



INSTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO DE INVESTIGACIÓN
EN ESTUDIOS NORTEAMERICANOS
“BENJAMIN FRANKLIN”

Course	Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices
Program	International Studies Program. Spring
Credits	4.5 ECTS / 3 USA (semester credits)
Instructor's full name	Maria Rita Reyes Cucio, PhD
Email	mcucio@feu.edu.ph
Instructor's University Degree	PhD Development Studies De La Salle University – Manila, Philippines
Block dates (days and time)	Monday-Thursday, 9am-12pm Block 3 (March 15 - April 9, 2027)
Classroom	TBA
Class hours	45
Office Hours	
Course Requirements	Class Participation Major Exams Reflection Essays Oral Presentation
Language of instruction	English
Type of teaching	In person

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our class on Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP).

This class will explore the economic, political, social, and cultural systems developed by Indigenous Peoples that are anchored on their relationship with nature, culture, spirituality, and community life. Through this class, you will develop an appreciation for indigenous knowledge and cultural diversity, and learn how to responsibly engage with indigenous communities. You will also gain familiarity with international and national legal frameworks that seek to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights of Indigenous Peoples. Most importantly, you will be given the opportunity to explore the many issues, concerns, and challenges encountered by Indigenous peoples. In a world that is increasingly multicultural, harnessing your intercultural competence and proficiency is one of the important goals of your university education.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems and practices, with particular attention to their ecological practices, governance approaches, health and education systems, and cultural practices as embodied in their knowledge systems and practices. The course will orient the students to the relationship of Indigenous Peoples with Western epistemologies and the global processes of colonialism, modernization, and globalization. It will also explore the economic, political, and socio-cultural systems, and the issues and challenges encountered by Indigenous communities. The course will similarly delve into the ethical and culturally-sensitive approaches to interacting with indigenous communities.

COMPETENCES

General Competences (GC):

GC1: **Critical Thinking:** Discuss key theoretical perspectives, concepts, and characteristics of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSP)

GC2: **Sustainability-Oriented Thinking:** Evaluate the relevance of indigenous worldviews in addressing challenges posed by global contexts, contemporary worldviews, values, and social arrangements.

GC3: **Intercultural Competence:** Engage with sensitivity and respect on issues and debates arising from Indigenous peoples' exercise of their knowledge systems and practices, and right to self-determination.

Specific Competences (CE):

SC1: **Conceptual understanding:** Explain issues and challenges pertinent to indigenous peoples' knowledge systems and practices.

SC2: **Community engagement:** Design a responsible engagement plan with Indigenous communities.

SC3: **Reflexivity:** Manifest self-understanding in relation to the Indigenous knowledge systems and practices, issues, and challenges explored in this class.

METHODOLOGY

The main methodology for this class is class discussion. Both professor and student/s assigned to be the discussant/s for the day take the lead in facilitating an interactive learning experience. When necessary, short thematic videos will be shown as prompt to class discussion. These activities constitute the theoretical sessions of the course.

Assessments are in the form of class participation shown in questions and comments raised in class, and reflection essays and major exams that are focused on the application of learnings. These constitute the practical sessions of the course.

PREPARATION FOR CLASS

- Students will need to read all the articles and book chapters related to the topic before coming to class. While in class, students should show preparation for the readings by asking relevant questions and making comments related to the topic.
- Students should think about questions and the relations of the texts with another previous knowledge. Write comments and reflections related to the readings, which can be shared in class to start debates and discussions.
- Student takes notes during class presentation and discussions.

EVALUATION

The evaluation system is based on class participation during in-person class sessions, participation in activities, exams, and assignments in the form of reflection essays.

- **Participation**

Participation must be active. That is, the student should not only ask questions but also make comments and actively engage in the exercises proposed in class, both individually and in groups. In addition, students are expected to read the texts assigned by the professor and complete exercises related to them. Students are expected to demonstrate maturity and responsibility in the classroom, so gestures, passive behavior such as sleeping in class, or inappropriate conduct may negatively affect the grade in this category.

The total weight for this component is **20 %**.

- **Major exams**

Exams require students to demonstrate familiarity with the readings and apply the learnings in their respective contexts.

