

AIS 600: Field Project- Capstone Research or Applied Project 6 cr

Course Description

The capstone research topic will be focused on a student's particular interest area and will begin in the junior year. The project will be approved and supervised by a faculty member who will guide the student's research, service project, or applied project through to formal evaluation by a committee of faculty members. A formal field project paper will be presented to the committee.

Goals of the course are:

1. To apply and evaluate the content and ideas learned in American Indian Studies courses to the "real world" experience of American Indian communities and organizations;
2. To gain first-hand knowledge of the workings of an organization or individual involved in American Indian issues;
3. To gain first-hand knowledge of issues of race and work;
4. To establish contacts and mentors in the American Indian community who can provide ongoing guidance and education;
5. To refine personal and professional goals which reflect an American Indian Studies education.

Prerequisites and Concurrent Requirements

1. Junior Standing
2. AIS 101, 475, 525, 622

Internship Process

You are expected to select an internship placement or research project from the list provided at the beginning of the term. Projects/internships outside the list are possible but must be approved in advance by the instructor. All placements must have a clear relationship to the goals, issues, or processes of the American Indian Studies Program.

You may not receive internship credit in this class for a job where you have worked in the past, or where you are currently working. Your employment status will be verified with the supervisor prior to approval of the internship. You may not receive pay for the internship, as paid employment puts you in a capacity different than someone who is volunteering to work for the education and experience of the job. Also, you may not receive credit from another academic unit for the internship you are completing in American Indian Studies.

You must choose a minimum of two possible placements of the second week of class, and have scheduled interviews with each of the placement agencies prior to class. The placement supervisor at each agency will conduct interviews for the intern position and select the person whose skills and interests best match the agency's needs. Thus, it is possible that you may not find a placement with your first choice.

You must secure a placement by the third week and begin working at the placement agency by the fourth week of class. You are expected to work at the internship through the twelfth week of class.

You are expected to schedule a minimum of 8 hours per week to work at your placement agency or doing research on your project. The total amount of time you will need to commit to various aspects of this course will vary depending upon the project/internship design. The total time for all tasks will be at least 8 hours per week.

If you are having trouble choosing or finding an internship placement, please discuss the situation with the instructor as soon as possible.

Seminar Process

The Internship seminar will meet once a week for two hours and forty minutes. The time you spend on the seminar is separate from the time you spend at your placement, though the two will draw from each other. There will be time devoted in each class period to a discussion of your internship or research experience, both as it relates to the course readings and as a means for sharing and receiving feedback.

Three broad questions underlie the seminar: 1) What does it mean to work in American Indian Studies?; 2) How has your knowledge of American Indian Studies impacted your work or research experience?; and 3) How can you incorporate skills and practices from American Indian Studies into your career choices? These questions will be addressed through readings, discussions, class assignments and reflections on your personal experience in the internship/research experience. Unlike conventional courses, you are not expected to master a specific issue or body of literature in this seminar. What we learn in the seminar will reflect your application of the reading and the analysis you make of your internship/research experience.

The success of the seminar relies in large part on active class participation. This means that you share the responsibility for making the classroom interesting, challenging, and fun. You should come to class having completed all readings and assignments and prepared with questions, comments or personal reflections on the material. You should also be prepared to discuss any issues, stories, concerns, and lessons which arise from your internship or research experience. We'll all be interested to hear what is going on, whether it is mundane, surprising, difficult, bothersome, fun, etc.

Seminar Grade and Requirements

You will receive a letter grade for this course. Your grade will consist of the following:

Learning Contract (10% of your grade). You are expected to work with your placement agency or research advisor to prepare a written learning contract which establishes the guidelines for your internship which will be approved by yourself and your supervisor.

Field Work/Research Journal (15% of your grade). Your journal should include a straightforward daily account of the work you do. This means you need to record the hours you worked and the tasks you performed each day. The journal should also include your reflections on the internship. Describe how you feel about the organization, your supervisor, the work you are doing, or any particular challenges or accomplishments. You should use the journal to record any problems, concerns, questions or revelations you discover. Be as detailed as possible. "I learned a lot today" or "it was boring" are insufficient. Your journal will be collected and reviewed three times during the semester, and it will also be handed in with your final paper at

the end of the term. You will not be graded on the content of what you say in your reflections, but rather on the consistency of your record and evidence of thoughtful analysis of your experiences. Your journal will also serve as an important tool for you at the end of the term when you write your final report.

Supervisor Evaluation (15% of your grade) At the conclusion of your internship you are expected to receive an evaluation from your supervisor. This evaluation will include an assessment of your reliability in showing-up for the agreed upon hours, responsibility in completing the assigned tasks and projects, your general work performance, and an appraisal of the level to which you fulfilled the Learning Contract.

Final Report/Final Paper (30% of your grade) This will vary depending on whether you are doing an internship or a research project. For those doing an internship experience, complete an 8-10 page final report on your internship experience. The purpose of the final report is to provide a summary analysis of what you accomplished and learned from the internship. You will be able to integrate the work you do in your journal and the short assignments into the report. Thus, your final report should be “in process” during the entire semester. For those of you doing a research paper or literary project, your final paper should be 20-25 pages. As you will be journaling concerning the progress of your research and or writing over the full course of the semester, your final paper should be “in process” during the entire semester.

Class Assignments (20% of your grade) You are expected to prepare one page written assignments for 10 of the 14 weeks of the seminar. Each assignment is

Classroom Participation (10% of your grade)