

Alaska Native Societies, History and Spirituality
Alaska Native Relations Online Course Series
Department of Interior – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Place: Online Only **Time:** M, W 10:00-11:30am
Video: (Teams or Zoom – TBD)
Phone: +1 *Crystal's conference line?*
Summer 2020 * August 11-20

Instructor: Steve Langdon, PhD, University of Alaska Anchorage Professor Emeritus

Coordinator: Crystal Leonetti, USFWS Alaska Native Affairs Specialist

Cellular Telephone: 907-230-8419

E-mail: crystal_leonetti@fws.gov

Course Description

The term Alaska Natives is used to refer to a diverse spectrum of Alaska's Indigenous peoples, living in distinct geographic regions, each having unique histories, and each culturally distinct. This course is intended to provide a broad overview of Alaska's first peoples, with emphasis on spirituality and connection to the lands and waters.

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 an introduction to Alaska Native origins, cultural areas and languages with additional topics about kinship, trade, innovations, war and peace and rituals. Alaska Native elders are held in high regard, so interactive discussion with elders will be a part of this course.

Required Texts

Langdon, Steve, The Native People of Alaska, 5th ed., 2014

Alaska Native Relations Course Series Values:

ALASKA NATIVE CULTURES all hold certain values to be paramount to their cultures. Our courses showcase similarities and individualities of various Alaska Native groups and their values. Below is a list of some important values shared by all Alaska Native Cultures.

Show Respect to Others - Each Person Has a Special Gift
Share What You Have - Giving Makes You Richer
Know Who You Are - You Are a Reflection on Your Family
Accept What Life Brings - You Cannot Control Many Things
Have Patience - Some Things Cannot Be Rushed
Live Carefully - What You Do Will Come Back to You
Take Care of Others - You Cannot Live without Them
Honor Your Elders - They Show You the Way in Life
Pray for Guidance - Many Things Are Not Known
See Connections - All Things Are Related

Disability Services

Any student eligible for and needing reasonable accommodations due to a disability is requested to speak with course coordinator as soon as possible.

Course Structure and Readings

There will be 3 online live lectures, and 1 online class discussion. You must attend all scheduled classes to complete this course. Instructor lectures and discussions with elders will provide the primary source for information. The texts are secondary, providing details for the information presented in class and used as supporting texts for the assignments.

Reading and completing writing assignments before class will *greatly* increase your understanding of the lecture and presentation material.

Course Requirements

Provided below is a list of assignments that are required for this class.

Writing Assignments:

DUE

- **Paper:** Research and write one page (~ 500 words) about the [Indigenous peoples in the area of your work \(or find it here\)](#). If your work spans multiple cultures, choose the one your work is primarily focused on, or the one you know the least about. Include the history pre-contact, societal norms, history of contact, language, kinship structures, and spirituality pre- and post-contact, and one way they are connected to the land and water, particularly if you find it interesting. August 13
- **Video & Questions:**
 - Watch the *Yakutat Sealing Camp video* provided by Dr. Langdon, and answer set of questions, provided after July 16 class August 18

Class Attendance*: Attend all 4 classes August 11, 13, 18, 20

Reading Assignments:

- Read Chapter 1 of The Native People of Alaska August 10
- Read Chapter 8 of The Native People of Alaska August 12
- Read ‘The Boy Who Lived With The Seals’ August 18

*In recognition that not all offices or homes have the capability to live stream the class lectures and discussions, each class will be recorded so that you may download and watch them in your own time.

Writing Style

Some tips about terminology: Capitalize “**Indigenous**” when referring to a group of people, **Alaska Native** (not Alaskan Native) when referring to the Indigenous people of Alaska. Note that “**Native Alaskan**” references any person who was born and raised in Alaska. **Elders** are a special term in Alaska Native cultures (as opposed to elderly). For more information, see Alaska Native Studies Council Writing Style Guide (PDF provided via TEAMS file share)

Attendance Requirement

Attendance is required, unless you receive a waiver from course coordinator, since this class is opportune for questions and answers, discussion, and visiting with elders. The first two classes are lecture-style with a Q&A period at the end, the third class is focused on spirituality and will have elders present, and the fourth class is a facilitated class discussion.

Other Suggested Learning Material:

Chance, Norman A., The Iñupiat and Arctic Alaska, 1990

Fienup-Riordan, Ann, Eskimo Essays, 1990

Laughlin, William, Aleuts: Survivors of the Bering Land Bridge, 1980

Roderick, Libby, Alaska Native Cultures and Issues, Responses to Frequently Asked Questions, 2010

Thornton, Thomas, Being and Place among the Tlingit, 2008

Video: Nutemllaput: Our Very Own (Yup'ik/Cup'ik), available on YouTube

Video: Drums of Winter

Video: Make Prayers to the Raven: The Bible and Distant Time / The Passage of Gifts (Dine/Dina – Athabascan), available on YouTube

Video: Hitting Sticks, Healing Hearts (Dine – Nenana)

Video: The Aleut Story (Unangan), available in 3 parts on YouTube

Video: On the Wings of Tomorrow (Inupiaq)

Video: Respect the Land - Kamaksriḷiq Nunam Irrusianik (Inupiaq)

Video: At the Time of Whaling (Sivuqaqmiut)