

ISEM 101

Spring 2013

Integrated Seminar Title: Sacred Journey into Indigenous Communities (a.k.a. "Sacred Journey")

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Textbooks:

- *Stories That Make the World: Oral Traditions of the Indian Peoples of the Inland Northwest*, Frey, Aripa and Yellowtail, 1995.
- *Landscape Traveled by Coyote and Crane*, Frey and the Schitsu'umsh, 2001.
- *The Mardu Aborigines*. 2nd Ed., Tonkinson, 1991.
- *Daughters of the Dreaming*. 3rd Ed., Bell, 2001. (optional)
- Supplemental Readings found at our web Schedule (PDF files)

Course URL: <http://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~rfrey/101a.htm> To access: a. Seminar Schedule and Topics, b. Specific Seminar Learning Activities, c. Grading Rubrics, d. Seminar Resources, and e. Pilgrimage Edicts, including Civility Clause, Study Skills and Resources, and Disability Services

Synopsis. Using a humanities and social sciences integrated methodology, we will explore the meaning and significance of the oral traditions and stories, and of the sacred pilgrimages, rites of passage and world renewal ceremonies, that help create and sustain Indigenous communities throughout the world (such as the American Indian and Australian Aborigine). As the seminar methodology is self reflexive, students will "travel" (through the learning activities) into these Indigenous communities, while at the same time explore and perhaps unveil special and revered territories within themselves and their own communities. What distinguishes the Indigenous from you and what do we all share in common? How is identity formed in these communities, and how are these communities held together? What is the meaning of their rites of passage and world renewal ceremonies? What are the implications for you, the student?

Course Description: Throughout history and in the varied societies of the world, sacred journeys within the world's great spiritual traditions have been at the foundation at providing spiritual and cultural significance and meaning to life. Sacred journeys go to the heart of what it means to be "**human**," and how we have come to define our "**communities**." During the semester we will consider the sacred journeys embedded in Coeur d'Alene and Crow American Indian, and Aranda and Mardu Australian Aborigine, among other indigenous communities throughout the world.

Sacred journeys are of many different types and serve a variety of essential roles. In this course we will consider three distinct, though interrelated, forms of sacred journeys. There are sacred journeys that are of a personal nature. These journeys include various "**rites of passage**," such as spiritual quests, initiations

into religious orders or statuses, states of illness and healing, and the final rite of passage, death. Sacred journeys can also be of a collective nature. These include groups of people journeying to sacred places, which can be either spatially or temporally oriented. Spatial journeys are illustrated in "**pilgrimages**" involving travel to a "sacred place," such as to the Medicine Wheel in the Bighorn Mountains. Temporal journeys are illustrated in the act of storytelling and certain communal rituals, together often referred to as "**world renewal ceremonies**," in which time is suspended and participants return to "the perennial time of the creation."

Rites of passage, pilgrimages and world renewal ceremonies are essential means for the creation and perpetuation of Indigenous communities. "**Community**" in its broadest sense, embraces all dimensions of human culture and society. Community concerns the negotiation and communication of how people will relate to one another and to their environment. Embedded within community are the essential identities, values and teachings of a people. The community experience is the story of humans interacting in and with the world in a variety of dimensions. These human dimensions are the core of all scholarship in the humanities and social sciences.

While all sacred journeys travel over and through an **exterior landscape**, seeking to discover the divine in a temple, mosque, synagogue or church, or at a sacred site such as Medicine Wheel, all sacred journeys are fundamentally focused on the **interior journeys** of the soul and spirit, realizing the divine within oneself – what is above is as below. We will discover that all sacred journeys are essential to and shared by all religions throughout time and throughout the world today.

It is through the sacred journeys in these Indigenous communities and conveyed in their **sacred story texts** that each religion facilitates access to and disseminates their quintessential teachings and truths. Among the sacred story texts we will engage are such accounts as *Salmon Goes Up River*, *Coyote and the Swallowing Monster*, *Sedna*, *Changing Woman and her Twin Sons*, and *Karora*. For each of the Indigenous communities we will encounter on our travels this semester, we will explore their great teachings.

