

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES, BACHELOR OF ARTS

College of Letters & Science

Native American Studies provides a multi-disciplinary introduction to the indigenous cultures of North, Central, and South America. It challenges students to consider issues of cultural diversity, sovereignty, and indigenous knowledge systems in preparation for living in a world of constantly increasing social and cultural complexity.

The Program

Students electing a major in Native American Studies may complete Plan I, Plan II, or Plan III. Plan I enables students to concentrate chiefly upon the Native experience in North America (north of Mexico). Plan II encourages interested students to focus upon Meso-America with some course work integrating Meso-America with North America and South America. Plan III focuses upon South America with some course work integrating that region with areas to the north.

Major Advisor & Advising

All new and prospective Native American Studies majors are encouraged to see the Student Affairs Officer individually, once per year, at minimum. See Native American Studies Advising (<https://nas.ucdavis.edu/contact-information/>).

Career Alternatives

Native American Studies is excellent preparation for a scholarly career or professional career such as teaching, law, human services, health, tribal administration, social work, and inter-ethnic relations. Graduate schools and agencies in these and related areas are looking for students with broad interdisciplinary preparation and who possess knowledge and sensitivity relating to ethnic issues and cultural diversity.

Study Off Campus

Majors have the option of spending one to three quarters elsewhere in the Americas or on or near a reservation as part of the fulfillment of the Area of Specialization. Each student's plan must be approved by the student's advisor and by the chairperson and may fulfill from 12 to 20 of the 28 units required for the emphasis. The courses or field internship taken elsewhere must be focused upon indigenous peoples or indigenous languages and the institution of study shall be located in an area with substantial indigenous population. Students must have upper division standing and, for Plan I, course 107 or the equivalent should have been completed; for Plan II, courses 107 and 133 should have been completed; and for Plan III, courses 107 and 120 should have been completed prior to departure. Several options may be used for receiving academic credit, including course 195. The department strongly encourages students to participate in the UC Education Abroad Program or Short-Term Programs Abroad.

Graduate Study

The Department offers a program of study leading to M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Native American Studies, as well as a designated emphasis in Native American Studies for graduate students in approved programs. Further information regarding graduate study may be obtained at the Department office and at Graduate Studies.

Graduates Advisor

Graduate Advisors (<https://nas.ucdavis.edu/graduate-advisor/>)

The major requirements below are in addition to meeting University Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/university-degree-requirements/>) & College Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/undergraduate-education/college-degree-requirements/>); unless otherwise noted. The minimum number of units required for the Native American Studies Bachelor of Arts is 48.

Code	Title	Units
Preparatory Subject Matter		
<i>Choose two:</i>		8
NAS 001	Introduction to Native American Studies or NAS 002V PENDING APPROVAL	
NAS 005	Introduction to Native American Literature or NAS 005V	
NAS 010	Native American Experience	
NAS 012	Native American/Indigenous Film	
<i>Choose one:</i>		4
NAS 007	Indigenous & Minority Languages	
NAS 030	Homeland History	
NAS 032	Native American Music & Dance	
NAS 033	Introduction to Native American Art	
NAS 034	Native American Art Studio	
NAS 050	Colloquium in Native American & Indigenous Studies	
NAS 099	Special Study for Undergraduates	
OR		
One comparable lower division course from the following departments or programs:		
African American & African Studies (AAS) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/aas/)		
Anthropology (ANT) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/ant/)		
American Studies (AMS) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/ams/)		
Asian American Studies (ASA) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/asa/)		
Chicana/o Studies (CHI) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/chi/)		
Gender, Sexuality, & Women's Studies (GSW) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/gsw/)		
History (HIS) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/his/)		
Linguistics (LIN) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/lin/)		
Middle East and South Asia Studies (MSA) courses. (https://catalog.ucdavis.edu/courses-subject-code/msa/)		
OR		
Another 4-unit lower division course selected in consultation with an advisor, guided by the student's interest and relevance to Native American Studies.		
Preparatory Subject Matter Subtotal		12
Depth Subject Matter		

Theory & Methods 4-8

At least one is required, but both encouraged.

