Colorado State University
Department of Political Science
POLS 441: Comparative Indigenous Peoples and Politics in the Americas
Spring 2024

Instructor
Dr. Marcela Velasco, Associate Professor
Marcela.Velasco@colostate.edu
Office Hours T & Th 3:30-4:30 and Th 9-10

Colorado State University acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations and peoples. This was also a site of trade, gathering, and healing for numerous other Native tribes. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. As these words of acknowledgment are spoken and heard, the ties Nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed.

CSU is founded as a land-grant institution, and we accept that our mission must encompass access to education and inclusion. And, significantly, that our founding came at a dire cost to Native Nations and peoples whose land this University was built upon. This acknowledgment is the education and inclusion we must practice in recognizing our institutional history, responsibility, and commitment.

OVERVIEW
This course compares the relationship between states and Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas. It examines their claims to self-determination, territoriality, and multicultural rights, and explores national and international laws that address Indigenous peoples’ rights. Some of the questions the seminar will address include (1) the politics of Indigenous identities and self-identification processes, (2) how Indigenous people organize and transform local and national politics, (3) how Indigenous movements and political parties adapt to or contest national policies and politics, (4) how these movements reshape democratic politics, and (5) how they challenge prevailing views and practices of economic development and the relationship between people and the natural environment. Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

• compare state-Indigenous relations in different countries of the Americas.
• analyze political processes that impact the lives and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples.
• identify the different ways Indigenous people define their identities and govern their lands.
• analyze different sources of policy change.

PREPARING FOR THIS CLASS
This is a three-credit class requiring 3 hours of classwork and about 6 hours of homework per week. Your active participation in this class is expected. Failure to attend regularly will have a detrimental impact on your success in this course, leading to a reduction in your grade. I anticipate all students to attend and adequately prepare for class by promptly completing assigned readings.
The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT) offers multiple resources to help you improve your reading, note-taking, and studying skills. Visit them at https://tilt.colostate.edu/Learning/LearningResources/OnlineResources

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS
Interesting courses depend on active student participation. This includes good attendance, informed discussions, and willingness to participate in thoughtful and respectful debates. Engaging with those who may (or may not) hold different viewpoints than your own on an issue is one of the most edifying experiences in the study of politics. You may or may not agree with their conception of the problem, the quality of their data, or the strength of their argument, but if you listen carefully and respectfully, you will strengthen your ideas and help improve the data with better empirical observations or research findings. It is therefore vital to allow everyone to speak and to be heard.

Read CSU’s Principles of Community and use them as a guide to engage with others in this class (https://diversity.colostate.edu/principles-of-community/).

ASSIGNMENTS
Your grade for the course will be determined through the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>% Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading preparations</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify key questions from readings, important concepts, and/or significant events to contribute to class discussions and analysis.</td>
<td>This assignment counts only when used for participation in class discussions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td>Most weeks</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>200-500 words summaries of case analysis</td>
<td>To earn full credit, this assignment must be submitted on time and used in class discussions or activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two Short Papers</td>
<td>Feb 2 &amp; March 22</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>4 pages, topics to be announced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>Different deadlines. See below.</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 to 12-page, double-spaced paper (1-inch margins and 12-point font size). This excludes references or charts.</td>
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Additional instructions in Canvas within the Assignments menu
Final Paper due dates

| Topic Statement | Feb 6 | Describe what you are going to do. 1-2 paragraphs. Your research should consider a specific problem in the field of Indigenous politics and policy in the Americas, including but not limited to state-Indigenous relations, subnational politics, political representation, governance of natural resources, international policies, human rights, or Indigenous identities. Use the writing center to receive additional feedback on your written work. [https://writingcenter.colostate.edu](https://writingcenter.colostate.edu) |
| Initial Bibliography | March 8 (5%) | Present a list of academic sources and describe in 2-3 sentences why each is relevant to your work (roughly 5-8 sources: 2 of which must be books and the rest, peer-reviewed academic articles). |
| Summary | April 11 (10%) | Introduction to the paper presenting a synopsis of (a) the problem (i.e., topic statement), (b) your argument, and (c) summary of results. 1-2 pages. |
| Draft Poster Presentation | May 2 (20%) | Presentation of your paper including enough relevant information on the problem, research question, and results. |
| Final Paper | May 8 (65%) | The final draft of your paper. 10-12 pages |

The assignments are designed to help you:
- analyze a specific problem or situation.
- summarize and interpret complex evidence and arguments in written work.
- analyze readings and identify the author’s thesis and supporting arguments.
- present individual research results.