The total weight for this component is **40%. (Major Exam 1 – 20% and Major Exam 2 – 20%)**

If the professor detects copying or plagiarism during an exam, the student will receive a zero and will have no opportunity to take a make-up exam.

If a student arrives more than ten minutes late to an exam without written justification from a doctor or program director, a penalty of 10 points will be applied to the total exam grade.

The professor reserves the right to give “pop quizzes” whenever deemed appropriate. These quizzes will always take place at the beginning of class and will be very brief (approximately five minutes). They will be graded as an additional assignment.

During the exam, students are not allowed to leave the classroom. If a student leaves the room, even to go to the restroom, they will not be allowed to re-enter and complete the exam.

- **Written Assignments (Reflection Essays)**

For written assignments (reflection essays), the rubric below will be used for marking.

Excellent	19-20 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shows a thorough understanding of the question – addresses all aspects of the question. ● Shows an ability to analyse, evaluate, compare, and/or contrast ideas, issues, and events. ● Richly supports essay with relevant facts, examples, and details. ● Writes a well-developed essay, consistently demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization. ● Includes a strong introduction and conclusion and strong topic sentences for each paragraph.
Very Good	17-18 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shows a clear understanding of the question – addresses all aspects of the question. ● Shows an ability to analyse, evaluate, compare, and/or contrast ideas, issues, and events.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes relevant facts, examples, and details, but may not support all aspects of the task evenly. Writes a well-developed essay, consistently demonstrating a logical and clear plan of organization. Includes a strong introduction and conclusion, and strong topic sentences for each paragraph.
Good	15-16 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a general understanding of the question. Addresses most aspects of the question or addresses all aspects in a limited way. Shows an ability to analyse or evaluate ideas, issues, and events, but not in any depth. Writes satisfactorily developed essay, demonstrating a general plan of organization, with adequate topic sentences. Uses some facts, examples, and details.
OK	13-14 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restates the question in the introduction and concludes with a simple restatement of the question. Attempts to address the question but uses vague and/or somewhat inaccurate information. Shows a limited understanding of the question, omits concrete examples, uses weak details. Writes a poorly organized essay lacking focus, uses new facts, examples and details, includes information that contains inaccuracies.
Poor or weak	11-12 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has vague or missing introduction and/or conclusion. Develops a faulty analysis or evaluation. Lacks analysis or evaluation of the ideas, issues, and events beyond stating vague and/or inaccurate facts. Uses little or no accurate or relevant facts, details, or examples. Weak topic sentences and/or no paragraphing (one long paragraph).
Unsatisfactory	10 and below	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fails to address the question adequately Illegible

Students are expected to write their own papers. AI tools are to be used sparingly, responsibly, and ethically. They may be used for research purposes. However, the actual writing of reflection essays and research papers should be a product of the students' original, creative, and critical thinking.

The total weight for this component is **20%** (Reflection Essays)

Note: If the assignment is not submitted by the due date, the student will lose one point for each day of delay.

- **Oral presentation**

For the oral presentation, where the student takes the lead in class discussion, the rubric below will be used for marking:

	Exceeds standard 20-17 points	Meets Standard 14-16 points	Nearly Meets Standard 11-13 points	Does Not Meet Standards 10 and below
<p>Language Use and Delivery The student communicates ideas effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks clearly, effectively, and confidently using suitable volume and pace. • Fully engages the audience. • Selects rich and varied words for context and uses correct grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks clearly and uses suitable volume and pace. • Takes steps to engage the audience. • Selects words appropriate for context and uses correct grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks clearly and unclearly in different portions. • Occasionally engages audience. • Selects words inappropriate for context; uses incorrect grammar. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to speak clearly and audibly and uses unsuitable pace. • Does not engage audience. • Selects words inappropriate for context; uses incorrect grammar.
<p>Organization and Preparation The student exhibits logical organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the topic clearly and creatively. • Maintains clear focus on the topic. Effectively includes smooth transitions to connect key points. • Ends with logical, effective, and relevant conclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the topic clearly. • Maintains focus on the topic. • Include transitions to connect key points. • Ends with coherent conclusion based on evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces the topic. • Somewhat maintains focus on the topic. • Includes some transitions to connect key points. • Ends with a conclusion based on evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not clearly introduce the topic. • Does not establish or maintain focus on the topic. • Uses ineffective transitions that rarely connect points. • Ends without a conclusion.
<p>Content The student explains the process and findings of the project and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defines the topic or thesis and its significance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly defines the topic or thesis. • Supports the thesis and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defines the topic or thesis. • Supports the thesis with evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not clearly define the topic or thesis. q Does not support the

