Native American history has, it would seem, been rediscovered by modern historians. There are myriad reasons for this; in the broadest terms, such study involves a recognition of the presence of Indians in the early landscape, the significance of their presence, and their agency in important historic events (i.e. their ability to affect their own destiny and unfolding history). This course will address these basic themes through a survey of the vibrant field of North American Indian history from before first contact with Europeans through the formation of the largest of the western reservations. The course’s goals are to expose students to some of the best literature in the field, raise questions about the Indian experiences based on regional, cultural, gender, and other criteria, considering in particular the interaction of Native history and a more traditional American history, and finally, to develop the students’ skills as critical thinkers and writers.

Generally, classes will be structured as a discussion of primary and secondary source reading. Discussions should be civil. I refer you to the very useful guidelines at: http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p4_1

Readings in this class are extensive (expected to average 100-150 pages/week) and important for your understanding, participation, and success. The reading is not perfectly spaced, so look ahead on the syllabus and plan your reading as necessary. Grades will be based upon a mid-term (20%), final exam (30%), a book review (20%), and footnote project (15%). Class participation will count for 15%. A grade of “C-” or below on any assignment requires that the student schedule a meeting with the professor, although I welcome the opportunity to meet with you at any time. See “Grading Guidelines” at the end of this syllabus.

I expect students to attend class and to be prepared to participate in a discussion. I will not take attendance regularly in this course, but attendance is in your interest, affecting both your class participation grade as well as your understanding. Repeated absences will be addressed by the professor. If you must miss a class, I urge you to get notes from one of your colleagues.

Use of electronic devices (laptops, netbooks, telephones, etc.) during class is prohibited.

Papers for this class should be double-spaced, 12 pt. type (including any footnotes – although footnotes are not generally recommended for such short papers), with one-inch margins. Citations should use The Chicago Manual of Style. Turning in an assignment late will reduce the
grade. I strongly recommend the short essay “Writing History” posted for this class. I also recommend at least one visit to the Writing Center as this course progresses. All papers for this class should include an Honor Code pledge: “I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.”

You will have the opportunity to rewrite either the mid-term or the footnote project; if you wish to rewrite an assignment, you should notify the professor within two days of receiving the graded paper, and the rewrite will be due no later than two weeks thereafter (the final grade on that assignment will be weighted 1/3 to the draft, 2/3 to the rewrite).

The textbooks for this class are:


Books should be available through the bookstore; if you wish to purchase them independently – I am fond of bookfinder.com, abebooks.com, and half.com for used books – please verify that you are obtaining the correct edition for Calloway, Mancall, and Eccles.

Other materials will be posted on Blackboard under Documents or Library Readings. “Suggested” and “Additional” readings are listed purely for your benefit.

The add/drop deadline for this class is September 11; the withdrawal deadline is November 4.

If you have questions concerning this class, I hope that you will come to see me during office hours or make an appointment.

The syllabus is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

**Students with a disability requiring special consideration:** Oberlin College will make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me during the first two weeks of class. You will need to provide the Office of Disability Services (50 N. Professor St., Peters Hall Rm. G-27/28) with appropriate documentation of your disability.

**Mid-Term Exam**
Answer one of the following questions in six or seven pages. This assignment is due in class Friday, October 17. You should cite to material from the class and may, but need not, cite to additional material. (This is not a research exercise, so additional research is really not necessary.)

Describe the pan-Indian movement in this period. How central is this movement to Native American history? Is it successful or unsuccessful? Why?

Discuss the centrality of the French and Indian War to the continued independence and integrity of Native Americans. Distinguish, as appropriate, different groups and tribes.

James Merrell argues that the post-contact era was a “new world” for Indians as well as for European colonists and enslaved Africans. Do you agree? Why or why not? Does this method of interpretation place too much emphasis on change?

Footnote Project

Once during the semester, each student is responsible to locate at the Mudd Library, on-line, or otherwise all of the sources from one footnote in our common readings. (The chosen footnote must contain at least two sources.) The student should brief the class (about 5-7 minutes) on whether, in her or his judgment, the author analyzed the evidence effectively and whether it supports the author’s point and contributes to the work. You may use a PowerPoint or equivalent presentation, but need not. (Please notify the professor in advance if you intend to use a projected presentation so that appropriate equipment is available.) A two or three page paper discussing the citation and sources is due on the day your footnote project is presented. Attached to that paper should be a photocopy of the relevant pages from the cited sources. (A sign-up sheet for this exercise will be circulated in the second or third class session.)

