

## NATIVE DECOLONIZATION IN THE PACIFIC RIM: FROM THE NORTHWEST TO NEW ZEALAND



Native Decolonization in the Pacific Rim class at Taheke Marae, in Rotorua, Aotearoa/New Zealand, 2011

**Fall 2014, Winter 2015, & Spring 2015**  
**Sophomore-Senior**

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*Fields of Study:* American studies, Native American studies, cultural studies, geography, and international studies

*Class Standing:* Sophomore–Senior

*Credits:* 16 (Fall); 16 (Winter); 16 (Spring)

**Class Projects in Aotearoa / New Zealand, 2011**

<http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz/NZ.pdf>

**Native Programs at Evergreen**

[www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms](http://www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms)

Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith asserts, “Our communities, cultures, languages and social practices – all may be spaces of marginalization, but they have also become spaces of resistance and hope.” In this program we will identify and contextualize these spaces and the politics of indigeneity and settler colonialism. We will use the Pacific Rim broadly as a geographic frame, with a focus on the Pacific Northwest Native nations and the Maori in Aotearoa (New Zealand). A comparative study of the role of treaties in Washington state and New Zealand—in natural resources, governance, the arts, education, etc.-- will provide a key framework for the program.

By concentrating on a larger region, students will have an opportunity to broaden Indigenous studies beyond the Lower 48 states, and explore common processes of Native decolonization in different settler societies. We will be studying decolonization through cultural revitalization and sovereign jurisdiction of First Nations. In order to examine the central role of Indigenous peoples in the region's cultural and environmental survival, we will use the lenses of geography, history, art and literature.

In fall our focus will be on familiarizing students with the concept of sovereignty, working with local Native nations, and preparing to travel to Aotearoa. The concept of sovereignty must be placed within a local, historical, cultural and global context. Through theoretical readings and discussion, we will move from state-building in the U.S. and Canada to Native forms of nationalism. We will stress the complexities and intricacies of colonization and decolonization by concentrating on the First Nations of western Washington and British Columbia. Students will gain skills to prepare for travel experiences, and cross-cultural interactions with Indigenous communities.

We will later expand the focus to appreciate the similarities and differences of Indigenous experiences in other areas of the Pacific Rim, such as Native Alaskans, Aboriginal peoples in Australia, and South Pacific island peoples. We will emphasize common Pacific Rim concerns such as climate change, tourism, and cultural domination.

For up to seven weeks straddling winter & spring quarters, many of us will travel to Aotearoa, where we will learn in a respectful and participatory way how the Maori have been engaged in revitalizing their language, art, land, and politics, and their still unfolding, changing relationships with the Pakeha (non-Maori) people and society. Students will challenge post-colonial theory that merely deconstructs and move to a consideration of decolonizing practices. We will take as our basic premise in this program that those wishing to know about the history of a particular Native group should write it with a purpose to be in solidarity with these people today.

### Weekly Schedule

Tuesday	9:30-12:00	Lecture
Tuesday	1:00-3:00	Book Seminar
Wednesday	9:30-12:30	Workshop/Film/Lecture/Close reading
Friday	9:30-12:30	Workshop/Film/Lecture/Close reading
Friday	1:30-3:30	Book seminar