

Master of Public Administration: Path to Sovereignty

Fall 2024 Term

(Tribal Governance Concentration Elective)



4 Graduate Credits | Open to All MPA Students

Class Schedule (Weekend Intensive):

- Weekend 1: Oct. 11-13 (Week 2)
 - Friday, 6-9pm
 - Saturday, 10am-4pm
 - Sunday, 10am-4pm
- Weekend 2: Nov. 15-17 (Week 7)
 - Friday, 6-9pm
 - Saturday, 10am-4pm
 - Sunday, 10am-4pm

Location: “s'gʷi gʷi ʔ altxʷ: House of Welcome” Longhouse, Classroom 1007B

Student Support Hours: In-person or over Zoom by appointment

Faculty: Kyle Pittman, MPA

Office: Lab II Building, Room 3272 (3rd floor)

Contact: pittmank@evergreen.edu | (360) 867-6613 (Office)

Land Acknowledgement: Evergreen acknowledges the Coast Salish Indigenous Peoples on whose ancestral lands our campuses reside and from whom this land was forcibly removed by federal accession through the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854, including autonomous communities comprised of peoples we now recognize as the Squaxin Island, Nisqually, and Puyallup Tribes who continue to be the traditional custodians of this land.

“We are not here to study Indians. Indians are here to study.”

--Mary Ellen Hillaire--

Course Description: In *Path to Sovereignty*, students will examine the cultural, historical, and modern development of Tribal governance. This will include reviewing the role of American Indian treaties between Tribal Nations and the United States, exploring the historical origins of federal Indian law and policies affecting Tribes at the federal and state levels, and evaluating contemporary issues and challenges facing Tribal governments today. Students will study the legal, political, and economic frameworks that pertain specifically to Tribal Nations while also identifying how these governments affect local and regional communities in various ways, constituting themselves as a vital aspect of American society; deconstruct colonial policies that limit Tribal sovereignty while validating Indigenous theoretical and practical demonstrations of self-determination; and describe traditional and contemporary forms of Tribal governance.

Content Advisory: The Evergreen State College MPA program covers a variety of challenging topics of to race, equity, culture, crimes, discrimination, colonization, intergenerational trauma and other potentially difficult topics. We acknowledge certain events may trigger an emotional response. Faculty's responsibility is to maintain a positive learning environment for all students in the program. Addressing these experiences are not faculty members' primary area of expertise and we ask that students seek support in advance as needed, if desired. Please be aware that all course materials are potentially related to reading, writing, viewing, and discussion that may include unexpected and unwanted exposure to painful realities, both historical and present-day, and including but not limited to genocide, violence, dehumanization, sexual crime, and destruction of sacred land. Course materials may awaken individual, family, cultural, universal human, and existential trauma (among other harms). Take good care of yourselves—and each other—and remember that if materials and activities are counterproductive for you, you may excuse yourself and work with the faculty to design a plan that works for you and meets the objectives and outcomes of the class.

Cultural Acknowledgement: As a course exploring aspects of Native American and Indigenous studies, it is likely that the content of this class will involve subjects and themes related to Native American issues, cultures, and communities that are presented through an Indigenous lens and with Indigenous pedagogical values, intentionally disrupting dominant cultural norms. For some students, this may be your first experience with this kind of content and/or approach and you may or may not be familiar with Native American cultures. However, to be inclusive to all students and to maintain focus on the subject of this course, it is incumbent upon each student to be cognizant of the shared nature of our learning environment and to act with respect, diligence, and consideration toward each other. Instruction will not be held up by routinely providing basic information about Indigenous Peoples or cultures. Minor questions for clarification are expected, but any student requesting further explanation of a given subject that is not directly related to the course material will need to arrange a time with the faculty outside of class time to discuss such matters.

Learning Objectives:

- Evaluate the historical origins and contemporary impacts of the federal government's Indian policy
- Analyze different frameworks (political, legal, economic) of Tribal governance and their application to the behaviors, systems, and policy decisions of Indian affairs
- Interpret the concept of political sovereignty and compare/contrast it to Indigenous perspectives of sovereignty
- Describe traditional and modern representations of Tribal governance

Credit Equivalencies:

- 2 Graduate Credit(s) – Federal Indian Policy and Tribal Governance
- 2 Graduate Credit(s) – Public Policy

Required Text(s) and Reading Materials:

- Students must obtain:
 - *American Indian Politics and the American Political System* (4th ed., 2017) by David E. Wilkins and Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark (ISBN: 978-1442252653)
 - *The Rights of Indians and Tribes* (5th ed., 2024) by Stephen L. Pevar (ISBN: 978-0190077556)
- Additional reading handouts and media links will be provided by the faculty on Canvas

Class Structure

Weekend Intensive. This course is being offered as a weekend intensive class. We will meet for two full weekends (Friday-Sunday) at different points in the quarter for students to receive live, in-person instruction on course material. For the rest of the quarter, students will complete asynchronous remote work via Canvas that has been organized into separate “modules.”