Book Review

Prepare a book review of one of the full books that we are reading for this class (Uncas, Spirited Resistance, Canadian Frontier, A New Order of Things, but not First Peoples or American Encounters). The book review should be four or five pages long. A book review should summarize a book and its argument and provide a brief analysis or commentary on that work that would be of use to historians. Book reviews also commonly address the historiography (i.e. other history works discussing this topic, the “history of history”). Discussing other works is useful for this project, but this is not a research project, and you are not expected to read other related works. (You should read some history book reviews before preparing one.) This assignment is due in class on Friday, November 14.

Final Exam

The Final Exam is likely to be a six to eight page take home essay; if so, it will be due by 4:00 pm on Friday, December 19. If a regular exam, it will be scheduled from 2:00-4:00 on Friday, December 19.
Syllabus

Day 1: Wednesday, September 3: Introduction: Native Americans in “early American history” and historiography. Come to class with a copy of the syllabus, which will also be discussed.

Reading:

Calloway, *First Peoples*, Introduction.


Questions:

Calloway (p. 2) says “There is no single history that tells the whole story; there can be many different histories, telling many different stories….” Is this all just historic relativism?

Day 2: Friday, September 5

Reading:


Suggested Reading:


Additional Reading:


Questions:

How can we properly characterize America – environmentally, culturally, historically – at first contact?

As historians, how should we treat oral history?

Day 3: Monday, September 8: Contact
Reading:


Additional Reading:


Patricia Galloway, *Choctaw Genesis, 1500-1700* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995)

Questions:

How can we properly characterize and evaluate the impact of disease on Native Americans? (This will be a recurring question.)

Considering the different approaches to contact by the Spanish, French, and English: How will this affect trade, religion, and legal/political/human relations?

Day 4: Wednesday, September 10

Reading:


Jones, “Virgin Soils Revisited,” in *American Encounters*

Day 5: Friday, September 12

Reading:


Questions:

Salisbury (p. 4) alleges that many historians treat “American history as having been set in motion by the arrival of European explorers and colonizers.” Is this inevitable?
Salisbury (p. 5) points out that the “idea of ‘Indians’ as a single, discrete people was an invention of Columbus and his European contemporaries.” What makes a people?

**Day 6: Monday, September 15: Exchange**

**Reading:**

Calloway, *First Peoples*, Chpt. 3: 152-80; 187-198; 202-07

**Suggested Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**


**Questions:**

How did Indian economic dependence impact political independence? Was economic dependence inevitable?

What role did alcohol play in Native American fortunes in this period? How should we evaluate this in the context of a Euro-American drinking culture?

Compare and contrast the debt problem faced by Native Americans and southern planters in the eighteenth century.

What is the proper role of captive narratives in understanding Native American history?

**Day 7: Wednesday, September 17**

**Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**

Questions:

What role did alcohol play in Native American fortunes in this period? How should we evaluate this in the context of a Euro-American drinking culture?

As historians, how should we evaluate the role of religion and genetics vis-à-vis alcohol consumption?

Day 8: Friday, September 19

Reading:

Oberg, Uncas, Chpt. 2 – Chpt. 4.

Suggested Reading:

Oberg, Uncas, Intro. – Chpt. 1.

Additional Reading:


Questions:

Does Oberg write beyond his evidence?

Do biographies of early Native Americans inevitably tend toward a “European” story? Does Oberg? How can this be avoided?

How, if at all, do Indian conflicts change under European influence?

Day 9: Monday, September 22

Reading:

Oberg, Uncas, Chpts. 5-6

Day 10: Wednesday, September 24

Reading:
Oberg, *Uncas*, Chpts. 7 to end

**Day 11: Friday, September 26: Canada**

**Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**


**Day 12: Monday, September 29**

**Reading:**

Eccles, *Canadian Frontier*, Chpts. 5-7.

**Additional Reading:**


**Questions:**

How would you expect the different treatment of Natives in New France and New England to affect modern Native relations in Canada and the United States?

**Day 13: Wednesday, October 1**

**Reading:**
Eccles, *Canadian Frontier*, Chpts. 8 to end.

**Day 14: Friday, October 3: Resistance and Land**

**Reading:**

Dowd, *Spirited Resistance*, Chpts. 2-4

**Suggested Reading:**

Dowd, *Spirited Resistance*, Intro. – Chpt. 1

**Additional Reading:**


**Questions:**

What was the “Middle Ground” for Native Americans and Euro-Americans? Did that paradigm function well in the latter half 18th?

