

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TODAY

Asserting their sovereignty and culture

COURSE #:

22F-IPT

FORMAT:

Seminar

MODERATOR:

Miriam Whitney
Margaret Russell

DATE & TIME:

Tues - 10:00 - 12:00 AM

10 Weeks

Starting on 9/27/2022

LOCATION:

Common Room
Public Library
Hadley

MAX NO. OF PARTICIPANTS:

18

AUDITORS

ACCEPTED:

Yes

MAX NO. OF AUDITORS:

1

PURPOSE:

This seminar will explore today's activism of Indigenous Americans in defending their sovereign rights and cultural heritage.

DESCRIPTION:

Despite three centuries of efforts to eradicate them or force assimilation, Indigenous Americans have been asserting themselves in myriad ways over the past fifty years. They are fighting for tribal recognition and enforcement of centuries-old treaties to protect their ancestral lands and rights. Focused on preserving their cultures and languages, they're using political action to protect their land, resources, and peoples.

These actions are important because Native Americans live in a world where they are often thought of in the past tense, a theme echoed by numerous Indigenous leaders and writers.

Following an introduction and historical background, we will learn from examples of Indigenous resilience. These include land claims to water and mineral rights, creative partnerships to manage public lands, protection of ancestral remains and sacred sites, and resistance to outside adoption of Native children. The seminar will conclude with a literature discussion of Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Night Watchman* by Louise Erdrich.

ROLE OF PARTICIPANTS:

Most participants will research a designated topic using suggested tribes as examples, give a short 20-25 minute talk, and lead a 15-minute discussion. The talk will include background and the current status of the topic. Two participants will lead a discussion of *The Night Watchman*.

RESOURCES:

Required reading: (1) *Sierra Club Magazine* Fall 2021 feature on Deb Haaland, Secretary of the US Department of the Interior (online link to be provided); and (2) Louise Erdrich, *The Night Watchman* (historical fiction). The book is available from the local library system and local and online booksellers.

ABOUT THE MODERATORS:

Margaret's interest in Native Americans stems from high school, where several of her classmates were Mashpee Wampanoag. Miriam has long been interested in tribal issues. Her work at the US Department of Education included legal advice on federal grant programs to tribes. Both have co-moderated seminars.