

**Comprehensive Program Review – First Nations Studies**  
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*We at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay acknowledge the First Nations people who are the original inhabitants of the region. The Ho-Chunk Nation and the Menominee Nation are the original First People of Wisconsin and both Nations have ancient historical and spiritual connections to the land that our institution now resides upon.*

*Today, Wisconsin is home to 12 First Nations communities including the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, Forest County Potawatomi, Ojibwe Nation communities, Stockbridge-Munsee Band of the Mohicans, and the Brothertown Indian Nation.*

*We acknowledge the First Nations People of Wisconsin.*

**General and Overview**

First Nations Studies is an interdisciplinary degree program that reflects the holistic world view of the Indigenous people of Turtle Island (North America), providing a non-western approach to teaching and learning within the academy. First Nations Studies is committed to the study of First Nations culture, philosophy, history, language, and the social, economic, and political status of First Nations people and their communities. The program is designed to preserve and promote the sovereign identity of the Indigenous people of North America, with an emphasis on the nations of the western Great Lakes. First Nations Studies incorporates the teaching and learning approaches of tribal people, offering students a new way to learn within the academy. The program places emphasis on the Indigenous oral tradition as preserved and shared by tribal Elders. Students take part in oral traditional learning experiences within the university classroom and, also, in tribal communities learning from Indigenous people. The Oneida Language Project is central to the program offering beginning and advanced courses in Oneida language in conjunction with the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin's language revitalization efforts.

**Curricular Strengths.** First Nations Studies reflects Seven Generation stewardship of the Haudenosaunee Great Law which requires us to tend to past and future generations in all that we do. First Nations Studies incorporates these values directly into the program through inter-

generational teaching and learning. Students in First Nations Studies mentor Indigenous school children in the newly created course FNS 211. Further, throughout their course work, they are required to work with Elders in the UW Green Bay Oral Scholars in Residence Program. The program has a nine credit upper level Oral Emphasis Requirement, whereby students may take nine credits of Oneida Language or FNS 399 Oral Concentration. Students enrolled in FNS 399 are in their senior year of study in FNS and spend a number of years in FNS courses preparing for this experience. Throughout their course of study in FNS, students are closely mentored by FNS faculty members. This mentoring relationship is unique and serves as a foundation for the program. Given the mentoring process, faculty members are intimately knowledgeable of student strengths, interests, and career goals and will seek individual Elders to work with the students. Through the mentoring process students are also keenly aware of the requirements and expectations of FNS 399. In order to assist both students and Elder teachers, FNS faculty members prepare each student and Elder individually for the FNS 399 teaching and learning experience. In addition, each student and Elder teacher receives a brief summary of the outcomes and expectations of FNS 399 prior to the course. Further, during the semester a student enrolled in FNS 399 also meets regularly with FNS faculty to discuss their work and their progress. Elder teachers in FNS 399 working with students during the semester have the option of meeting with FNS faculty to discuss the course and student work, but this is at the discretion of the Elders. The FNS faculty members evaluate (grade) student understandings, but the research and learning takes place between students and tribal Elders. Students learn how to approach Elders and conduct research using oral techniques, skills acquired in earlier course work. Students interact and study with tribal Elders to synthesize and acquire oral traditional knowledge. Thus, the program deeply fulfills the mission of the UW System to discover and disseminate knowledge.

**Area of Growth.** As there is balance in all things, there is need for program improvement in order to better serve our students. A primary concern of students is the need for additional courses offering more than introductory level content. The majority of FNS courses meet general education requirements (ethnic studies, sustainability, writing emphasis, Humanities) and, thus, have no prerequisites. This means First Nations Studies students are

repeatedly in courses designed for those with no basic understanding about First Nations people and communities. These courses must devote a great deal of time teaching basic terminology and combating stereotypes. In these courses, FNS students are prevented from exploring advanced topics and complex issues in the discipline. Thus, there is a need for FNS to offer additional upper-level courses with lower-level prerequisites.