**Grading Scale** (note this reflects any rounding)

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97.5-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93.5-97.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89.5-93.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.5-89.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83.5-87.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79.5-83.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.5-79.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69.5-77.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>59.5-69.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59.4</td>
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**LATE POLICY**
Assignments must be completed by the due date. If you miss a class activity, you will receive a grade of 0 for that assignment.

Assignments may be completed for full credit later under specific circumstances, such as a university-sanctioned excuse, instances of severe illness, or other valid reasons like observing a
religious holiday. Going on a family vacation or accommodating your work schedule are not valid excuses. For full credit consideration, you are required to promptly contact me and submit supporting documentation that justifies your absence.

In the case of an unexcused late assignment, I will take 10 points off per day late. You must report directly to me no later than one day after the assignment is due. If I have not heard from you within 1 day after missing an unexcused assignment, I will not accept it and you will receive a 0 for it. You will only be allowed to make up one unexcused assignment.

Take note of the class schedule and assignment dates when making personal plans, including your work schedules. If class assignments conflict with personal plans, consider changing your plans or not taking this class.

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**
If you are a student who will need special accommodations in this class, you must contact me to discuss your individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed promptly and a verifying memo from the Student Disability Center will be required before an accommodation is provided.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
The professor for this course strongly endorses CSU’s Academic Integrity Policy as outlined in the Colorado State University General Catalog and the Student Conduct Code. Adhering to the University’s policies builds trust and ensures that I am evaluating your work and judging the quality of what you do. If you plagiarize you could lose credit for the plagiarized work, fail the assignment, or fail the course.

Due to the central role that academic integrity holds in our collective mission as students, teachers, scholars, and citizens, I anticipate that every student will fully to our university’s Honor Pledge. While formal signing of the pledge is not required, each of you will be asked to write and sign the following statement on your papers and exams: “I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance.”

AI statement: Generally speaking, you are not authorized to use artificial intelligence engines, software, or artwork-generating programs (or similar) to produce work for this class.

**REQUIRED BOOK**
SCHEDULE

Introduction: Who are Indigenous Peoples? (January 16 & 18)

Further Reading

Explore these websites!
Native Land Information System https://nativeland.info/

Settler colonialism or neocolonialism? (January 23 & 25)

Further Reading

Indigenous studies, a challenge to “normal” social science? (January 30 & February 1)
Paper 1 due Feb. 2

The Sumak Kawsay/The Good Life: Alternative Epistemologies (February 6 & 8)

*Further Reading*
www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2002/03/1491/302445/

**International legislation (February 13-15)**
• **Case Study 3**: How do international agreements or conventions impact domestic legislation? Read Lightfoot.

*Further Reading*

**Indigenous legal systems, part 1 (February 20 & 22)**

**Indigenous legal systems, part 2 (February 27 & 29)**

**Indigenous legal systems, part 3 (March 5 & 7)**
• **Case study 5**: On Justice “for” vs. “of” Indigenous Peoples. Read:
Sovereignty and territoriality (March 19 & 21)


Paper 2 due March 22

Free, prior, and informed consent (March 26 & 28)


**Further Reading**


Social Movements and Political Parties (April 2 & 4)


Local Governments, part 1 (April 9 & 11)


Local Governments, part 2 (April 16 & 18)

- **Case Study 8**: Local governments as sources of political innovation. Read Van Cott, Tockman, and Velasco, above.

Indigenous Women (April 23 & 25)


**Draft Posters (April 30 and 2)**