<p>the resulting learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the thesis and key findings with an analysis of relevant and accurate evidence • Provides evidence of extensive and valid research with multiple and varied sources • Provides evidence of complex problem solving and learning stretch. • Combines and evaluates existing ideas to form new insights. 	<p>key findings with evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents evidence of valid research with multiple sources. • Provides evidence of problem solving and learning stretch. • Combines existing ideas to form new insights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents evidence of research with sources. • Provides some evidence of problem solving and learning stretch. • Combines existing ideas. 	<p>thesis with evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents little or no evidence of valid research. • Shows little evidence of problem solving and learning stretch. • Shows little evidence of the combination of ideas.
<p>Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the topic by responding confidently, precisely, and appropriately to all audience questions and feedback</p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge of the topic by responding accurately and appropriately to questions and feedback.</p>	<p>Demonstrates some knowledge of the topic by responding accurately and appropriately to questions and feedback.</p>	<p>Demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the topic by responding inaccurately and inappropriately to questions and feedback.</p>

Students should focus on the content and organization of the presentation. They should demonstrate familiarity with the reference materials, and show that additional research is conducted to substantiate key arguments.

The total weight for this component is **20 %**.

Plagiarism: Research assignments must reflect the students' own ideas. Work from other writers or experts used to support the students' ideas must be properly cited. Improper use of another

person's text or work is considered plagiarism. Plagiarism is a violation of academic standards and may result in failing the assignment or even the course for which the assignment was written. In extreme cases, it may result in expulsion from the program. Guidelines for properly writing the assignment should be provided by the professor.

EVALUATION

The evaluation of this course is as follows:

PARTICIPATION	20 %
REFLECTION ESSAYS	20 %
MAJOR EXAM 1	20 %
MAJOR EXAM 2	20%
ORAL PRESENTATION	20 %

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are members of a shared academic community based on integrity, responsibility, and mutual respect, according to the ethical and regulatory framework of the **Universidad de Alcalá de Henares**. Each student is expected to conduct their academic work honestly and responsibly, and to expect the same from their peers.

All enrolled students must adhere to the principles of academic integrity. Violations include, but are not limited to, fraud, falsification, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and any other form of academic dishonesty. Lack of awareness of these standards does not exempt students from responsibility. Upholding these principles ensures the quality of learning and the value of university degrees.

The full University Academic Integrity Policy can be consulted here:

<https://www.uah.es/export/shared/es/conoce-la-uah/organizacion-y-gobierno/.galleries/Galeria-Secretaria-General/codigo-etico-general-UAH.pdf>

ATTENDANCE (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)

Attendance is mandatory. Students in the International Studies program are not allowed to have any absences because they have days off between the three blocks of the program. Students will not be allowed, in the classroom, or on field trips, to arrive 10 minutes late or more. If a student has continual delays, he/she will be penalized with an absence, and the instructor may not allow him or her into class or the visit. Attending class or fieldtrips does not immediately provide the student with a percentage of the final grade; active participation is also required.

Absences, even when properly documented, will affect the class participation grade. While such absences do not result in a direct penalty to the final course grade, students should be aware that participation cannot be evaluated on days when they are not present.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (Instituto Franklin-UAH Policy)

Students with special needs should contact Antonio Fernández: antonio.fernandezm@uah.es. Instituto Franklin-UAH can accommodate these students who show, through a medical note or a note from their academic advisor, that they require help in order to fulfill the program.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASS

Technology in the classroom is essential nowadays. However, if used inappropriately, it can interfere with student learning. For example, checking email, chatting with others, browsing the web for purposes unrelated to the class content, etc. Misuse of these tools can also distract other students, so **using a computer is only permitted for taking notes**. Any other use requires the instructor's permission

