

# General Education Course Inclusion Proposal

## INTEGRATIVE THINKING

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number:** Indigenous Environmental Movements NAS 342

**Home Department:** Center for Native American Studies

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): April Lindala (227-1397, alindala@nmu.edu)

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): Every winter

**Official Course Status:** Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate?      YES      IN PROGRESS

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

A. Overview of the course content

NAS 342 analyzes contemporary Indigenous environmental activism and the historical, anthropological, philosophical, political, economic, and cultural roots of the environmental issues confronting Indigenous peoples today. Three units are covered. Unit One consists of the cultural and philosophical background to contemporary Indigenous environmental movements. Unit Two presents the anthropological, historical, political, and economic dynamics that have led to today's Indigenous environmental movements. Unit Three analyzes case studies of contemporary Indigenous environmental movements and ensures students are up-to-date on key developments in these movements and their ramifications.

B. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes

NAS 342 is founded on the principle of integrative thinking across disciplines. Rather than simply presenting the case studies of today's Indigenous environmental activism, students are engaged in lectures, readings, films, discussions, and a final project that draws on various disciplines to create a deep understanding of why Indigenous communities today are faced with a multitude of environmental concerns (draws on the fields of anthropology, environmental history, political science, environmental philosophy, and Native American studies), why these environmental issues matter to Indigenous communities (draws on the fields of environmental philosophy and Native American studies), how Western colonialism continues through environmental racism (draws on the fields of history, anthropology, political science, economics, and Native American studies), and how the roots of these contemporary Indigenous environmental issues go back further than Western colonialism (draws on the fields of anthropology, environmental philosophy, environmental history, and Native American studies).

C. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

This course is a three-hundred level course intended for the advanced student interested in environmental issues, international Indigenous environmental issues, environmental philosophy, the environmental and cultural impacts of economic globalization, the anthropological roots of contemporary environmental concerns, colonial and “post”-colonial environmental history, the political dimensions of Indigenous environmental issues, the structural evolution of society in relation to contemporary environmental issues.

D. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

NAS 342 is an elective for the following degrees: Fisheries and Wildlife Management, Environmental Studies and Sustainability, and Native American Studies. The course is also an elective in the Native American Studies minor.

NAS 342 serves to acquaint students with an in-depth analysis of how all of contemporary humanity stands in relation to the planet and Indigenous peoples. Ultimately the course is a mirror into which each student may analyze their role in shaping the future of humankind and the Earth. Presenting an analytical overview of human history as expressed by the political, historical, economic, anthropological, and philosophical dynamics of contemporary Indigenous environmental movements, NAS 342 is broadly applicable, deeply probing, and paradigmatically challenging. As such, NAS 342 would function well as a requirement or elective in various majors and minors.

E. Provide any other information that may be relevant to the review of the course by GEC

NAS 342 was developed in 2006 by a contingent faculty member and has been taught by that same contingent faculty member since then. The course typically fills to capacity when offered in multiple sections.

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

DIMENSION	WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED	PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT
Evidence	Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument	<p><b>Task type:</b> Final project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to do quality research on an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements. These projects are presented to the class as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, and social media pages.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final essay exam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Students are required to write an in-class essay thoroughly describing what they have learned in the course. Generally students are asked to identify 5 major themes from the course and to discuss 2-4 specific examples for each theme (minimum of 10 examples) drawing from the course material. The content must be presented clearly and informatively assuming a general audience with limited background on the subject.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 20% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 80% as this course is for upperclassmen. While many students are often from</p>

		disciplines other than NAS, by the end of the course they should be able to integrate the information gleaned from the various disciplines analyzed in the course at a higher level than what was expected of them during the course. The final essay exam functions as an overall assessment of how well each student can grasp and integrate the course's multi-disciplinary concepts.
<b>Integrate</b>	Integrates insight and or reasoning with existing understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding	<p><b>Task type:</b> Exams for Units One and Two</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Multiple choice exams with occasional fill-in-the-blank and true/false questions tests the students' ability to remember and synthesize the information presented and analyzed in class. Questions range from rote memorization of facts to demonstrating the understanding of concepts.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 20% of the final course grade for each exam</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to research an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements. These projects have been presented to the class as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, and social media pages. The solutions are to be original to the student and argument must be made supporting the viability of that solution based on logical reasoning and a thorough understanding of the dynamics discussed in the course.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final essay exam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Students are required to write an in-class essay thoroughly describing what they have learned in the course. Generally students are asked to identify 5 major themes from the course and to discuss 2-4 specific examples for each theme (minimum of 10 examples) drawing from the course material. Students must make clear connections between case studies and their understanding of the theories discussed in class.</p>

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<b>Evaluate</b>	Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines	<p><b>Task type:</b> Final project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to research an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements. These projects have been presented to the class as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, and social media pages.</p> <p>In order to successfully complete this requirement, students must effectively evaluate the information they come across in their research in order to present the most accurate and informative information. In developing their own solutions, students necessarily must evaluate their ideas according to the assignment's parameters: addressing the involved activists' concerns and avoiding the traps of the roots of the issues as discussed in the course.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final essay exam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Students are required to write an in-class essay thoroughly describing what they have learned in the course. Generally students are asked to identify 5 major themes from the course and to discuss 2-4 specific examples for each theme (minimum of 10 examples) drawing from the course material.</p> <p>In presenting a proficient analysis of what they have learned, students must evaluate the type of information that will best present their understanding of the course content. Further, they need to</p>

