**A Proposal for Native American & Indigenous Studies**

**at**

**The Claremont Consortium**

**Claremont, California**

April 11, 2014

Presented by The Indigenous Student Alliance

**A Proposal for Native American & Indigenous Studies at the Claremont Consortium**

**Background**

According to the 2010 Census the state of California has the largest American Indian and Alaska Native population in the United States at 723,225 individuals (2010 Census Summary File 1, Table QT-P5). Of the 565 federally recognized tribes, over 100 of them reside in California. There are at least 15 federally recognized tribes located near the Claremont Colleges in Southern California including the Morongo, Soboba, Cahuilla, and San Manuel tribes. However, that statistic does not include those tribes not recognized by the federal government such as the Tongva upon whose ancestral land the colleges reside.

Of the overall population 25 and older in the United States, 86 percent obtained at least a high school diploma, GED, or alternative credential and 28 percent obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher. In contrast, only 77 percent of American Indian and Alaskan Natives obtained at least a high school diploma and only 13 percent obtained a bachelor’s degree or higher (2010 American Community Survey for the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population). The median income of American Indian and Alaska Native households is $35,062, approximately 70 percent lower than the national median income of $50,046. As of 2010, the poverty rate among American Indian and Alaska Native populations is twice the national rate (United States Census 2010).

These statistical discrepancies in educational attainment levels can be explained by particular structural mechanisms reflected by the high poverty, suicide, and teen pregnancy rates. Such rates are but a few indications of barriers to social and economic movement among American Indian and Alaskan Native populations.

**Terminology & Significance**

“When describing themselves, Native American people refer to themselves primarily by tribal affiliation and also as American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian. However, the Census groups Native Hawaiians is in a separate category with other Pacific Islanders, creating a challenge when trying to extrapolate data on this specific indigenous population,” (Adams 5).

American Indian and Alaska Native is frequently abbreviated as “AI-AN” in reports and documents about indigenous people of North America, however in our proposal we will also be including Native Hawai’ians, and as such we will use the abbreviation “AI-AN-NH” for the remainder of this proposal.

**Problem**

Historically, formal education was a colonial tool for assimilation underpinned by the “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” mentality. With this historical backdrop in mind, it is no wonder why formal education is an arena of conflict for many AI-AN-NH individuals. Furthermore, the continual failure of post secondary educational institutions to provide AI-AN-NH students with an education within the framework of their own culture only reifies past assimilation efforts by modernizing AI-AN-NH lifeways through erasure of traditional cultural knowledge.

In addition, discrepancies in educational attainment levels between AI-AN-NH and non-native populations, particularly white populations, can in part be explained by financial constraints, lack of education preparation in primary and secondary schools, and differences in incentives and rewards for additional education. Since a large portion of AI-AN-NH households fall below the federal poverty line, college is often not financially feasible. Contrary to popular belief AI-AN-NH do not go to college for free, however as a consequence of this common belief there is often little support for navigating Financial Aid avenues and forms for AI-AN-NH students. A lack of educational foundation from primary and secondary schools often make the rigors of college life too overwhelming. Moreover, the incentive to acquire additional education may be reduced if reservations do not have flourishing economies for it is unlikely that under those conditions highly educated AI-AN-NH students will find employment opportunities. Furthermore, these incomes are typically not sufficient enough to appropriately compensate for the costly skills and training received in college. This pattern is often referred to as a ‘brain drain’ of reservations and indigenous communities. College success is also often situated as in conflict with culture and family expectations particularly when looking at community responsibility versus individual achievement (Quinones 120-22).

As liberal arts institutions and advocates of diversity, the Claremont Colleges have a responsibility to fill this educational gap both for AI-AN-NH students and non-native students alike. Although there are few AI-AN-NH students attending the Claremont Colleges, the lack of institutional support and resources available to these students undermines the Claremont Colleges intended commitment to diversity and unintentionally reproduces systems of assimilation and acculturation.

**Proposed Program**

Historically, the idea of the function of Native American Studies has been a contentious topic within the AI-AN-NH communities.

In November 1968, students at the San Francisco State University gathered in protest. African American, Chicano/Latino, Asian American, and Native American students all banded together in solidarity to form the Third World Liberation Front and collectively, they made demands for ethnic studies and an end to the Vietnam War. This event was known as the Third World Strike. After the strike ended in March 1969 with the concession of the Ethnic Studies Department at San Francisco State, similar departments like Black/African American Studies, Chicano/Latino Studies, Asian American Studies, and Native American/American Indian Studies began to crop up in institutions of higher education all across the country.

Then, from November 1969 to June 1971 following the closing and abandonment of the Alcatraz penitentiary on March 21, 1963, Native American activists occupied Alcatraz Island to demand the return of the land to Native Peoples. They called for a center for Native American Studies, an American Indian spiritual center, an ecology center, and an American Indian Museum to be built on the land.