**Ed.D. in First Nations Education.** The FNS faculty at UW Green Bay are leaders in transforming Indigenous education in the academy. Given this leadership, campus administrators encouraged the faculty to develop and launch the institution's first doctoral degree program. In 2014, the FNS faculty started planning the Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) in First Nations Education. The program is centered in Indigenous knowledge systems and draws upon Indigenous teaching and learning methods. The program provides an educational environment for students to seek out their original instructions and ancient teachings by learning from Elders, oral scholars, knowledge bearers, and apply these teachings in a community context. The Ed.D. in First Nations Education at UW Green Bay is the first degree of its kind in the U.S.

The program is practitioner focused and driven by professional and community needs. The Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) is an applied degree that addresses genuine problems and generates knowledge about First Nations. The Ed.D. in First Nations Education prepares transformational leaders to change institutions and promote cultural resurgence and the vitality of future generations. The 54-credit degree program consists of a set of core courses offered primarily in face to face settings, reflecting the oral tradition. Classes are offered on weekends with limited online delivery to accommodate working professionals. Students enter the program in a cohort and work collaboratively in classes during the first two years of the program, including summer. Students complete the degree with a culminating applied dissertation project in years three and four. The dissertation project is developed in collaboration with First Nations governments, communities, and individuals. It is a scholarly project that impacts the Tribal World.

The faculty (Poupart, Brooks and Leary) worked diligently designing the program from the initial stages, earning campus-wide, system-wide and Board of Regents support. Program

planning included consultation with tribal governmental leaders, tribal education leaders, tribal community members from all of the Wisconsin Nations, and community members in Milwaukee and Madison. The faculty led the accreditation process earning strong praise from the Higher Learning Commission. Through the accreditation process, the FNS faculty paved the way for other doctoral degree programs to follow at UW Green Bay. In the fall of 2018, the first doctoral cohort entered the program. Currently, the program is accepting applications for the second cohort in the fall of 2020.

**Oral Traditional Teaching and Oral Scholars.** Indigenous teaching and learning is grounded in the oral tradition. Oral scholars share the responsibility of transmitting knowledge to the younger generations. The FNS program is centered on elder epistemology (ways of knowing, approaches to knowledge, and sharing knowledge). Acknowledging the role of tribal elders and oral scholars and incorporating their knowledge is essential to First Nations education at UW Green Bay. The oral scholars in the program collaborate with academic faculty and co-teach classes together. The oral scholars provide students with opportunities to interact with learning and teaching activities not always possible within the normal academic channels. The oral scholars also provide students an experience in listening, observing, doing, and inquiring that fits within indigenous cultural contexts. This offers students an opportunity to experience and learning in the traditional First Nations approaches.

**Act 31 Leadership.** The First Nations Studies faculty continue in their efforts to transform k-16 education state-wide. In an attempt to address racism and the widespread lack of knowledge about the first citizens of Wisconsin, in 1989, the state passed a law requiring all persons seeking a license to teach in the state have received instruction in the history, culture, and tribal sovereignty of the federally recognized tribes in the state (s.118.19(8) Wis. Stats.). The individual teacher education programs are responsible for incorporating this information into their courses of study to ensure that all of their graduates receive this instruction. To date, a systematic response has yet to emerge, and the individual campuses are unable to develop the capacity to provide this instruction in all but the most perfunctory ways. In an attempt to address this lack, FNS faculty continue in their efforts to implement Act 31 within the UW system. The Fusion Project developed by FNS faculty at UW Green Bay imparts information

through the strategy of incorporating of “fusing” First Nations Studies core knowledge into existing undergraduate education courses. The FNS knowledge is organized into four pillars of learning which provides a base from which education faculty draw upon for inclusion into their curriculum. The education professors are instrumental to the process in that they first learn the information, fuse it into their curriculum, and teach it to their students. Thus, First Nations knowledge becomes part of the basic curriculum for all students in the education program. The Fusion Project provides leadership in implementing cultural diversity in the academy, while utilizing its own benchmarks. Since the last review, FNS faculty were sought about by UW System Administration and OPID to implement a statewide approach to changing education by sharing and incorporating the fusion plan across the System. The faculty prepared an Act 31 educational packet and policy briefing for President Cross, at his request. The FNS faculty then collaborated with American Indian Studies faculty from other UW institutions and together led a group of education faculty in a two-year Fusion Project that included a four-day summer and two-day winter workshop. The group held a final presentation of their collaboration in a world café style session at the Wisconsin Indian Education Association annual meeting.

