

## RELS 115 RELIGION AND SOCIETY Lakota / Sioux Religion

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Office Hours: Mon & Weds 12:00-1:30; M 3:30-4:30  
(or by appointment)

**Course Description:** In this course, we will explore the nature of Native American Religions using one particular group as our primary example, the Lakota/Sioux Indians. We will begin with the pre-European contact period of the 1760s and track the development of Lakota society and religion through the period of forced removal into the present day. We will cover the following topics: ritual, cosmology, social structure, oral traditions, literary representation, religious and communal leadership roles, missionization, colonization, reservation life, religious repression, modern political movements, burial rights, cultural appropriation, peyote, and federal laws pertaining to native peoples. We will also discuss the differences between native and non-native points of view on all these subjects.

### **Books:**

John Neihardt, *Black Elk Speaks*. NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2000.  
Peter Catches [Lakota], *Sacred Fireplace: Life and Teachings of a Lakota Medicine Man*. SD: Oceti Wakan, 1999.  
Mary Crow Dog [Lakota] and Richard Erdoes, *Lakota Woman*. NY: Harper Perennial, 1991).  
Kent Nerburn, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog: On Forgotten Roads with an Indian Elder*. CA: New World Library, 2002.  
**E-Reserve articles** ON-LINE at: OAKS/Contents (listed, end of syllabus)

### **General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

1) Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted, and valued in various expressions of human culture; 2) Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments. These outcomes will be assessed in Response Paper TWO, 15% of the final grade.

**Requirements:** Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate in class discussions; missing more than three classes can result in a lower grade. The assignments in this course include the following: four quizzes (15 minute each, 5% each = 20%), two response papers (3-4 pages, 15% each = 30%), a Mid-Term (25%), and Final (25%). No excuses will be accepted for missed assignments or exams, such as oversleeping, lost books, or being stuck out of town. If you have a legitimate excuse, please talk to me before the scheduled assignment. All missing assignments receive a failing grade.

**Honor Code:** Lying, cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the Honor Code and are not permitted at the College. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Dean of Students. A student responsible for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure based on dishonesty. Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration--working together without permission-- is a form of cheating.

**Classroom Electronics:** Students must TURN OFF all electronic devices before class starts; you are not permitted to engage in texting or reading electronic mail (etc.) while class is in session. If you have a computer for taking notes, you must ONLY take notes (not surf the web) unless asked.

**Writing Lab:** Center for Student Learning, Addlestone Library, first floor. Trained writing consultants can help with writing; they offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to craft sentences; also how to document sources. For more information, see <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>

**Grading:** Numerical curve: A+ = 100-97; A = 96-93; A- = 92-90; B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80; C+ = 79-77; C = 76-73; C- = 72-70; D+ = 69-67; D = 66-63; D- = 62-60; F = 59.

**Reading Assignments:** Readings should be done **before** the class for which they are assigned. Please come to class prepared to discuss the readings.

- I. Week One: January 8, 10 Introduction to Native American Religions
  - A. OAKS article: Vine Deloria, "Religion and the Modern American Indian" and "Native American Spirituality."
  - B. Reading Assignment: *Black Elk Speaks*, pp. 1-36.
- II. Week Two: January 13, 15, 17
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Black Elk Speaks*, pp. 37-99.
- III. Week Three: January **20 [NO CLASS]**, 22, 24
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Black Elk Speaks*, pp. 100-156.
  - B. **QUIZ ONE, January 24**
- IV. Week Four: January 27, 29, 31
  - A. Reading Assignment: finish *Black Elk Speaks*, pp. 157-210.
  - B. Oaks article: Damian Costello, "Redescribing the Lakota World."
  - C. **PAPER ONE DUE, January 31**
- V. Week Five: February 3, 5, 7
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Sacred Fireplace*, pp. 1-69.
- VI. Week Six: February 10, 12, 14
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Sacred Fireplace*, pp. 71-127.
  - B. **QUIZ TWO, February 14**
- VII. Week Seven: February 17, 19, 21
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Sacred Fireplace*, pp. 129-187.
- VIII. Week Eight: February 24, 26, 28
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Sacred Fireplace*, pp. 189-221.
  - B. **MIDTERM EXAM, Take Home Feb 26, in-class Feb 28**
- IX. Week Nine: **SPRING BREAK MARCH 1-9**
  - A. NO CLASSES
- X. Week Ten: March 10, 12, 14
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Lakota Woman*, pp. 1-92.
- XI. Week Eleven: March 17, 19, 21
  - A. Reading Assignment: *Lakota Woman*, pp. 93-169.
  - B. **QUIZ THREE, March 21**

- XII. Week Twelve: March 24, 26, 28  
A. Reading Assignment: *Lakota Woman*, pp. 170-263  
B. OAKS article: Chris & Todd Wise, "A Conversation with Mary Brave Bird"
- XIII. Week Thirteen: March 31, April 2, 4  
A. Reading Assignment: Nerburn, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, 1-81, 335-336  
B. **QUIZ FOUR, April 4**
- XIV. Week Fourteen: April 7, 9, 11  
A. Reading Assignment: Nerburn, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, 83-169
- XV. Week Fifteen: 14, 16, 18  
A. Reading Assignment: Nerburn, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, 171-251  
B. **PAPER TWO DUE, April 18 (SLO Certification)**
- XVI. Week Sixteen: April 21, 23  
A. Reading Assignment: Nerburn, *Neither Wolf Nor Dog*, 253-334  
B. Pass Out Take Home part of Final, April 21  
B. **FINAL EXAM:**  
**FRIDAY, APRIL 25 [RELS 115.01] 9:00-11:00 AM, ECTR 103**  
**MONDAY, APRIL 28 [RELS 115.02] 9:00-11:00 AM, ECTR 103**

**RELS 115 Lakota Religion & Society Articles @ OAKS/Contents**

Vine Deloria, Jr. "Religion and the Modern American Indian" and "Native American Spirituality." In James Treat (editor), *For This Land: Writing on Religion in America* (1999), pp. 122-129 and 130-134.

Damian Costello. "Redescribing the Lakota World." In *Black Elk: Colonialism and Lakota Catholicism* (2005), pp. 72-90.

Christopher and Todd Wise. "A Conversation with Mary Brave Bird." *American Indian Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 3, (2000), pp. 482-493.