Canvas. This course will utilize the online Learning Management System (LMS) known as Canvas to house course content and act as the submission point for assignments. Students will need a device capable of handling online work (desktop, laptop, tablet, etc.), and stable internet connection. All students are expected to familiarize themselves with Canvas.

Readings & Media. Readings and media will be posted on Canvas. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings and media in accordance with relevant assignment due dates and before weekend intensive sessions.

Formatting. All written assignments should use the standard paper formatting of 12-point sized font, 1-inch margins, pagination, and double-spacing. All assignments should have basic details such as your name, the class title, the assignment title, and the date listed unless otherwise stated; be of high quality, grammatically correct, and clear in meaning; all citations should be formatted in APA 7. Your final assignment must be written using the APA 7 student paper format. For help with APA formatting, please refer to [Purdue Owl for APA 7](#).

Assignments

Discussion Posts. Discussion posts are meant to assess your progress on completing the readings and will allow you to apply the concepts and information you're learning. Students should think critically about the prompts and comments should fully address the subject under consideration. Discussion posts are also meant to be a collaborative exercise, so you will be required to respond to classmates. Your initial comments and your responses to classmates *must be meaningful*. They should show genuine interest and thoughtful consideration. Low effort responses will not be accepted.

Prompt Discussions: In the modules, you will be assigned to respond to discussion posts with prompts. These discussion posts directly relate to the readings, so student responses to the prompts should be informed by the assigned reading chapters, article handouts, and/or media for that week. Reply to the prompt provided for the discussion post and offer at least one meaningful reply to other classmates. Initial responses need to be a **minimum of 250 words**, responses to classmates need to be a **minimum of 150 words**. Initial replies will be due first and responses will be due within several days.

Lecture Discussions: In the modules, you will be assigned a lecture video. After watching the lecture, you must respond in a related discussion post on Canvas with any notes, questions, or general commentary you have about the topic that was discussed. Your post should be a **minimum of 150 words**.

(Midterm) Policy Memo. Policy memos are strong, concise documents that briefly present relevant information and recommendations for decision makers with the intention to persuade. You will conduct research and write a **maximum 2-page policy memo, single-spaced**, about a policy issue related to an issue that concerns Tribal Nations (education, child welfare, economic development, law and justice, repatriation, food and agriculture, transportation, intergovernmental cooperation, service agreements, etc.) and **addressed to a specific decision maker**. Use a memo-style heading (not a cover page) and standard paper formatting; any sources you cite for this memo should be included as **footnotes styled in APA 7**. Your memo must include the following parts:

- A maximum 4-sentence executive summary
- An overview of the specific problem
- Identification of stakeholders
- A discussion of arguments (pros and cons) about the policy
- A final recommendation to address the problem (support, reject, or amend policy)

(Final) Policy Brief. Policy briefs (or briefing papers) provide leaders with an overview of an issue, identifies boundaries for the scope of recommendation, frames a recommendation with an audience in mind, finds gaps in existing information or the available options to show how your recommendations fill a gap, compares and contrasts existing information from various parties, and establishes credibility through knowledge and evidence. A persuasive briefing paper is concise, well organized, easy to read, and covers the most important and relevant facts and solutions. For this assignment, each student will write an **8-10-page policy brief, double-**

spaced in APA 7 student paper format, about a policy topic derived from chapters 2-17 in Pevar's *Rights of Indians and Tribes (2024)*. Once you've chosen a topic, you must conduct research on a specific subject under that topic and devise a way to compose your policy brief that includes the following pieces:

- Cover page (does not count toward page count)
- Table of contents (does not count toward page count)
- Definition of key terms (does not count toward page count)
- Executive summary
- Background of issue
- Identification of problem
- Policy recommendation
- Analysis and cautionary notes (pros and cons of recommendation)
- Impact to stakeholders
- Action plan (how to implement your recommendation)
- Reference page(s) and appendices (if needed; neither count toward page count)

Include citations throughout the document to properly assess your explanation of the problem and support your recommendation. You must use secondary sources for this assignment (i.e., no interviews) such as government documents, research reports, case law, policy briefs, books, academic journals, newspapers, websites, etc. As a tip, do not attempt an exhaustive review of all your sources. Synthesize information, use very few direct quotes, and avoid long quotes.

