

American Indian Studies
Academic Plan III
February, 2009

Section I: Program Mission and Aspirations

The mission of American Indian Studies is to offer academic courses to all interested students, support services to American Indian students, and outreach to the larger Wyoming community.

We aspire to provide the highest quality educational experience for our students through classes that support undergraduate and graduate minor degrees and will support a proposed undergraduate major.

We aspire to support tribal sovereignty by educating tribal members, contributing to the preservation of indigenous languages, providing assistance to tribal communities, and educating non-tribal members about tribal peoples and their governments.

We aspire to provide services to the state and region through collaborative relationships with a variety of educational institutions, cultural centers, organizations, and agencies.

We aspire to assist with diversity at UW through faculty hires, course offerings, research and publication, public programs, and student support.

Section II: Previous Planning Accomplishments from the 2004-09 AIS Plan

Item	Fulfilled	Unfulfilled
Develop and implement an assessment plan for each class we offer and for our curriculum as a whole.		X
Develop and implement an assessment plan for student outcomes.	X This has been fulfilled for both our undergraduate and graduate curriculum.	
Create and implement a graduate minor.	X	
Design and implement a major degree.	X The major has been approved at the college level.	
Further develop outreach.	X In addition to maintaining relationships with the BBHC and the WRTC, AIS has established relationships with the Northern Arapaho Language and Culture Commission, the Eastern Shoshone Cultural Center, the Northern Arapaho Charter School, and the Northern Arapaho Council of Elders. We routinely offer classes through the Outreach School.	
Develop international travel opportunities for AIS students.	X AIS offers classes that provide travel to New Zealand and Mexico.	
Further develop and implement the High Plains American Indian Research Institute.	X A feasibility study supporting the HPAIRI has been conducted.	

Section III: Relevant Institutional Issues:

American Indian Studies will implement and refine its major degree. We will actualize the interdisciplinary potential of our graduate minor. We will strengthen tribal involvement in AIS through language and culture classes, the proposed Tribal Elders in Residence Program, consultation with the tribal groups and commissions on educational matters, including the proposed UW American Indian center and High Plains American Indian Research Institute. We will continue to support interdepartmental and cross-college initiatives such as an AIST/RELI proposal for an Excellence Chair in Native American Philosophy and Theology, the Wyoming Endorsement for Highly Qualified Teachers of American Indian Children, and the proposed Humanities Institute. We will strive to further internationalize our curriculum in support of UW's commitment to educational abroad.

Section IV: Action Items

Items with fiscal implications

AIST 1. Further develop international teaching and learning opportunities for our students and staff. This will allow us to provide the highest quality educational experience for our students, to support tribal peoples in the U.S. by sharpening the thinking of our students and faculty about global concepts of tribal identity, indigeneity, and sovereignty, and contribute to the internationalization of UW's curriculum.

AIST 2. Continue our instrumental role in creating a UW American Indian center. This will enhance educational opportunities and quality for all UW students, will help support tribal sovereignty through education and research, will provide service to the state and region, and will assist with diversity at UW.

AIST 3. Establish the High Plains American Indian Research Institute. This will provide educational opportunities for UW students, research and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff, will support tribal sovereignty through education and applied research, will provide service to tribal and non-tribal communities throughout the state and region, and will further diversify UW.

AIST 4. Implement a *Tribal Elders in Residence Program* designed to bring eminently knowledgeable culture and tradition teachers into AIST. These men and women will teach classes on their own as well as with AIS tenured or tenure track faculty. Their presence in our classrooms will support our program's respect for traditional knowledge and will give our students much needed interaction with esteemed elders.

Items without significant fiscal implications

AIST 5. **Establish an AIST major degree.** This will help us provide the highest quality educational experience for our students, will support tribal sovereignty, will provide additional service to the state and region, and will contribute to UW's diversity.

AIST 6. **Strengthen relationships on the Wind River Indian Reservation.** This will help us provide the highest quality educational experience for our students as field trips to the Reservation, invitations to cultural and educational programs on the Reservation, visits to UW by Reservation tribal members, and contributions to our teaching activities become more readily available. Additionally, enhanced Reservation involvement will allow us to support tribal sovereignty through the provision of services to tribal peoples and their governments.

AIST 7 and 8. **Refine and implement assessment of student learning outcomes and our curriculum.** This will allow us to offer the highest quality educational experience for our students.

AIST 9. **Increase interdisciplinary participation in the graduate minor.** This will allow us to enhance the educational experience for all graduate minors and will allow us to better serve tribal communities through graduate research projects and internships.

AIST 10. **Increase student internship opportunities.** AIST 4020, *Internship*, has been identified as the capstone course in the proposed AIST major degree, and additional internship opportunities must be identified for our students. This effort will allow us to further develop relationships with offices and programs on our campus, in the Laramie community, with the Wind River Indian Reservation, with tribal communities in our region beyond the Wind River Indian Reservation, and with Indigenous communities in other countries.

Section V: Implementation

Action Items 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 will be areas of AIS focus in 2008-2011. Action Items 2, 3, and 5 will continue into the 2009-2014 planning period. These items involve entities and implementation authorities beyond AIS.