As described above, the Fusion Project is a leader in transforming teacher instruction. As a leader in transforming teacher education, the FNS faculty continue to support and operate Education Center for First Nations Studies. The Center opened in 2010 and was the first public university in the U.S. to offer an oral traditional scholars in residence program. Since that time, the Center director has consulted with other institutions launching similar programs at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill and UW Madison.

The Education Center for First Nations Studies offers a physical space that is welcoming and where Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners gather with Elders. It is an opportunity to learn from oral traditional scholars by sitting and visiting with Elders, engaging in storytelling, building relationships with Elders, making connections to the tribal world, and by seeking counsel from the Elders. It is a site for First Nations student success as all students are welcomed offered a place to gather, study, visit, with the Elders, other students, and the First Nations Studies faculty. The Center assists university faculty, K-12 classroom teachers, and UWGB pre-service teachers with written and electronic curriculum resources and provides

opportunities to learn from the Elders. A goal of the Center is to offer our institution and others an opportunity to experience the fusion of FNS curriculum into educational learning and practice.

### **Demand**

In the proposal to create the First Nations Studies major and the Ed.D. in First Nations Education, the institution acknowledged the program would not draw large numbers of students. Even in states with high numbers of First Nations people in the total population, there are proportionately low enrollments in First Nations Studies in those states. Thus, the need for a First Nations Studies at UW Green Bay was never driven by enrollment demands. The development of the First Nations education is driven by an intellectual need within northeastern Wisconsin and in our society as a whole.

According to institutional data, enrollments in the FNS major are increasing over time. In 2013, 12 students declared the FNS major. By 2018, the number doubles and 24 students were declared majors. Between the years 2013-2017, 13 students graduated with a FNS major and 21 graduated with a minor. Of these FNS majors that graduated in this timeframe, 10 were students of color, seven were women, and five were over the age of 26. Between the years 2013-2016, about half of all FNS majors were students of color. This demonstrates that FNS continues to draw equal numbers of white students and students of color. This is noteworthy as there are no other programs on campus with comparable racial equity in their enrollments. In 2017 and 2018, more minority students declared the FNS major than non-First Nations students. This increase is likely due to development of the Ed.D. and tribal involvement and support for the program.

Overall, as predicted there are small numbers of students in FNS but the numbers on the rise. With small numbers, it is difficult to discuss trends and make analysis of the data. For example, the Graduating Senior Survey for the period 2014-2018, six of the eight graduating FNS majors completed the survey. The six Senior Surveys indicate high levels of satisfaction with the program - higher than the overall average for UWGB. These six students also indicated

having very positive educational experiences at UWGB. During the same time frame (2014-2018) only one of the 16 alumni completed the Alumni Survey.

Given that the numbers of FNS students are low, the program does not plan to take specific actions based on the institutional data alone. However, the data will be used in addition to formal and informal assessment measures.

**Program Changes.** The most significant program change was made possible given the FNS faculty partnership with the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. In a 2019 meeting with tribal leadership including Chairman Tehassi Hill, the faculty and Dean of CHESW were encouraged to create two new positions. First, the Nation encouraged the creation of a new tenure track faculty position in Haudenosaunee research and scholarship. In August of 2020, the faculty hired Professor Lois Stevens as our newest colleague. Professor Stevens is a member of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin and is currently defending her dissertation in Geography with a emphasis in Indigenous Geography. Professor Stevens extends the interdisciplinarity of FNS with her STEM background and as a college writing professor. Second, the Nation encouraged us to create a new position for a First Nations Student Success Coordinator. In May of 2020, Crystal Lepscier (Menominee/Mohican/Ojibwe) was hired in this position. This position will be discussed later in this document.

In addition to the changes above, over the past several years, three program changes were made to better meet program outcomes. Two of these changes are related to course requirements. The third change is related to program learning outcomes.