Policies

Academic Honesty. All students are expected to maintain [academic honesty](#). This means thinking critically and engaging with this class to the best of your ability. Students are expected to put forth demonstrations of their own work and thinking. Students may not recycle previous academic materials for current assignments without prior permission from the faculty. Plagiarism is absolutely not allowed, including self-plagiarism and AI-generated work. Evidence of academic dishonesty by any student is grounds for receiving zero credit for this class and potentially being dismissed from the class or the MPA program.

Earning Credit. To earn credit, students must perform the learning objectives by fulfilling the expected amount of credit hours each week. Credit hours are represented by the completion of assignments by their due dates and according to their instructions, attending class, and engaging meaningfully with the learning community. These items are assessed with rubrics and weighted with points which are awarded as either "complete" or "incomplete." **Earned credit is not indicative of the quality of your learning; it is a recognition of fulfilling the expected credit hours of work.** Partial or no credit (NCR) may be received if a student does not complete all the required coursework nor engages sufficiently with the learning community. If you are at risk of losing credit, you will be notified prior to week 10. Credit hours are weighted accordingly:

- Attendance/Engagement = 1 Credit
- Discussion Posts = 1 Credit
- Policy Memo = 1 Credit
- Policy Brief = 1 Credit

Faculty Evaluation of Student Work. At Evergreen, students receive [written narrative evaluations](#) that detail the quality of your work and progression of your learning through this course. **Though earning credit is essential to obtaining a degree, your evaluation describes your skill level and capabilities. Full credit is assumed, your evaluation is what really matters.** It is vital to perform well so your evaluation reflects your academic growth. Language used in the narrative evaluations to assess student progress and mastery:

- Exceeding, excellent, strong, quality (typical A area)
- Meeting, proficient, moderate (typical B area)
- Discovering, approaching, emergent (typical C area)

Student Evaluation of Faculty Work. **A written student evaluation of the faculty is required.** All final evaluations are to be submitted via My.Evergreen no later than the end of evaluation week (week 11). Additionally, **all students must write a self-evaluation** for themselves. During week 11, the faculty will reach out to each student to arrange a final evaluation meeting to discuss your academic progress.

Attendance. It is expected that all students will attend the scheduled class days. Should you anticipate missing a class, please notify me. While students are not expected to justify why they missed a class, notifying me of an expected absence alerts me to your safety. After reoccurring absences (being late to class, regularly missing more than one class), you may lose credit if we do not have a plan for success in place. No make up work will be assigned for missed class days.

Engagement. Because students are considered co-creators of knowledge in this class, meaningful engagement is important for the learning community. Engagement can look like attending class, completing in-class activities, making individual/collaborative contributions during seminar, taking notes during lectures, responding timely to activities, making inquiries on the content, focusing on instruction, and generally making your presence known.

Late Work. Students are required to submit all work by their stated deadlines; late work is unacceptable. If there is an unavoidable need to turn in an assignment late, contact the faculty immediately prior to the original due date to discuss options. Turning in late work will result in no feedback, delayed grading, and grading penalties. Not completing asynchronous work (i.e., discussion posts) by their stated deadlines constitutes late work and “missed” class hours.

Student Support Hours and Faculty Communication. The faculty will provide a designated time for student support hours (AKA “office hours”). This time is meant for students to connect with the faculty outside of class time to discuss academic, administrative, or personal issues related to the student’s education. Students are also welcome to email or send a Canvas message to the faculty at any time and will receive a response within 48 hours. **Students are required to communicate using their Evergreen email addresses or through Canvas. Any changes to the class or other important notices will be posted via Canvas Announcements.**

Pronouns. Class rosters and institutional data systems are provided to instructors with students’ legal names and gender identifications. However, knowing that many students do not use their

legal names or identify with their sex assigned at birth, the faculty are happy to use the name and/or pronouns you use. We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, where you can share with all members of our class what name and pronouns you use.

Guest Policy. Guests are welcome to visit our learning community with discretionary approval from the faculty in advance of the requested visit.