The students protesting for ethnic studies in the university system believed that Native American Studies was supposed to function as a response to established paradigms of knowledge and provide counter narratives to the dominant forms of education. However, the protesters at Alcatraz rejected academia altogether and asserted that Native American Studies should exist as a site devoted to the study of Native knowledges and promote Native ways of seeing the world. Then, during the first convocation for the establishment of a Native American Studies department in the 1970’s, those gathered pushed for a Native American Studies department that would mobilize Native American intellectuals and academics to advocate for and take stands on pressing issues in Indian policy.

We propose that Native American Studies at the Claremont Colleges should exist as a combination of these models. As it will exist at an intellectual, scholarly institution, Native American Studies would necessarily be academic. However, as Elizabeth Cook-Lynn describes in *Who Stole Native American Studies*,

[Native American Studies] would differentiate itself from other disciplines in two important ways: it would emerge from *within* Native people's enclaves and geographies, languages and experiences, and it would refute the exogenous seeking of truth through isolation (i.e., the "ivory tower") that has been the general principle of the disciplines most recently in charge of indigenous study, that is, history, anthropology, and related disciplines all captivated by the scientific method of objectivity. (Cook-Lynn, 11)

In this sense, although we propose that Native American Studies at the Claremont Colleges remains an academically rigorous field of study, that does not necessitate complete and total withdrawal from AI-AN-NH cultures and communities. Native American student connection to local tribal communities is of critical importance in their success in the academy. As such, creating opportunities for students to engage and work with local Indian communities and tribes will expand their capacities not just in activist or field work, but also as intellectuals. Forming lasting relationships with indigenous communities will have a broad impact on Native education, and also on education at the Claremont Colleges as a whole. Ultimately these relationships will lead to transformational change both within indigenous communities and our academic institutions.

**Mission**

The mission of having a Native American Studies department at the Claremont Colleges is to inspire a critical consciousness among students about indigenous experiences both historical and contemporary. Additionally, Native American Studies would support the decolonization of education by inviting guest speakers, collaborating with communities and organizations in the classroom, and holding academic and social events. As part of this process we are asking the Claremont Colleges to commit to actively recruiting AI-AN-NH students and to build relationships with local indigenous communities.

The goal of Native American Studies as an academic discipline was first established with the purpose of using the educational system that would lead to concrete changes for American Indian communities. To better understand the obstacles and tools for making institutional changes, scholars that first outlined the department divided the discipline into concepts of sovereignty and indigeneity. These two umbrella subjects would encompass themes relating to history, law, culture, place, and philosophy (Cook-Lynn, 10).

In order for the Claremont Colleges to maintain the aims outlined above and for these endeavors to succeed, we need institutional structures to support AI-AN-NH students and community building. Students and faculty are already working on creating partnerships to bring American Indian students to the campuses. For instance, Pitzer’s Native American Summer Pipeline to College Program is an example of such recruitment efforts, however, there needs to be a social and academic network to support students upon arrival at the Colleges. This would include having AI-AN-NH professors and staff members to support student organizations, cultural centers, remediation services and counseling programs.

For the campus community as a whole, the position of a Native American Studies department is to support all students becoming transformative agents of change in their communities around the world. Although, it is imperative that Native American Studies centers itself and emerges from indigenous communities, colonization affects both the colonized and the colonizer. A Native American Studies department would mean exploring privilege and would involve the Colleges’ community at large.

**Objective & Goals**

AI-AN-NH’s make up an integral part of the history of the United States, and if the Claremont Colleges are truly committed to providing a fully well-rounded, liberal arts education, there must also exist a commitment to teaching Native American Studies at the 5-C’s. To be able to hold the Colleges accountable there are several concrete steps the Colleges can take. Some of them are listed below:

* Hire two tenure-track faculty of AI-AN-NH descent with community ties
* Provide internship and research grant opportunities for AI-AN-NH students
* Have a AI-AN-NH student population that more closely reflects the demographic of the surrounding area
* Native American & Indigenous Studies Library & Native American Resource Center
* Student Affairs position designed to focus on Native student retention and recruitment
* Scholarship and Financial Aid opportunities specifically for AI-AN-NH students
* Thesis Prize for the Native American Studies department
* Encourage Scripps College Academy and other campus organizations to connect AI-AN-NH youth to higher education opportunities and leadership positions within their local communities

Moreover, it is imperative that when measuring the success of AI-AN-NH students and the Native American & Indigenous Studies department as a whole, to consider local and regionally defined indicators of success and not limit notions of success to economic interests and incomes.