Regarding the changes in course requirements, the program now requires 12 credits of supporting courses and 27 credits of upper-level courses. First, the program added a three credit course requirement, FNS 211: Mentoring First Nations Youth. This is a high-impact field, placement course that pairs undergraduates with First Nations youth in local, K-12 school districts as mentors and tutors. The course was created based on a need in the local school districts and is offered in partnership with Title VI Indian Education Program in Green Bay Public Schools, Ashwaubenon School System, and Oneida Nation Youth Education Services. By placing FNS students in the field as tutors and mentors to school-age learners, the program deepens its commitment communities and inter-generational teaching and learning.

Second, a change was made to the 12 credit upper level Oral Emphasis requiring all FNS majors and minors to take FNS 301: Oneida Language 1 (or three credits of other Indigenous language). This change was made to further support the FNS learning outcomes related to Indigenous languages. The change was made based on assessments in FNS 226 Intro to First Nations Studies: Social Justice and FNS 301 Oneida Language 1. Student learning in FNS 301 was measured in oral projects, oral exam presentations, and written linguistic translations. In FNS 226, learning was measured in written essay questions, written discussion questions, and written essay exams. Through the assessment process, FNS faculty learned students in FNS 226, students are not meeting Language Outcomes 1, 3, and 4. The new requirement ensures students are meeting all outcomes related to language.

The program also expanded the wording of two of the program learning outcomes. The changes were made to acknowledge the multiple ways students are learning on campus. Today, FNS students have opportunities to learn in a tribal or communal setting while on campus, since the development of the Education Center for First Nations Studies Oral Scholars in Residence Program and changes in the Oneida Language project. Students in the program are now required to learn from the Oral Scholars in Residence as a part of their FNS course requirements. Students no longer have to leave campus to learn from tribal Elders in the time honored oral tradition. Since the last review, Forrest Brooks was hired to direct the Oneida Language Project. He teaches all sections of Oneida Language (levels one thru six) and has transformed the Oneida Language courses, in part, in response to student feedback. The courses now offer more cultural knowledge intentionally embedded within the curriculum, offering a more holistic approach to teaching language. Professor Brooks brings both oral traditional and formal academic scholarship to his teaching creating a more Indigenous teaching setting on campus. Thus, the FNS program outcomes were expanded to include the oral traditional learning settings now provided to students at the institution. The FNS program continues to further integrate Indigenous teaching and learning at UW Green Bay. The program learning outcome changes are identified below in italics.

- Indigenous Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions Program Outcome: Students will learn in a tribal community setting *or holistic, Indigenous education setting.*

- Language Learning Program Outcome: Students will engage in language acquisition in a tribal setting *or holistic, Indigenous education setting.*

### **Internal**

First Nations Studies (FNS) supports UW Green Bay in meeting the Select Mission as it “reflect(s) a deep commitment to diversity, inclusion, social justice, and educational opportunity at all levels. Our core values embrace community-based partnerships, collaborative faculty scholarship and innovation.” The program also supports the University’s strategic plan and goals to “Increase student and staff experiences that involve internationalization and diversity and foster inclusive excellence” and “Enhance stewardship and community connections.” UW Green Bay is committed to Inclusive Excellence as a vision of diversity that is broadly inclusive and equitable in its treatment of all members of the campus community. Through engagement, reflection and action, the institution is committed to diversity in thought and practice moving beyond categories that put up barriers and keep us fragmented (<https://www.uwgb.edu/onboarding/about-uw-green-bay/inclusive-excellence/>). First Nations Studies is a national leader in our collaborations with Indigenous communities and in bringing Indigenous education to the academy. This is evidenced in the Oneida Language project, FNS field and community placements, the Education Center for First Nations Studies, the UW Green Bay Oral Scholars in Residence Program, development of the doctorate of education (Ed.D.) in First Nations Education, and in faculty scholarship, service, and outreach. Together these serve the institution to increase compositional diversity, create learning environments in which students of all backgrounds strive; place the mission of diversity at the center of institutional life so that it becomes a core organizing principle, around which institutional decisions are made; and is centered on the student experience itself.