Credit Dispute. Should you be concerned over the amount of credit you received once final credit has been posted, you may contact the faculty to resolve any inquiries or find resolution. If your concerns have not been satisfied after attempting to resolve things with the faculty, you may raise your concerns with the [Academic Deans](#).

Incident Weather. In the event of bad weather or emergencies, students should check for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line (360) 867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. The MPA director may decide to cancel class, in which case you will be notified by them via email. Alternatively, the faculty may decide to cancel a class meeting even if campus is open and will send an all-class email or Canvas announcement prior to 8:00am (PT) the day of class. Students are responsible for checking their student email and ensuring viable transportation options are available to them.

Reasonable Accommodations. To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities at (360) 867-6348. If any student has a health condition or disability that may require accommodations to effectively participate in this class, please do the following: Contact the faculty before class and Contact Access Services to receive a letter of accommodation. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to [TESC's Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Expectations. All students and guests are bound by Evergreen's [nondiscrimination policy](#), [Student Code of Conduct](#), [Evergreen's Social Contract](#), and the confirmed Community Agreement (protocols) established during class. MPA students are also bound by the policies set forth in the [MPA Student Handbook](#).

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault. Students can [report online](#) or contact the Title IX Coordinator in LIB 3216, titleixcoordinator@evergreen.edu, (360) 867-5224 or campus police. Student Wellness Services can provide a confidential space for students to discuss options. All faculty and staff have a duty to report any significant safety concern including notice of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, sexual harassment, or harm to self/suicide attempt to the authorities or appropriate parties.

MPA: Path to Sovereignty (F24)

Coursework schedule (any changes will be announced and posted on Canvas):

- All readings and media should be completed within the timeframe of each module; additional reading and review materials are provided on Canvas and linked here.
- All assignments are due by their stated deadlines.
- Reference items are meant to be considered in preparation for a weekend intensive session and/or a specific assignment.

Module 1 – Introduction to Tribal Sovereignty (Week 1: 9/30-10/6)

Read:

- Wilkins and Stark, *American Indian Politics*, Introduction
- [Cobb, A. \(2005\). Understanding Tribal sovereignty: Definitions, conceptualizations, and interpretations. *American Studies*, 46\(3/4\), 115-132.](#)
- [Blackhawk, M. \(2023\). The Constitution of American colonialism. *Harvard Law Review*, 137\(1\), 1-21 \(introduction\).](#)

Reference:

- (Guide) [University of Southern California Libraries. \(2024, May 7\). *Writing a policy memo. Research Guides.*](#)
- Fixico, *Bureau of Indian Affairs*, Glossary

Due:

- Prompt Discussion Post #1

Module 2 – Tribal Nations, Settler Colonialism, and Indian Treaties (Week 2: 10/7-13)

Read:

- Pevar, *Rights of Indians and Tribes*, Chapter 1-2, 4
- Wilkins and Stark, *American Indian Politics*, chapters 1-3
- [Vera, K. B. \(2012\). From Papal Bull to racial rule: Indians of the Americas, race, and the foundations of international law. *California Western International Law Journal*, 42\(2\), 453-472.](#)
- (Video) [Professor Robert Miller: The Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny](#)

Due:

- Prompt Discussion post #2

Module 3 – Overview of Federal Indian Law and Policy (Weeks 3-5: 10/14-11/3)

Read:

- Pevar, *Rights of Indians and Tribes*, Chapters 3, 5, 6-17
- Wilkins and Stark, *American Indian Politics*, Chapters 4-6
- (Video) [Civil Jurisdiction on Tribal Land](#)
- (Video) [Criminal Jurisdiction on Indian Lands](#)

Reference:

- [Mikkanen, A. Q. \(2022\). *Indian Country criminal jurisdictional chart* \[Chart\]. Justice.gov.](#)
- [Anderson, R. T. \(2011, March 3\). *Criminal and civil jurisdiction & P.L. 280* \[Memorandum\]. University of Washington Law School.](#)

Due:

- Lecture Discussion Post #1
- Lecture Discussion Post #2
- Policy Memo (due by end of week 5)

Module 4 – Contemporary Tribal Governments (Weeks 6-7: 11/4-17)Read:

- [Miller, R. J. \(2011\). Tribal constitutions and Native sovereignty.](#)
- [Taylor, J. \(2022, May\). *The economic & community benefits of Tribes in Washington State*. Washington Indian Gaming Association.](#)

Reference:

