much*

**Week 10:** Plants That Teach Us Values

- *In Class:* Lectures on: “Plants Teaching Us Values: Lycopodium ssp., Cedar, Yarrow”
- Traditional teaching story: “Naanabozho and the Squeaky Voice Plant”
- *Hands On:*
- *Discussion:* How can students in this class work as allies to Anishinaabe (or other Indigenous) culture revitalization?
- *Readings Due:*

**Week 11:** Physical and Spiritual Healing

- *In Class:* Lectures on: “Spring Water, Botanicals, and Spiritual Healing,” “She Prays For Us: Balsam Fir” and “The Healing Properties of Spruce”
- Traditional teaching story: “Why Some Plants Lose Their Leaves”
- *Hands On:* Make Mint & Balsam, Epsom salt, Medicinal Soak.
- *Readings Due:* selected readings from *Our Knowledge*

**Week 12:** Physical Medicinals Part Three

- *In Class:* Lectures on Spruce and Balsam fir.
- *Hands On:* Make Lip Balm.
- *Readings Due:* Selected readings from *Plants Have So Much*

**Week 13: Pines and Colonization**

- *In Class*: Lectures on Pines, Traditional medicines made from pines, and on the Colonization of the Anishinaabe and the White Pine.
- *Discussion*: Barring the invention of a working time machine, would it ever be possible for Anishinaabe to physically return to a pre-colonial world? Could one return other than physically to the same pre-Contact condition?

**Week 14: Other Beings Associated With Plants**

- *In Class*: Lectures on: “Other Beings Associated With Plants”
- *Readings Due*: selected readings from: *Directions We Know*

**Week 15: Wrap-up of Semester**

- Traditional teaching story: “Naanabozho and the Four Warriors”.
- Review for final.

***Final exam: date and time TBA see also this website for more information on final exams:*** <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S22.htm>