NAS 146 Orientation to Research in Native American Studies

NAS 190 Advanced Seminar on Sovereignty & Autonomy

Language 4

Choose one:

NAS 107 Learning Native American Languages

NAS 108 Indigenous Languages of California

NAS 109 Native American Language Spotlight

NAS 110A Quechua Language & Society: Beginning Level 1

NAS 110B Quechua Language & Society: Beginning Level 2

OR

Substitute a field experience credit (NAS 192) for independent language learning.

Hemispheric Perspectives 4

Choose one:

NAS 120 Ethnopolitics of South American Indians

NAS 133B Ethnohistory of Native Peoples of Mexico & Central America 1500 to 2000

NAS 171 Indigenous Mesoamerica

NAS 175V Hemispheric Indigenous Connections

NAS 184 Contemporary Indigenous Literature of Mexico

NAS 191 Topics in Native American Studies

Experiential Learning 4-12

Combine as needed for a minimum of 4 units, up to 12 units:

NAS 093 Powwow Internship

NAS 120 Ethnopolitics of South American Indians

NAS 122 Native American Community Development

NAS 124 Indigenous Justice Laboratory

NAS 133 Ethnohistory of Native People of Mexico & Central America

NAS 165 Keepers of the Flame: Native American Cultural Burning & Land Stewardship in California

NAS 185 Native American Literature in Performance

NAS 192 Apprenticeship & Internship

NAS 193 Leadership Training in Native American & Indigenous Organizations

NAS 198 Directed Group Study

NAS 199 Special Study for Advanced Undergraduates

Upper Division Courses 20

Students take a variety of upper division courses in Native American Studies. Virtual & hybrid versions of all these courses any of these classes may be automatically be substituted for these requirements.

HMR 160 Human Rights & Indigenous Peoples

NAS 101 Contemporary Native American Art

NAS 115 Native Americans in the Contemporary World

NAS 118 Native American Politics

NAS 119 Introduction to Federal Indian Law

NAS 121 Corporate Colonialism

NAS 123 Native Foods & Farming of the Americas

or NAS 123V Native Foods & Farming of the Americas

NAS 125 Performance & Culture Among Native Americans

NAS 130A Native American Ethno-Historical Development

NAS 130B Native American Ethno-Historical Development

NAS 130C Native American Ethno-Historical Development

NAS 132 Native American History in California

NAS 134 Race, Culture, & Nation

NAS 135 Gender Construction in Native Societies

NAS 157 Native American Religion & Philosophy

NAS 161 California Indian Environmental Policy I

NAS 180 Native American Women

NAS 181 Native American Poetry

or NAS 181V Native American Poetry

or NAS 181C DISCONTINUED FOR SPRING 2025 **

NAS 182 Native American Fiction

or NAS 181A DIS

NAS 183 Native American Non-Fiction

or NAS 181B DISCONTINUED FOR WINTER 2026 **

NAS 188 Special Topics in Native American Literary Studies

NAS 191 Topics in Native American Studies

Honors Courses 0-8

NAS 194HA Special Studies for Honors Students

or NAS 194HB Special Studies for Honors Students

NAS 196 Senior Project in Native American Studies

Related Upper Division Courses

By petition, the undergraduate advisor can approve up to three other relevant upper division courses of interest from other departments, particularly those from the recommended departments listed for the lower division elective, but open to any interdisciplinary interests of the student. Also with the approval of an undergraduate advisor, up to four courses (16+ units if semester-length) can be taken via UC Online from other UC campuses in this subject area. An unlimited number of online/"v" virtual courses taught by UC Davis NAS faculty can count towards the major. Virtual versions of any NAS classes developed in the future at UC Davis may be substituted.

Depth Subject Matter Subtotal 36-56

Total Units 48-68

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Course(s) discontinued; see your advisor for course options.