How central is the notion of racial identity to the hopes and fears of Native Americans in this period? Consider the parallel role of group identity for women and African Americans.

What different racial identities did Euro-Americans give Native Americans and why? What was the source of racism against Indians by Euro-Americans? How significant is the development of African-American slavery to the development of Native American history?

**Day 15: Monday, October 6**

**Reading:**

Dowd, *Spirited Resistance*, Chpts. 5-7

**Suggested Reading:**

Edward J. Cashin, “‘But Brothers, It Is Our Land We Are Talking About,’ Winners and Losers in the Georgia Backcountry,” in Ronald Hoffman, Thad W. Tate and Peter J. Albert, eds., *An Un-*


Questions:
Is the eighteenth century pan-Indian movement primarily a religious or a political movement? Does that distinction make sense?

Day 16: Wednesday, October 8

Reading:
Dowd, Spirited Resistance, Chpts. 8-end

Questions:
What are the similarities and dissimilarities between Native American religious movements in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century and Christian evangelical “awakenings?”

How central was land speculation to the coming of the American Revolution? Did the Proclamation Line of 1763 matter?

Day 17: Friday, October 10: Revolution and Pan-Indian

Reading:
Calloway, First Peoples, Chpt. 4: 218-38, 249-62


Suggested Reading:


Additional Reading:


Peter Silver, Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2008).


Questions:

Was Indian resistance to white encroachment doomed by the 1763 Treaty of Paris?

How central was land speculation to the coming of the American Revolution? Did the Proclamation Line of 1763 matter?

Can Native American issues during the American Revolution be considered as “class” issues?

Why does the Indian proposal to pay squatters to vacate land north and west of the Ohio fail?

Day 18: Monday, October 13: Natives and the New Nation (incl. the West)

Reading:


Questions:
Why is land so central to Native identity?

Compare and contrast the impact of American independence on western and eastern Natives.

**Day 19: Wednesday, October 15: Removal**

**Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**


**Questions:**

Were gender roles significant in Indian removal?

Evaluate claims that the Echota Treaty party was made up of race traitors.

Was the Federal Indian Trade and Intercourse Act effective? Why or why not?

**Day 20: Friday, October 17**

Mid-term Paper due.

**Movie:** *Blackrobe*

This movie is approximately 1:45 minutes long; please let me know if you will not be able to stay until 11:50. The movie will be available to borrow from the professor.

**Reading:**

Catch-up (and read ahead).

**Day 21: Monday, October 27 Southeast: Change, But Never Enough**
Reading:
Saunt, *New Order of Things*, Pt. II.

Suggested Reading:

Additional Reading:


Questions:

Is Native American history entirely about their interactions with Europeans?

Compare/contrast Uncas and McGillivray’s efforts at adapting and service to their peoples.

Is centralization a product of mestizo collaboration with Europeans or inevitable after contact?

**Day 22: Wednesday, October 29**

Reading:
Saunt, *New Order of Things*, Part III

Questions:
What was the basis of efforts to “civilize” the Indians? Were those efforts entirely duplicitous (at the time – not teleologically)?

How do efforts to “civilize” the Indians relate to developing racial norms in America?

**Day 23: Friday, October 31**

**Reading:**

Saunt, *New Order of Things*, Part IV

**Questions:**

Is Indian slaveholding any different from other slaveholding?

How is Indian slaveholding tied-up with racial identity?

**Day 24: Monday, November 3**

**The Struggle for the West**

**Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**


**Day 25: Wednesday, November 5**

**Reading:**

White, “Winning of the West,” in *American Encounters.*

**Additional Reading:**

**Questions:**

How important was the notion of “Manifest Destiny” to the development of the West?

Does the Frontier Thesis (Turner) explain America’s historic development?

**Day 26: Friday, November 7**

**Reading:**


**Questions:**

How significant are religious conflicts in the story of Native American history?

How can a historian properly analyze Indian “winter counts?”

**Day 27: Monday, November 10: The Rise of Western Indian Empires**

**Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**


**Questions:**

What was the role of the horse in Native migrations and the success or failure of various Native groups on the Great Plains in the nineteenth century?

**Day 28: Wednesday, November 12**

**Reading:**

**Additional Reading:**


**Day 29: Friday, November 14: Indian Identity**

**Book Review Due**

**Reading:**


**Questions:**

What factors accounted for relatively high acculturation by whites into Indian society and relatively low acculturation of Indians into white society?