While our study of Indigenous communities will be conducted within a scholarly venue, seeking academic objectives, the sacred journey will not and cannot be divorced from your **own personal quest**. We will learn the value of and attempt to integrate together, both "head" and "heart" knowledge. This course, as with your entire freshmen experience, is itself a special sort of "rite of passage," within which you will receive many powerful "gifts" and "huckleberries" as you journey on your own unique educational pilgrimage in search of your own "special place." Cherish all the "huckleberries" that are bestowed on you, gifts from your class experiences, as well as outside the classroom. They will serve you a life-time.

Before we begin our journey you need to be better equipped with certain learning and research skills in "Huckleberrying" and "Eye Juggling." The eye juggling method is an academic research and learning, interpretive method (as distinguished from a theological approach) that allows you to place the Indigenous communities in their historic and cultural contexts to better interpret their essential sacred symbols, values and stories. It is an integrated methodology based upon both the **humanities** and **social science** disciplines, to **interpret the meaning and purpose** in the varied sacred story texts and ceremonies. Eye juggling allows you to get a little closer to seeing the world's diverse cultures and communities from the

perspectives of the participants themselves. And in so doing, by juxtaposing what can be unique and distinct alongside what is often veiled and taken for granted, eye juggling also helps you to more clearly reveal and appreciate your own **personal values**.

Learning Outcomes: Several learning outcomes are sought in this seminar, each of which is linked to the specific focuses of an ISEM 101 and the appropriate Learning Outcomes of the University of Idaho. Upon reaching the summit of your pilgrimage (at the end of the semester), you should have greater competency in following skills and understandings and appreciations. The five Seminar Learning Outcomes are:

1. **Learn and integrate** – Learn through independent **self** and **collaborative** study, using the **multi-disciplinary** methodologies of the **humanities** and **social sciences**, to **integrate diverse information** through these disciplines.
 - a. **Distinguish Differing Disciplinary Approaches, and Applying a Multidisciplinary Interpretative Method ("Eye Juggling")**. You will gain an academic methodology based upon the disciplines of humanities and social sciences for interpreting, appreciating, and understanding differing ways of viewing and knowing the religions of the world, and of expressing divergent cultural, religious, and aesthetic values. As an interpretative method you will gain an ability to develop your skills in reflexivity and reflectivity, as well as the skills to reflect upon, think critically and creatively, and integrate information across diverse disciplines and varied points of view.
2. **Think and create** - Use **multiple thinking strategies**, such as **critical, reflective, creative and/or interpretative thinking**, to **understand** and examine real-world **human community issues**, explore original avenues of expression, solve problems, and make consequential decisions.
 - a. **Understanding and an Appreciation of Human Diversity** as well as our **Shared Humanity**. You will gain a heightened understanding of and appreciation for the many of the great Indigenous communities of the world, along with their quintessential teachings and truths, as well as their cultural, aesthetic (art and architecture), literary, religious and philosophical expressions. Each community is to be appreciated for its special uniqueness and individuality, yet there will be thread of shared humanity, of what is universal in our diverse experiences. We will attempt to view the world from the perspectives of those we study.
3. **Communicate** – Through **various sources of information**, including **library research**, acquire, articulate, create and convey intended meaning using **verbal and non-verbal methods of communication** that demonstrates respect and understanding in complex and diverse human communities.
 - a. **Improve Oral and Written Communication Skills**. You will enhance your skills in computer use, in note-taking abilities, actively listening and reading, develop a working knowledge of university library resources, and develop successful time management. You will enhance your skills in conveying ideas coherently and effectively in written and oral forms, including storytelling, develop interpersonal skills including participating in class discussions, posing

thoughtful questions, listening and responding to others, and accomplish tasks through group work. You will also enhance your ability to effectively gather data from a variety of sources, e.g., texts, public documents, interviews, panels, surveys observation, internet sites, to support your oral and written arguments and ideas.