CLASS SCHEDULE

DAYS	CLASS SCHEDULE / TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
MARCH 15-APRIL 9, 2027		
BLOCK 3		

Note: Readings will be provided by the professor.		
<p>March 15-16, 2027</p>	<p>Background, Concepts, and Approaches to the Study of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, and Practices (IKSP)</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Cobo, M. (1972). <i>Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations</i>. New York: United Nations.</p> <p>Bertrand, J. (2011). 'Indigenous peoples' rights' as a strategy of ethnic accommodation: contrasting experiences of Cordillerans and Papuans in the Philippines and Indonesia in <i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i> Vol. 34 No. 5 May 2011 pp. 850-869.</p> <p>Gupta, A. (2015). <i>Way to Study Indigenous Knowledge and Indigenous Knowledge System</i> in <i>Research Journal of Recent Sciences</i>, Vol. 4(ISC-2014), 16-29 (2015).</p> <p>Inguanza, I. (2024). <i>The Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Southeast Asia: Recent Advances and Current Challenges</i> in G. Facal et al. (eds.), <i>The Palgrave Handbook of Political Norms in Southeast Asia</i>, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-99-9655-1-21.</p>	<p>*All students are required to read the assigned materials and will be assigned to be the lead discussants.</p>
<p>March 17, 2027</p>	<p>IKSP and Western epistemologies</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Grincheva, N. (2013). <i>Scientific epistemology versus indigenous epistemology: meanings of 'place' and 'knowledge in the epistemic cultures</i> in <i>Logos & Episteme</i>, IV, 2 (2013): 145–159.</p> <p>Held, M. (2019). <i>Decolonizing Research Paradigms in the Context of Settler Colonialism: An Unsettling, Mutual, and Collaborative Effort</i> in <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i> Volume 18: 1–16, DOI: 10.1177/1609406918821574.</p>	
<p>March 18, 2027</p>	<p>Legal and national frameworks on the rights of Indigenous peoples</p> <p>Readings:</p>	

	<p>United Nations General Assembly (2007). <i>Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</i>. New York: United Nations.</p> <p>Eligio, A. (2012). <i>Communication imperatives for indigenous peoples' representation in policy making: Lessons from the IPRA (Indigenous Peoples Rights Act) experience</i>. <i>Telematics and Informatics</i> 29, 324–334.</p>	
<p>March 22, 2027</p>	<p>Ethical practices in conducting research in Indigenous communities</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Burnette, C., Sanders, S., Butcher, H. and Rand, J. (2014). <i>A Toolkit for Ethical and Culturally Sensitive Research: An Application with Indigenous Communities in Ethics and Social Welfare</i>, 8:4, 364-382, DOI: 10.1080/17496535.2014.885987.</p> <p>Koster, R., Baccar, K. and Lemelin, R. H. (2012). <i>Moving from research ON, to research WITH and FOR Indigenous communities: A critical reflection on community-based participatory research</i> in <i>The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien</i> 2012, 56(2): 195–210 DOI: 10.1111/j.1541-0064.2012.00428.</p>	<p>Reflection Essay 1 (Engagement Plan) is due after the discussion of this topic. Guide questions will be provided during class.</p>
<p>March 23-24, 2027</p>	<p>Indigenous peoples and ecological practices</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Hagen, R. and Minter, T. (2019): <i>Displacement in the Name of Development. How Indigenous Rights Legislation Fails to Protect Philippine Hunter-Gatherers</i> in <i>Society & Natural Resources</i>, DOI: 10.1080/08941920.2019.1677970.</p> <p>Huang, N. and Ge, L. (2024). <i>Mining and indigenous communities in Southeast Asia: Examining the social impact of mineral development</i> in <i>The Extractive Industries and Society</i> 17 (2024) 101363.</p>	
<p>March 29, 2027</p>	<p>Indigenous peoples and health systems</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Nelson, S, and Wilson, K. (2021). <i>Rights and health versus rights to health: Bringing Indigenous Peoples' legal</i></p>	