Like the UW System as a whole, UW-Green Bay is committed to serving the needs of students from under-represented groups including First Nations. Despite this commitment, according to data compiled by UW System, First Nations (Native American) students have among the lowest recruitment, retention, and graduation rates in the UW System (UW System 2019). For every 100 Native students from Wisconsin, 19 apply to a UW, 14 complete their application, 11 are admitted, 8 enroll, 5 are retained and 4 graduate from a UW with an

undergraduate degree (UW System 2019). These low rates persist over time. UW Green Bay has a particular responsibility to address these rates as seven First Nations communities are within driving distance of the campus. UW Green Bay's commitment to the sovereign First Nations in northeastern Wisconsin remains visible in the institution's support of the First Nations Studies degree program.

**Objectives and Student Outcomes.** The learning objectives and student outcomes for First Nations Studies at UW Green Bay reflect the Standards for Instruction, Teacher Qualifications, and Course Content created and passed by the UW System American Indian Studies Consortium. To present First Nations knowledge from an indigenous perspective, placing emphasis on the oral tradition, Elder epistemology, and oral scholars. Thus, information and knowledge reflect traditional (pre-contact) tribal protocols, whereby stories, images, objects, and artifacts are treated respectfully and not simply used for the convenience of students and faculty. To teach First Nations Studies core knowledge while reflecting a holistic tribal world view, a world view which includes the concept of sacred or spiritual practice. First Nations Studies core knowledge is organized into Four Pillars of Learning. Courses in FNS reflect the Four Pillars: History (precontact, contact, contemporary periods), Sovereignty, Laws and Policies, Indigenous Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions.

- To maintain and promote tribal oral knowledge in the traditional way of learning and interacting by working in tribal communities in the time-honored way of providing service through the use of skills and knowledge including acceptable research, scholarship, and useful publications.
- To build and support collaborative relationships between tribal communities with particular emphasis on the nations in northeastern Wisconsin - Oneida, Menominee, and Mohican Nations.
- To provide students with oral traditional teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom and within a tribal setting.
- To provide suitable instruction, information and process to students and instructors of students in other disciplines in an effort to fulfill the requirements of Act 31.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

### **Oral Tradition & Elder Knowledge**

1. Students will work with Elders in a tribal setting.
2. Students will demonstrate oral traditional learning, listening, and remembering skills.

3. Students will demonstrate the tribal values of respect, reciprocity, relationship, and responsibility.
4. Students will take part in and demonstrate an understanding of Elder epistemology.
5. Students will demonstrate protocols for learning and working in a tribal setting.
6. Students will take part in participatory learning and will discuss the form and function of this traditional teaching/learning approach.

#### **History - Precontact, Contact, Contemporary Eras**

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of First Nations history in each of the three eras – precontact, contact, and contemporary.
2. Students will demonstrate an in-depth developed historical awareness of the history of one nation in Wisconsin.
3. Students will draw upon the oral tradition in the study of history.
4. Students will use electronic and written sources in their study of history.
5. Students will identify the political, economic, and social status of First Nations in each of the three historical eras.

#### **Sovereignty**

1. Students will define and understand precontact tribal sovereignty.
2. Students will explain the erosion and persistence of tribal sovereignty after contact.
3. Students will explain the federal trust relationship in the context of treaty-making.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of ways to promote and protect tribal sovereignty.
5. Students will understand and demonstrate personal sovereignty.

#### **Laws and Policies**

1. Students will understand and explain the major formal (congressional acts, court cases) and informal policies that make up the body of First Nations law.
2. Students will provide a critical analysis of the major formal and informal policies in #1 above.
3. Students will understand the powers and limitations of contemporary tribal governments.
4. Students will use electronic and written materials in their examination of laws and policies.

#### **Indigenous Philosophy and Intellectual Traditions**

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of Elder epistemology in the oral tradition.