How do we evaluate eighteenth century Enlightenment claims of the “noble savage” against frontier claims of the “brutal savage”?

How significant were the differences in European and Native notions of warfare in Native efforts to adjust to the Euro-American invasion?

How does the nature of the Indian polity affect interaction with Europeans? Consider over time and for different Native groups.

**Day 30: Monday, November 17: Spirituality**

**Reading:**


**Additional Reading:**

**Questions:**

How can one best evaluate conflicting spiritual, political, cultural and economic influences on Native conversion?

How do Christian icons – e.g. the image of a tortured, bleeding leader stoically suffering and distributing his power to his followers – affect Native conversion? What should we make of this?

**Day 31: Wednesday, November 19**

**Reading:**


**Day 32: Friday, November 21: Gender**

**Reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


**Questions:**

Many Euro-American thought that Indian females performed most work in Native society, and Indian males were lazy. Evaluate this perception. How does it affect Euro-American and Indian relations?

How should we evaluate differing patterns of “going Native” among men, women and children?

How should we evaluate the *berdache* in defining Native gender roles? What additional research might illuminate this issue?
Euro-Americans often misinterpreted Indian sexual conventions, significantly impacting early exchanges. Did Native misinterpretation of European sexual conventions cause similar problems? How would we know?

Day 33: Monday, November 24: **Environment**

**Reading:**


**Questions:**

How does the Native imprint on the environment affect the story of their history?

Can we fairly compare the Native impact to that after European settlement? How is this affected by land ownership principles?

Day 34: Wednesday, November 26

**Reading:**


Crying Indian Commercial: [http://www.aef.com/exhibits/social_responsibility/ad_council/2278](http://www.aef.com/exhibits/social_responsibility/ad_council/2278)

**Questions:**

Is this really all just semantics?

Day 35: Monday, December 1: Civil War
Reading:


Additional Reading:


Questions

What should we remember about Native American history through the end of the Civil War?

Day 36: Wednesday, December 3

Reading:


Day 37: Friday, December 5

Reading:


Questions:

How can we evaluate the influence of Christianity on early Native Americans? Is conversion a religious, political, or economic matter? How can we evaluate the differing influences?
Day 38: Monday, December 8: Indian Choices

Reading:


Question:

Evaluate the Brothertown Indian experiment? How might it influence modern Indian policy? How do you think Indians reacted?

Day 39: Wednesday, December 10

Tour of Native Collection (Howling Wolf’s Ledger Drawings): Allen Memorial Art Museum

Reading:


Allen Memorial Art Museum, Howling Wolff
http://www.oberlin.edu/amam/HowlingWolf_Fight.htm

Day 40: Friday, December 12: Catch-up, Wrap-up

Reading:


Questions:

What role should Native American history play in history education?

Why did Native Americans fare so poorly in American history? Was Turner right?

Discuss the dichotomy nativist/accomodationist. Is this a sensible way to evaluate issues in this period? Was it?

What next for Natives?
GRADING GUIDELINES

An A or A- paper is one that is good enough to be read aloud in class. It is clearly written and well organized. It demonstrates that the writer has conducted a close and critical reading of the texts, grappled with the issues raised in the course, synthesized the readings, discussions, and lectures, and formulated a perceptive, compelling, independent argument. The argument shows intellectual originality and creativity, is sensitive to historical context, and is supported by a well-chosen variety of specific examples.

A B+ or B paper demonstrates many aspects of A- work but falls short of it in either the organization or clarity of its writing, the formulation and presentation of its argument, the thoroughness of argumentation or factual background, or the quality of research. Some papers or exams in this category show flashes of insight into many of the issues raised in the course. Others give evidence of independent thought, but the argument is not presented clearly or convincingly.

A B- paper demonstrates a command of course or research material and understanding of historical context but provides a less than thorough defense of the writer’s independent argument because of weakness in writing, argument, organization, or use of evidence.

A C+, C, or C- paper offers little more than a mere summary of ideas and information covered in the course, is insensitive to historical context, does not respond to the assignment adequately, suffers from frequent factual error, unclear writing, poor organization, or inadequate primary research, or presents some combination of these problems.

Whereas the grading standards for written work between A and C- are concerned with the presentation of argument and evidence, a paper or exam that belongs to the D or F categories demonstrates inadequate command of course material.

A D paper demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student’s command of course or research material.

An F paper demonstrates no competence in the course or research materials. It generally indicates a student’s neglect or lack of effort in the course.