

## **Master of Science in American Indian Studies: Program of Study**

The MS in American Indian Studies is a terminal degree program, which is designed to be completed in two years. All students are required to complete 30 credit hours, including three required core courses (AIS 501, 502, 503), three concentration courses (see course list below), 6 credit hours of electives (either within AIS or with affiliated faculty in other programs), and 6 credit hours of either thesis (AIS 599) or practicum (AIS 580). Both capstone options (thesis and practicum) require students to recruit and collaborate with an appropriately composed supervisory committee, which will provide the student mentoring and final evaluation of the student's capstone work (guidelines for both capstone options can be found in handbooks posted on the AIS web-page, see *Graduate Program*).

The objective of the program is to provide, through its two concentrations, an advanced education in the current trends defining the field of American Indian Studies. Developing competency in the current ideas and scholarship integral to AIS will enable students to make their own contribution to the field, either through a thesis project or improving their professional skills in an applied project. Acquiring an MS from this program will also enable students to acquire entry into further graduate education (eg, doctoral programs), professional programs (eg, law school), or professional careers serving the American Indian community, regionally and nationally.

### **AIS Master's Concentrations**

*Indigenous Rights and Social Justice:* Explores the historical dimensions of colonization on the political, economic and cultural aspects of Indigenous communities. Particular attention is paid to analyzing the legal, political and social components of the relationship between Indigenous nations and the settler-colonial government of the US, be it the federal, state or local level. In turn, special emphasis is placed on the strategies Indigenous people have pursued collectively and individually at responding to and resisting colonization, including efforts at achieving social justice and decolonization.

*Tribal Leadership and Governance:* Explores traditional and contemporary notions of leadership and governance with respect to education and politics. Special emphasis is placed on understanding the concepts and functions of tribal governments, including setting policy, forming and passing legislation, creating constitutions and constitutional reform, planning, economic development, nation-building, tribal courts, and tribal jurisdiction. All of which is complemented with an appreciation and understanding of historically Indigenous notions of community and leadership.

### **AIS Capstone Options**

*Thesis Option:* Students conduct an original research project appropriate to their area of concentration, which will be overseen by a three-member thesis supervisory

committee that the student is responsible for recruiting. Said committee will provide mentoring and guidance for the student as s/he develops their research and analytical skills with the objective of making a meaningful contribution to AIS (with due consideration for the Indigenous community). Ultimately, when the thesis supervisory committee is satisfied with the student's progress, s/he will be permitted to schedule a thesis defense as the last stage of their capstone experience.

*Practicum Option:* Students will be responsible for contracting a practicum with an agency serving the Indigenous community, typically within the state of Arizona, where s/he will serve as an intern. The agency chosen ought to be appropriate to the student's area of concentration. The work assigned by the agency will be complemented with requirements assigned by the practicum supervisory committee. As such, the practicum is designed to provide authentic practice situations where the learning that occurs at the agency setting capitalizes on previous coursework through an application of theories, concepts, and specific practice behaviors for the field experience. Overseeing the student's progress is a two-member practicum supervisory committee, in addition to a site supervisor (see *AIS Graduate Practicum Handbook*). A defense is not required for the practicum, however, but a final review of the student's work conducted by the student's committee is required.

### *Summary of Program Requirements*

30 credit hours total:  
9 credit hours Core Courses  
9 credit hours Concentration Courses  
6 credit hours Elective Courses  
6 credit hours Thesis or Practicum

### **Course Listing**

#### *Core Courses*

AIS 501 American Indian Studies Paradigm  
AIS 502 American Indian Studies Research Methods  
AIS 503 Contemporary Issues and American Indians

#### *Indigenous Rights and Social Justice Courses*

AIS 509\* American Indians and Indigenous Rights  
AIS 510 Social Change in American Indian Communities  
AIS 511 Genders & Sexuality in American Indian Societies  
AIS 512 Historical Trauma, Healing and Decolonization  
AIS 513 Urban Issues  
AIS 514 American Indian Intellectuals  
AIS 515 The Work and Legacy of Vine Deloria Jr

AIS 516 Concepts of Power and Indigeneity  
AIS 517\* Customary Tribal Law and Governance  
AIS 518\* Tribal Jurisdiction  
AIS 519 Burial Rights, Repatriation and Sacred Places Matters

*Tribal Leadership and Governance Courses*

AIS 509\* American Indian and Indigenous Rights  
AIS 517\* Customary Tribal Law and Governance  
AIS 518\* Tribal Jurisdiction  
AIS 521 American Indian Leadership and Resistance  
AIS 522 Tribal Government  
AIS 523 Community Development with American Indian Communities  
AIS 524 Indian Control of Education: Tribal Colleges and Universities  
AIS 598 Tribal Community Planning

\* courses marked with an asterisk (\*) are available in both concentrations outlined above

*Capstone Options*

AIS 580 Practicum  
AIS 599 Thesis

In addition to the above courses, master's students are permitted up to 6-credits of 400-level coursework, which may be taken, with appropriate permissions, as part of a student's degree program. Eligible courses in the AIS program include:

AIS 455 Human Rights and Cultural Resource Laws  
AIS 470 Tribal Governance  
AIS 480 Actualizing Decolonization  
AIS 494 Principles of American Indian Leadership  
AIS 494 Crime in Indian Country  
AIS 494 American Indian Rights  
AIS 494 American Indians in Cinema, Art, and Media  
AIS 494 Critical Issues in Indian Education  
AIS 494 Indigenous Media and Image-Making  
AIS 494 Cultural Professionalism

Please note: All master's students must meet with the director of graduate studies about their individual Program of Study, which must be posted on the student's MyASU account (see tab labeled "iPOS").