2. Students will learn in a tribal community setting or holistic, Indigenous education setting.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of First Nations philosophical teachings.
4. Students will demonstrate an awareness of American Indian historical and contemporary intellectuals.
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of First Nations values and their expression in a cultural context.
6. Students will explain internalized oppression and approaches to decolonization.

#### Language

1. Students will identify the major language families on Turtle Island and explain how languages change over time.
2. Students will understand the importance of language and cultural revitalization efforts.
3. Students will demonstrate some acquisition of a First Nations language.
4. Students will engage in language acquisition in a tribal setting or holistic, Indigenous education setting.

**Connections to other Programs.** First Nations Studies is interdisciplinary in nature and cross-lists courses in Art, Humanities, Education, Social Work, PEA, Women and Gender Studies, Religious Studies, and Environmental Humanities.

First Nations Studies also has partnerships that include decades-long collaborations with UWGB Outreach, Social Work Program, and Education. Examples include the development of the Ed.D. in First Nations Education in CHESW, and a recent certificate created in partnership with the Social Work program. Here, members of the UW Green Bay Social Work faculty met with Professors Brooks and Poupart to provide First Nations Studies education to social work students at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The goal was to design a learning experience to prepare professionals for working with First Nations populations and issues related to healing historic trauma. In 2018, First Nations Studies for Professionals certificate was offered. In the first year, over 50 students, professionals, and faculty in social work, counseling, AODA, and other human services fields took part on five day-long trainings and earned a certificate in First Nations Studies. Each of the five training sessions present First Nations Studies content using Indigenous teaching and learning methods. Professors Brooks, Poupart and Schanen-Materi earned rave reviews from the participants at each session which

were described as “profound” and “life altering both personally and professionally.” It is worth noting that Brooks and Poupart created and offered the FNS certificate while simultaneously designing and launching the doctoral program with Professor Leary.

In December of 2020, the FNS faculty were invited to partner with Dean Matt Dornbush and the Business College in the NERR proposal to support the Green Bay waterways and estuary guided by TEK (traditional ecological knowledge). This is an exciting and meaningful partnership that promises to impact communities far beyond the institution.

The FNS program also partners with University administration more broadly. For example, the faculty were asked to support the institution in creating an inclusive environment for all students, particularly, those from First Nations. In 2015, Poupart was appointed by Chancellor Miller to serve as the campus representative on the UW System Task Force on Diversity and Climate. Under the leadership of Regents Many Deeds and Hall, the committee published a system-wide report calling for key changes on all campuses. The work of this committee led to the creation of the UW System Native American Student Success Coordinator position that reports directly to the UW System President. Professor Leary and Yuntlekalau McLester (FNS graduate 2019) both served on the search and screen committee for this new position. In the fall of 2019, UW Green Bay followed the recommendations of the report, and request by the Oneida Nation, and approved a First Nations Student Success Coordinator position for the campus that is housed in the Education Center for First Nations Studies. In May of 2020, UWGB hired Crystal Lepscier to serve as the institution’s first First Nations Student Success Coordinator. This position is funded by Oneida Nation gaming reallocation dollars. It is a shining example of partnership in support of students.

The FNS faculty were also instrumental in the formalization of the UW Green Bay Land Acknowledgement, a statement that is read opening formal gatherings on campus recognizing Indigenous homelands and occupation. The faculty also led the effort to institutionalize an inclusive graduation regalia policy that allows students to wear items of cultural significance at commencement. In May of 2019, FNS graduate Yuntlekalau McLester was chosen as the commencement speaker. She wore traditional Haudenosaunee clothing and delivered an address and sang a traditional Oneida song. It was an important moment for our institution and

signified the many positive changes that have taken place at UW Green Bay with the support of the First Nations Studies faculty. Currently the FNS faculty are working with the administration to create a campus policy that protects First Nations and diverse students' religious practices on campus.

**Courses Offered.** The First Nations Studies program serves general education with many of the courses meeting Ethic Studies and Sustainability requirements. The program is founded on high impact oral traditional teaching methods which requires face to face instruction. The faculty prefer and demand that our courses meet face to face in order to teach in a way that reflects Indigenous pedagogy. In spite of this, we are called to offer online courses to meet student needs and demands. Thus, FNS offers general education courses online to meet students needs and demands.

