

Alaska Native Studies (ANS) F242 F61
Native Cultures of Alaska
Gruening Building, Room 303, 10:00-11:45 am
Summer 2009

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Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide a general background on the indigenous cultures of Alaska as they are now and as they were prior to the arrival of non-indigenous peoples. The course provides a review of each of the large cultural areas with additional thematic topics about kinship, trade relations, oral traditions, art, and music. Discovery of information and theories about indigenous peoples is an ongoing process, and student input is valued and actively sought.

Required Texts

Texts purchased from the UAF Bookstore must now be ordered on-line: www.uaf.edu/bookstore

Chance, Norman A.	<u>The Iñupiat and Arctic Alaska</u> , 1990; ISBN: 003032419-X
Fienup-Riordan, Ann	<u>Eskimo Essays</u> , 1990; ISBN: 0813515890
Langdon, Steve	<u>The Native People of Alaska</u> , 4 th ed., 2002; ISBN: 0936425814
Laughlin, William	<u>Aleuts: Survivors of the Bering Land Bridge</u> , 1980; ISBN: 0030812690
Olson, Wallace	<u>The Tlingit: an introduction to their culture and history</u> ; 1991; ISBN: 0965900908
Simeone, William	<u>Rifles, Blankets and Beads: Identity, History and the Northern Athapaskan Potlatch</u> , 2002; ISBN: 0806135085

Students with Disabilities

If you have any condition such as a physical or sensory disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as I have outlined it, or which will require extra time on examinations, please notify me in the first two weeks of the course so that we may make appropriate arrangements. If medical situations arise during the semester, whether physical or emotional, you can contact the Center for Health and Counseling at 474-5655.

Course Structure and Readings

You must attend class regularly to successfully complete this course. *Much* of the course material may be gained only by attending the class, and instructor and student lectures and presentations will provide the primary source for information that will appear on the two exams. The texts are secondary in importance to class participation, providing details for the information presented in class and used as supporting texts for the assignments.

Videos

Five videos will be shown in class during the semester. After each video, you will be given time to write five questions about the subject matter of the film, and you will attempt to answer these questions from the information learned from the film. **You will not lose points for incorrect answers, only “mis-phrased” questions.** For example, these questions **cannot** be questions *about* the film, but must be questions concerning the subject of the film. Each set of "video-questions" are worth 30 points, for a total of 150 points.

Group Presentations

Each of the five groups (A-E) will be responsible, as a group, for presenting material in one class (one group per unit). Each group member will present an aspect of their assigned subject (~10 minutes each). Accompanying this presentation will be a paper of 3-4 pages, double-spaced, at ten to twelve-point font, detailing the subject matter of the presentation. This paper is intended to *augment* the presentation, and is prepared *instead of* the writing assignment for each unit. However, presentations are to be *presented*, not read.

Exams: Map Test

On Tuesday of the 1st week of class a take-home map test will be distributed. It is due the following Friday. To complete this test any resource may be used. Most important is to become familiar with the geographic position of Alaska's features. It is necessary to understand the relevance of the geographic situation of all human groups. The map test is an *easy* 50 points, which will also increase geographic awareness of Alaska.

Exams: Final Exam

The Final Exam is worth 200 points. The exam will consist of three parts. An *example* exam is presented below:

PART 1: (required) (define in 2-3 sentences any 5 of the following) **50 points**

Paleo-Arctic peoples	Umialik	Animism	Toion / doyon
Clan	Maniilaq	Barabara	Niuriviik

PART 2: One out of two discussion questions (approximately 1 page) **50 points**

(1) Give a description (rather than a definition) of culture, displaying how culture is a natural adaptive mechanism for humans.

(2) Give a description of how the ancestors of indigenous Alaska Natives came to settle Alaska, according to archaeological evidence, and briefly identify the controversies surrounding this origin-theory.

PART 2: Essay Question (required) (approximately 2 pages) **100 points**

Describe in detail the Athabascan potlatch, including its change through history, the effects of culture change, rituals and symbolic details, and its overall role as a social institution.

Attendance Requirement

Attendance is required, since this class requires considerable group cooperation. As per ANS attendance requirements, your grade will be dropped by one value for three or more absences.

SCHEDULE of READINGS and ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Lecture Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
INTRODUCTION 5/26, 5/27	Anthropology, Ethnology, & the Study of Indigenous Cultures Readings: Langdon: Introduction Tasks: Take-home Map Test distributed; due 5/28
UNIT 1 5/28, 6/1, 6/2, 6/3	The Eyak, Haida, Tlingit, & Tsimshian Readings: Langdon: Tlingit and Haida (Southeast Coastal Indians) Olson: pp.1-65 as a part of Assignment 1 Tasks: Group A Presentation, 6/3 Assignment 1 distributed; due 6/3 Video: “ <i>Haida Gwai</i> —the Queen Charlottes: Islands in the Web of Life”
UNIT 2 6/4, 6/8, 6/9	The Yupiaq/Yupiit Readings: Langdon: Yupiit (Bering Sea Eskimos) Fienup-Riordan: pp. 1-67; 167-220 as a part of Assignment 2 Tasks: Group B Presentation, 6/9 Assignment 2 distributed; due 6/9 Video: “In Iirgu’s Time” / “ <i>Carayak</i> ”
UNIT 3 6/10, 6/11, 6/15	The Iñupiat Readings: Langdon: Iñupiat (Northern Eskimos) Chance: parts of entire text used as a part of Assignment 3 Tasks: Group C Presentation, 6/15 Assignment 3 distributed; due 6/15 Video: “From the First People”
UNIT 4 6/16, 6/17, 6/18, 6/22	The Dena/Dene/Dina (Athabaskan) Readings: Langdon: Athabaskans (Interior Indians) Simeone: pp. 3-48; 107-161 as a part of Assignment 4 Tasks: Group D Presentation, 6/22 Assignment 4 distributed; due 6/22 Video: “Make Prayers to the Raven: The Passage of Gifts”
UNIT 5 6/23, 6/24, 6/25	The Unangan (Aleut) & Sugpiaq (Alutiiq) Readings: Langdon: Unangan/Aleut Langdon: Sugpiaq/Alutiiq (Pacific Eskimos) Tasks: Laughlin: parts of entire text used as a part of Assignment 5 Group E Presentation, 4/25 Assignment 5 distributed; due 4/29 Video: “Our Aleut History: Alaska Natives in Progress”
CONCLUSIONS 6/29, 6/30, 7/1	Museum Visit, Final Review, & Final Exam Museum Visit: 6/29 Final Exam Review: 6/30 FINAL EXAM: 7/1 (Wednesday)