- (Guide) [University of North Carolina. \(2024\). *Policy Briefs*. The Writing Center.](#)
- [Murray, M. J. \(2021, October 14\). *Tribal lands: An overview*. \(CRS Report No. IF11944\).](#)
- [James, N. \(2024, January 12\). *Law enforcement on Tribal lands*. \(CRS Report No. IF12569\).](#)
- [Leubsdorf, B., Murray, M. J., & Taylor, N. \(2024, April 2\). *American Indian, Alaska Native, and Tribal population data*. \(CRS Report No. IF12612\).](#)
- [Dortch, C. \(2023, October 17\). *Postsecondary education of Native Americans*. \(CRS Report No. IF10554\).](#)
- [Murray, M. J., & Donley, M. W. \(2023, November 3\). *Indian Gaming Regulatory Act: Gaming on Indian Lands*. \(CRS Report No. IF12527\).](#)
- [DeSantis, M. K., & Taylor, N. \(2024, May 1\). *Repatriation of Native American remains and cultural items: Requirements for agencies and institutions*. \(CRS Report No. IF12523\).](#)

Due:

- Prompt Discussion Post #3

Module 5 – Modern Issues for Tribal Nations (Weeks 8-10: 11/18-12/15)Read:

- Wilkins and Stark, *American Indian Politics*, Chapters 7-10
- [Du Bey, R., Fuller, A. S., & Miner, E. \(2019\). Tribal treaty rights and natural resource protection: The next chapter United States v. Washington – The culverts case. *American Indian Law Journal*, 7\(2\), 54-72.](#)

Reference:

- [National Congress of American Indians. \(2023\). *Policy Issues*.](#)
- [Government Accountability Office. \(2024\). *Tribal and Native American Issues*.](#)

Due:

- Lecture Discussion Post #3
- Draft Policy Brief (due by end of week 8)
- Final Policy Brief (due by end of week 10)

--- EVALUATION WEEK (December 16-20) ---

Table 1: Class Agenda and Schedule for Weekend 1 (October 11-13)

	Class Agenda & Schedule	Reference List (read these to be prepared for the corresponding day)
Friday	<p>Evening session (6-9pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Class overview • Assignment workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Guide) USC Libraries, "Writing a policy memo" • Fixico, "Glossary"
Saturday	<p>Morning session (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: "Sovereignty, Tribes, and Settler Colonialism" • Lunch (30 minutes) <p>Afternoon session (12:30-4pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: "Traditional and Contemporary Forms of Tribal Governance" • Guest Speaker: Wayne Buchanan • Seminar discussion on referenced readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pevar, Ch. 1-2 • Wilkins & Stark, Intro and Ch. 1-3 • Cobb, "Understanding Tribal Sovereignty" • Blackhawk, "Constitution of American Colonialism"
Sunday	<p>Morning session (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: "American Indian Treaties: Historical Analysis" • Lunch (30 minutes) <p>Afternoon session (12:30-4pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture: "American Indian Treaties: Contemporary Analysis" • Seminar discussion on referenced readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pevar, Ch. 4 • Vera, "Papal Bull to Racial Rule" • (Video) The Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny

Table 2: Class Agenda and Schedule for Weekend 2 (November 15-17)

	Class Agenda & Schedule	Reference List (read these to be prepared for the corresponding day)
Friday	<p>Evening session (6-9pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: "Fundamentals of Federal Indian Law and Policy" Assignment workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pevar, Ch. 3, 5, 14 Wilkins & Stark, Ch. 5 (Guide) UNC, "Policy Briefs" Miller, "Tribal Constitutions"
Saturday	<p>Morning session (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: "How Contemporary Tribal Governments Function" Lunch (30 minutes) <p>Afternoon session (12:30-4pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: "Jurisdiction in Indian Country" Guest Speaker: Justin Kover Seminar discussion on referenced readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pevar, Ch. 6-13 Wilkins & Stark, Ch. 4 (Video) Civil Jurisdiction on Tribal Land (Video) Criminal Jurisdiction on Indian Lands Mikkanen, "Indian Country Criminal Jurisdiction Chart" Anderson, "Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction Memorandum"
Sunday	<p>Morning session (10am-12pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: "Tribal Economic Development" Guest Speaker: TBD Lunch (30 minutes) <p>Afternoon session (12:30-4pm):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: "Modern Challenges for Tribal Governments Today" Seminar discussion on referenced readings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pevar, Ch. 15-17 Wilkins & Stark, Ch. 6 Taylor, "Economic & Community Benefits of Tribes in WA State" CRS Reports