**Diversity.** Cultural diversity is at the center of the First Nations Studies program. The content of the courses and the context (how the courses are taught) integrate Indigenous world view. All of the faculty and ad hocs teaching in the program are from tribal world backgrounds or must demonstrate extensive learning from oral scholars.

**General Education Courses.** Nearly every course offered in the First Nations Studies program serves general education including the following:

Ethnic Studies: FNS 210, 211, 216, 224, 225, 226, 360, 372, 374, 301-306

Sustainability Perspective: FNS 210, 211, 216, 224, 225, 226, 360, 372, 374, 301-306

Humanities: FNS 210, 224, 372, 374, 385, 391, 392, 393

Fine Art: FNS 381 First Nations Art

Writing Emphasis: FNS 226

Capstone: FNS 391

First Year Seminar: FNS 198 Disney's Pocahontas to the NFL: Race Based Mascots and Logos

### **External**

**Outreach.** Outreach is at the core of the First Nations Studies program. The program curriculum and faculty are closely connected to with the First Nations communities of Wisconsin. The tribal First Nations worked closely with the faculty in the developed of the FNS major and the 12 credit oral traditional concentration. The extent to which the program

partners and collaborates with external partners is endless and on-going. Some of these include the following.

**College Credit in High School.** Since the last review, the FNS program has collaborated with UW Green Bay College Credit in High School. The course, FNS 226: Introduction to First Nations Studies: First Nations Social Justice is offered every year at three Wisconsin high schools – Prescott, Black River Falls, and Shawano. These college credit in high school courses were developed in response to community needs. For example, for nearly a decade, Menominee Nation leaders have been working with Professor Poupart to create a college credit course at Shawano High School. The course is in an attempt to repair relationships between members of the Shawano community and the Menominee Nation. Finally, in 2018, Professor Poupart started training Angie Bahr, a Shawano High School social studies teacher. In fall of 2019, the course was offered to 40 enthusiastic First Nations and non-First Nations students. The course at Black River Falls was created under a very similar circumstance in a strong partnership with the Hochunk Nation and Paul Ryyken, a dedicated social studies teacher. These courses offer opportunities for students to learn and grow together as a community, bridging racial divides that have persisted outside their classrooms for decades.

**FNS 211 Mentoring First Nations Youth.** This course, mentioned earlier in this document, is a requirement for all FNS majors and minors. It was created in partnership with the Title VI Indian Education Programs in Green Bay, Ashwaubenon and West De Pere. The course prepares undergraduate students to tutor and mentor First Nations youth in local K-12 schools. In fall of 2002, Poupart partnered with the Oneida Nation School System and students in the course served as virtual tutors and mentors to Oneida students learning at home during covid. The course serves communities and families by providing much needed support for youth who have experienced discouragement and challenges in school.

**Scholarly Activity.** The First Nations Studies faculty are actively engaged in scholarship and some highlights are included here. As mentioned previously, our newest tenure track faculty member, Lois Stevens is earning her doctorate in Geography. As a doctoral student, Professor Stevens already published two peer reviewed journal articles in the field of Indigenous Geography. She is an upcoming and emerging scholar shaping her discipline. In

2018, Professor J P Leary published his book *The Story of Act 31: How Native History Came to Wisconsin Classrooms*. The book provides a history and analysis of this unique legislation that was enacted to counter widespread racism in the state. Indigenous education policy expert, Dr. Jacki Rand, described the book as “a compelling analysis of content knowledge as official knowledge of the structures that reproduce it, and of the local, state, and national scales of policy production with attendance politics that are critical to our understanding of the ways in which curriculum content is determined.” The book offers a justification for how and understanding about why similar educational laws should be enacted. Dr. Leary has emerged as a national leader in the field and his name is synonymous with First Nations education policy. Canadian education leaders consult with Dr. Leary to enact similar legislation on the international level. As leader in Act 31 education, Dr. Leary’s work is laudable. In 2017, he was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure. In 2013, Lisa Poupart and former FNS faculty member, Rosemary Ackley Christensen co-authored the book *Connective Pedagogy: Elder Epistemology, Oral Tradition and Community*. The book documents the integration of Indigenous thinking and learning in K-16 classrooms with an emphasis on Poupart’s and Christensen’s leading-edge work in First Nations Studies at UW Green Bay.