	<p>demonstrate they understand how the dynamics of the various root causes discussed in Unit Two along with the foundational philosophical principles discussed in Unit One have created the Indigenous environmental movements we analyzed in the course case studies.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 20% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 80% as this course is for upperclassmen. While many students are often from disciplines other than NAS, by the end of the course they should be able to integrate the information gleaned from the various disciplines analyzed in the course at a higher level than what was expected of them during the course. The final essay exam functions as an overall assessment of how well each student can grasp and integrate the course's multi-disciplinary concepts.</p>
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**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES**  
**INTEGRATIVE THINKING**

Attainment of the INTEGRATIVE THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this learning outcome. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.

DIMENSION	WHAT IS BEING ASSESSED	PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT
Connections to Experience	Connects academic knowledge to experiences	
OR Connections to Discipline	Makes connections across disciplines	<p><b>Task type:</b> Final Project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to research an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements. These projects have been presented to the class as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, and social media pages.</p> <p>In order to offer solutions, students must integrate the knowledge discussed in class from across the disciplines. For example, students need to have an anthropological understanding of the structural evolution of societies and the historical impact on the human-planet relationship inherent in each societal type while also understanding how the institutions of economic globalization epitomize this anthropological understanding of human societies and how, in turn, these economic institutions philosophically, politically, culturally, and ecologically impact Indigenous societies today.</p>

	<p>Students need to present their researched issue within this multi-disciplinary context and develop a solution(s) to the issue that draws on this cross-discipline understanding to adequately address the issue, its interdisciplinary roots, and the concerns of the Indigenous activists involved in the issue.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final essay exam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Students are required to write an in-class essay thoroughly describing what they have learned in the course. Generally students are asked to identify 5 major themes from the course and to discuss 2-4 specific examples for each theme (minimum of 10 examples) drawing from the course material.</p> <p>In order to be considered proficient at this, students must demonstrate the ability to connect the cultural, philosophical, anthropological, historical, political, economic theories from Units One and Two with the case study examples of Unit Three.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 20% of the final course grade</p> <p><b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 80% as this course is for upperclassmen. While many students are often from disciplines other than NAS, by the end of the course they should be able to integrate the information gleaned from the various disciplines analyzed in the course at a higher level than what was expected of them during the course. The final essay exam functions as an overall assessment of how well each student can grasp and integrate the course's multi-disciplinary concepts.</p>
Transfer	<p>Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in one situation to new situations</p> <p><b>Task type:</b> Final Project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to research an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements. These projects have been presented to the class as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, and social media pages.</p>

		<p>To present a proficient understanding of the issue researched, students must be able to take the interdisciplinary lessons from Units One and Two and apply them to the issue they have chosen.</p> <p>Further, students need to understand how the theories of Units One and Two apply to the case studies of Unit Three in order to present a proficient analysis of the issue they choose to research.</p> <p>Finally, in order to offer solutions, students must adapt the knowledge they have gathered from across the disciplines to present a viable solution that addresses the Indigenous environmental concerns they have identified and the interdisciplinary roots of the issue.</p> <p>In order to achieve overall proficiency for this task, students will need to emphasize Indigenous concerns while drawing on such disciplines as history, economics, political science, and philosophy to present an accurate and thorough discussion of their chosen issue.</p> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade  <b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p>
<b>Integrated Communication</b>	Communicates complex concepts by choosing appropriate content and form	<p><b>Task type:</b> Final Project</p> <p><b>Description:</b> The final project requires students to research an environmental issue confronting an Indigenous community or communities today, one that was not covered in class. They are to present key perspectives from the Indigenous environmental activists involved in the issue. Students are also required to offer a solution to the issue that resolves the main concerns of the Indigenous environmental activists involved. Students must explain why their solution is viable, taking into account what they have learned about the development of these problems through our interdisciplinary exploration of the causes and effects of Indigenous environmental issues and movements.</p> <p>These projects require students to present their research as in-depth brochures, presentations, original videos, original websites, or social media pages. While they are not expected to be graphic design professionals, students are also graded on the project's design qualities and how well their medium performs for their particular project. They are asked to consider such questions as</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Is the presentation format appealing?</li><li>- Is it designed to attract attention?</li><li>- Is there artistry evident in the design?</li><li>- Does the design facilitate the transfer of information or hinder it? Are the ideas clear? Does the format avoid irrelevant information?</li><li>- Between the design and the information, is the project both persuasive <i>and</i> factual?</li><li>- Is the presentation of the information designed so that people can access the information with little effort?</li></ul> <p><b>Typical grading weight:</b> 25% of the final course grade <b>Expected Proficiency Rate:</b> The criterion level for <i>proficient</i> is at 75% as this course is for upperclassmen, but many students are often from disciplines other than NAS.</p>
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