4. **Clarify purpose and perspective** – Explore **one’s life purpose and meaning** through skills of **reflexivity** and transformational experiences that foster an understanding of **self** in relationships to **diverse** local, regional and/or global **human communities** and **perspectives**.
 - a. **Understanding and an Appreciation of Your Own Spiritual/Philosophical/Cultural Background in Relationship to Global Community.** By juxtaposing that which is culturally and religiously distinct alongside that which is immediate though often veiled, the contours of the landscape of one’s own cultural and religious world view and values becomes clearer. You will better be able to understand yourself in relation to the many “strangers” in our global community. You will gain a heightened understanding of your own unique worldview, as well as realize the common threads of our shared and universal humanity within our global communities.
5. **Practice citizenship** – Apply principles of **ethical** leadership, **collaborative engagement**, socially responsible behavior, **respect for diversity** in an interdependent world, and a service-oriented commitment to advance and sustain local and/or global **human communities**. Apply your education in the service of others to “make a difference.”
 - a. **Foster a Respect and Ability to Collaborate with Diverse Others.** In our culturally and religiously pluralistic world it is critical that we develop a tolerance of and respect for the varied communities of other peoples. An appreciation and understanding of the varied communities in this course is an essential first step in facilitating a heightened ability to effectively communicate, cooperate, and collaborate with those who may differ from us. In this seminar, you will also develop your ability in respecting as well as your skills in civic engagement and collaborating with diverse communities, as developed pedagogically within the seminar.

Learning Activities: This is a course modeled as a “rite of passage” and a “pilgrimage.” As such, it is a course that requires your participation as an engaged learner, making “discoveries” on your own. You cannot assume a passive observer's role, viewing the Indigenous communities from afar. To help you stay on course and reach your destination, you will need to adhere to certain "Pilgrimage Edicts." As a “rite of passage” and “pilgrimage” some of the learning activities will be conducted as an individual journey, while other learning activities will be engaged as “family” group journeys. The “families” will also serve as study groups. Each of the learning activities are embedded with the learning outcomes and will seek to have you demonstrate your ability to: 1. understand and appreciate human **diversity** as well as your own **shared** humanity, 2. **respect** and **cooperate** with **diverse others**, 3. understand and appreciate of your **own spiritual/philosophical/cultural** background, identifying and reflecting on yourself and its relationship to the larger contextual communities, 4. differentiate disciplinary approaches, and applying a

multidisciplinary method to the interpretation of the seminar materials, and 5. effectively use **oral and written communication** skills. Each learning activity thus seeks to evaluate and assess the growth of the student during the course of the seminar relative to the learning outcomes. See the web syllabus for a complete discussion of each learning activity and the schedule when each is due. There are four learning activities:

- A) *Growth of the Neophytes* (3 exams of differing styles: in-class, individually-taken, written essay; group-oriented, oral recitation; and take-home individual-reflective essay - 45% of total grade)
- B) *Pilgrimages* (in-class discussions and reflective writes; each student will have an opportunity during the seminar to orally and in writing articulate and discuss the varied topics and subjects of the seminar; the first reflective write will identify student's most meaningful prior life experiences - 10% of total grade)
- C) *Re-Telling One's Own* (conducted within the student's family, the re-telling of an authentic oral narrative - 15%)
- D) *Family Quests* (group participatory project - 30% of total grade). Conducted as a collaborative project, each family will select a rite of passage or pilgrimage from one of the religions communities to engage. Dividing up the responsibilities of the quest equitably, family members will 1) Conduct extensive library research on its background, ritual meanings and significances, ceremonial structures, all from an adherent's point of view; 2) Write a creative-nonfictional story of the rite of passage or pilgrimage, inventing probable characters and a storyline, all based upon authentic and accurate ceremonial and philosophical information from the selected ritual; 3) Apply the "Eye Juggling" method to interpret the meaning of the ritual, as well as to differentiate a social science and a humanities analysis and interpretation of the ritual. You will be asked as a psychologist to show how your ritual influences personal identity and enhances self-esteem. You will be asked as a sociologist how your ritual influences group solidarity and sustains community. You will be asked as an ethnographer what are the symbolic meanings of the various components of a rite of passage or pilgrimage, and how do these meanings render an appreciation of what it means to be a "human." 4) Each student will reflect on the significance and meaning of the ritual for you, identifying qualities of your own belief or value system.