	<p><i>rights into the spaces of health care services</i> in Political Geography 85 (2021) 102311.</p> <p>Sumibcay, J. (2024). <i>Examining structural racism as the fundamental cause of health inequities among the Indigenous Maori, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Island peoples in the U.S. and Aotearoa New Zealand: Perspectives from key informant community leaders</i> in SSM - Qualitative Research in Health 5 (2024) 100379.</p>	
March 30, 2027	MAJOR EXAM 1	
March 31, 2027	<p>Indigenous peoples and disaster risk and reduction practices</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p><i>Balay-As, M., Marlowe, J., and Gaillard, J. (2018). Deconstructing the binary between indigenous and scientific knowledge in disaster risk reduction: Approaches to high impact weather hazards</i> in International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 2212-4209.</p> <p>Cuaton G. and Su, Y. (2020). <i>Local-indigenous knowledge on disaster risk reduction: Insights from the Mamanwa indigenous peoples in Basey, Samar after Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines</i> in International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction 48 (2020) 101596.</p>	
April 1, 2027	<p>Indigenous peoples and governance systems</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Alcantara, C. and Morden, M. (2017). <i>Indigenous multilevel governance and power relations</i> in Territory, Politics, Governance, DOI: 10.1080/21622671.2017.1360197.</p> <p>Perez, J. (2021). <i>The Philippines: The Challenges of Moro and Lumad Power-sharing in the Bangsamoro</i> in Conflict Studies Quarterly Issue 35, April 2021, pp. 70-88, DOI: 10.24193/csq.35.5.</p>	
April 5-6, 2027	<p>Indigenous peoples' education</p> <p>Readings:</p>	Reflection Essay 2 is due after the discussion of this

	<p>Bishop, M. (2020). <i>Indigenous education sovereignty: another way of 'doing' education</i> in Critical Studies in Education, DOI: 10.1080/17508487.2020.1848895.</p> <p>Knopf, K. (2015). <i>The Turn Toward the Indigenous: Knowledge Systems and Practices in the Academy in American Studies</i>, 2015, Vol. 60, No. 2/3 (2015), pp. 179-200.</p>	<p>topic. Guide questions will be provided in class.</p>
<p>April 7, 2027</p>	<p>Indigenous peoples and gender relations</p> <p>Readings:</p> <p>Brooks, A. (2003). <i>The Politics of Location in Southeast Asia: Intersecting Tensions around Gender, Ethnicity, Class, and Religion</i> in Asian Journal for the Social Sciences, 31, 1, 86-106.</p> <p>United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (2010). <i>Gender and Indigenous Peoples</i>. New York: United Nations.</p> <p>Veneracion-Rallonza, M.L. (2022). <i>Towards indigenous women's meaningful participation: Their voices, their spaces</i> in Conferencia Internacional de reconciliación ignaciana de la crisis y el enfrentamiento a la sanación y el perdón: ¿cómo es posible la reconciliación? (1st ed., pp. 119-140). Editorial Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, http://doi.org/10.11144/Javeriana.9789587817331.</p>	
<p>April 8, 2027</p>	<p>MAJOR EXAM 2</p>	
	<p>Exams</p> <p>March 30, 2027 (Tuesday) April 8, 2027 (Thursday)</p>	
	<p>Holiday</p> <p>March 25, 2027 – Maundy Thursday March 26, 2027 – Good Friday</p>	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kindly refer to the **CLASS SCHEDULE** for the readings.

For your basic reference, we will use:

Smith, L.T. (2021). *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (3rd Edition)*. Oregon: Blackstone Publishing.

An additional recommended reading is:

Scott, J. (2009). *Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

WE SPEAK ONLY IN ENGLISH

In class, we will speak in English.

INSTRUCTOR

Maria Rita Reyes Cucio is a guest professor from the Far Eastern University, Manila, Philippines where she is a research fellow and associate professor of political science. She earned her Bachelor's degree in the Social Sciences from the University of the Philippines-Manila, her Master's degree in Development Studies from the University of Auckland, New Zealand (Honours), and her PhD in Development Studies from the De La Salle University-Manila. She was also a grant recipient of Rotary Foundation and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, both held in Germany. Her Master's thesis and dissertation were on indigenous peoples' education and cultural rights in the Philippines. Her research interests are indigenous peoples, education, religion, migration, and identity politics. She has also acted as peer reviewer in Philippine journals like the Asia-Pacific Social Science Review and Journal of Action Research.



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