### **Student Success**

**HIP.** First Nations education is centered in high impact practices with the emphasis on experiential education, oral traditional learning, group collaborations in the classroom built on consensus, learning from tribal elders, mentoring youth, etc. In addition, All First Nations Studies majors must complete 12 credits of oral traditional concentration. Here students have the option of completing 12 credits of FNS 399 Oral Knowledge and Epistemology. This course pairs a student with an oral scholar, knowledge bearer, or Elder from a tribal community. The student becomes an apprentice to the knowledge bearer in the time-honored oral tradition. In their senior exit interviews, students describe their experiences in this course as profound and life-changing. Overwhelmingly, students report this is the most impactful experience of their K-16 education.

The First Nations Studies faculty regularly partner with undergraduate students to present at regional and national conferences and forums including the Wisconsin Indian Education Association and Widening the Circle Conference on Indigenous Education. Professors Leary and Poupart have both shared invited keynote speeches with the FNS majors, providing the students with an opportunity to speak about their classroom experiences and learning.

In the FNS senior seminar (FNS 391), students developed and presented policy briefing packages that applied their understanding of law and policy to analyze a contemporary policy problem. In Professor Leary's spring 2015 and spring 2019 seminar courses, students presented their research to the State Superintendent Tony Evers and cabinet in both oral and written form in an effort to educate state leaders about Act 31 and Indigenous Education. Today, all of the students who presented these policy briefings can now say they did work that informed the current governor of Wisconsin.

**Retention.** As mentioned previously, the FNS faculty worked closely with the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin to create and hire the institution's first First Nations Student Success Coordinator. This position is housed in CHESW in the Education Center for First Nations Studies. It is our aim that this new staff position will support the success and retention of all Indigenous students at UW Green Bay. Included here is the position description:

The First Nations student success coordinator is responsible for support services of prospective and current First Nations students with a specific focus on students from the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin. This includes academic advising and counseling. The coordinator develops and maintains partnerships with Wisconsin First Nations communities to actively support campus efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate First Nations students. First Nations student success coordinator is also responsible for developing programs and activities to promote campus-wide understanding of Wisconsin First Nations history, culture, sovereignty, and contemporary status with particular emphasis on the Oneida Nation. The coordinator develops new programs and works independently and collaborates effectively with the Education Center for First Nations Studies, First Nations Studies program, First Nations Education doctoral program and other University programs.

#### Essential Job Functions and Responsibilities <sup>i</sup>

##### 60% First Nations Student Advising

- Provide personal counseling, academic advising, assistance with financial aid problem solving, assist with Lawton Grant recruitment, admissions assistance, degree requirements, career options, graduate programs, personal finances,

orientation, and assistance with other issues related to student well-being, adjustment, and relocation.

- Advocate and liaison for First Nations students with university programs, administration, staff, and faculty.
- Advocate for First Nations students to state agencies and First Nations governments and agencies.

#### 20% First Nations Outreach

- Develop and maintain face to face partnerships with Wisconsin First Nations and tribal higher education communities and programs to enhance and support First Nations students
- Coordinate with Admissions staff to represent UWGB at college fairs and higher education forums

#### 15% University Service

- Collaborate and coordinate with FNS, the Ed Center for FNS, and the Signature and Cultural Events Coordinator in Student Life to develop programs and activities to promote campus-wide understanding of Wisconsin First Nations history, culture, sovereignty, and contemporary status with particular emphasis on the Oneida Nation.
- Collaborate and coordinate with the UW System American Indian Student Success Coordinator to support First Nations students on campus
- Collaborate and coordinate with MESA, Pride Center and other units on campus to support First Nations students
- Provide leadership regarding the status of First Nations students to campus administration including Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and Campus Climate

#### 5% Advise UWGB Inter-Tribal Student Council

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