Grading Criteria Rubric: These rubrics are embedded in and applied to the seminar student learning activities (exams, papers and class discussions). The rubrics were derived, with modifications to some rubrics, from VALUE Association of American Colleges and University (<http://www.aacu.org/value/index.cfm>). The instructor will utilize these rubrics to grade the seminar exams, in-class discussions and research papers, thus providing a uniform and systematic means of grading all students.

Your final grade will be based upon the averaged point totals earned from the *Quest* participatory project (for proposal, and for project for 30% of grade), *Neophyte* exams (for 45% of grade), *Re-telling one's own* (storytelling for 15%) and *Pilgrimage* in-class discussion and reflective writes (for 10% of grade). In cases of

boarder-line decisions, your class attendance, as well as questions and discussions brought up during class, will be taken into consideration. We are using a 5-point scale, with only 1-4 receiving a value rubric, i.e., 0=incompetent

Learning Outcomes:	Minimal (1=D)	Emerging (2=C)	Emerging (3=B)	Competent (4=A)
1. <u>Understand</u> (Civic 1)	Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.
2. <u>Respect</u> (Intercultural 3)	Views the experience of others but does so through own cultural worldview.	Identifies components of other cultural perspectives but responds in all situations with own worldview.	Recognizes intellectual and emotional dimensions of more than one worldview and sometimes uses more than one worldview in interactions.	Interprets intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview and demonstrates ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.
<u>Collaborate in Community</u> (Civic 6)	Experiments with civic contexts and structures, tries out a few to see what fits.	Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to participate in civic contexts and structures.	Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.	Demonstrates ability and commitment to collaboratively work across and within community contexts and structures to achieve a civic aim.
3. <u>Self</u> (Foundations 5 added "self")	At a surface level, reviews prior learning (past experiences inside and outside of the classroom) and the themes of the seminar, without revealing clarified meaning or indicating a broader perspective about educational, life events, and the self.	With some depth, reviews prior learning (past experiences inside and outside of the classroom) and themes of seminar, revealing slightly clarified meanings or indicating somewhat broader perspectives about educational, life events, and the self.	In depth review of prior learning (past experiences inside and outside of the classroom) and themes of seminar, revealing fully clarified meanings or indicating broader perspectives about educational, life events, and the self.	In depth review of prior learning (past experiences inside and outside of the classroom) and themes of seminar to reveal perspectives about educational, life experiences, and the self that are changed or celebrated, providing foundation for expanded knowledge, growth, and maturity over time.
4. <u>Differentiated Disciplines</u> (Integrative 2 modified)	When prompted, presents examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or discipline.	When prompted, connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or discipline.	Independently connects examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or discipline.	Independently creates wholes out of multiple parts (synthesizes) or draws conclusions by combining examples, facts, or theories from more than one field of study or discipline.
<u>Integrates Disciplines to Interpret Meaning</u> (Integrative 3 changed to "interpret")	Uses, in a basic way, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained in own discipline or experience to interpret an issue.	Uses skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained from multiple disciplines to interpret an issue	Adapts and applies skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained from multiple disciplines to interpret or explore issues.	Adapts and applies, independently, skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained from multiple disciplines to interpret a difficult issue or explore complex issues in original ways.

<p>5. <u>Communicate</u></p> <p><u>written</u></p> <p>(Written 2)</p>	<p>In addressing themes of seminar, uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.</p>	<p>In addressing themes of seminar, uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.</p>	<p>In addressing themes of seminar, uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.</p>	<p>In addressing themes of seminar, uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the whole work.</p>
<p><u>Oral</u></p> <p>(Oral 4)</p>	<p>Insufficient supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.</p>	<p>Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that partially supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.</p>	<p>Supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that generally supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.</p>	<p>A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.</p>
<p><u>Sources</u></p> <p>(Written 4 added "verbal")</p>	<p>Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the written and verbal communications.</p>	<p>Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and in the written and verbal communications.</p>	<p>Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and in the written and verbal communications.</p>	<p>Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and in the written and verbal communications.</p>