**Development of Proposed Program**

Pulling from the Montana State University’s proposal from 1971, to develop a curriculum for Native American Studies, the Claremont Colleges will “work with local Indian tribes to establish a liaison with the tribes, gain assistance of tribes in building up specific knowledge about tribes, to help determine opportunities for study and research, to develop a multi-tribe forum to review [AI-AN-NH] programs at [the Colleges], to recruit students, to develop curricula and correlate Indian and [Claremont College] interest in modifying and upgrading programs, and to assist in economic and resource development” (Montana State University, 7).

Since historically Native American Studies has been pushed for and developed by students, students must play an integral role in the Native American Studies department through the intentional incorporation of a student-led course. The theme of which would change with the interests and needs of the students at the time.

The new department would be housed with the other ethnic studies programs. Asian American Studies currently requires its majors to take at least one course in the other departments, and currently Africana Studies is discussing making the same requirement part of their major. Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, and Chican@/Latin@ Studies support the proposal for the introduction of Native American and Indigenous Studies.

**Current Resources & Proposed NAIS Minor**

Several professors at the Claremont Consortium already teach courses relevant to Native American Studies in departments such as sociology, anthropology, literature, intercultural studies, and psychology. Though to have a well-rounded Native American Studies department, we would need to include courses in the fields of legal studies, philosophy, history, politics, and language.

We have composed a sample minor in Native American and Indigenous Studies, drawing from the courses already offered at the Claremont Colleges.

NAIS learning Objectives:

* Understand the history and cultural production of indigenous peoples in the United States, within both multiracial American and transnational contexts;
* Effectively evaluate how race is socially constructed, how racism has been embedded in social structures and institutions and how these structures affect people’s everyday lives.
* Understand how race intersects with gender, sexualities, and socio-economic class in the world;
* Understand how to carry out a research, creative product, or community-based product in Native American and Indigenous communities;
* Understand ethical implications of research, creative projects, or community-based projects in Native American and Indigenous communities

For the minor in Native American & Indigenous Studies, students are required to complete six courses in Native American & Indigenous Studies. Students are required to complete Introduction to Native American & Indigenous Studies, one Community Studies course, and four other Native American & Indigenous Studies courses.

1. [NEW COURSE] Intro to Native American & Indigenous Studies
2. Community Studies: Approved fieldwork in Native American or Indigenous community or internship with a Native American/Indigenous community-based organization. (ASAM111)
3. Four courses from the list of approved Native American & Indigenous Studies courses from at least two of the following four categories:
   1. History;
   2. Social Science (Anthropology, Sociology, Politics, Econ, or Psych)
   3. Literature;
   4. Art History, Music, or Religion

**List of Approved Native American and Indigenous Studies Courses**

**History**

HIST 146 SC           History of the Modern Maya: Indig Ethnicity     *Cindy Forster*

History of the Maya explores resistance and the political economy of race relations in a cultural region that embraces Chiapas, the Yucatan Peninsula, and Guatemala. Through oral tradition and history, the course looks at Maya identity from its ancient roots to present-day revolutionary movements in Chiapas and Guatemala. The readings focus on the words and actions of the Maya.

**Social Science**

ANTH 012 PZ          Native Americans & Environments                      *Sheryl Miller*

This course will investigate the traditional interrelationships of Native American ethnic groups with their various environments. Are patterns of collecting wild resources or farming primary foods environmentally determined? How does the physical environment affect a groups social system, politics, art, religion? What impact do these cultural factors have on a groups utilization of its environment? We will examine these and other issues through class discussions and readings. We will consider several regions of North America in our study of such groups as the Inuit, Kwakiutl, Cahuilla, Hopi, Navajo, Dakota and Iroquois.

ANTH 160 PZ          Native American Women’s Arts  *Sheryl Miller*

This course explores arts created by Native American women emphasizing their traditional forms of ceramics, basketry, textiles and beadwork. Other media such as painting, sculpture and jewelry are included. A primary focus is on the lives and work of individual artists, expressed in their changing cultural contexts.

SOC 077 PZ             Indigenous Movements                                      *Erich Steinman*

This course will examine contemporary indigenous movements from Canada to South America, with an emphasis outside of the United States. The course will highlight processes of colonization, resistance, institutional change, identity formation, and decolonization. To connect local and global, students will participate in community-engaged learning with California Indigenous communities.

SOC 078 PZ    American Indian Movements: Indigenous Resistance    *Erich Steinman*

This course will critically examine Indigenous resistance to ongoing settler colonialism in North America. Analysis will feature processes of institutional change, ethnic group formation and decolonizing action in the realms of politics, culture, education, health, and others. Learning will involve engaging in a community partnership with local community members/groups.

ANTH 052 PZ          Indigenous Societies: Histories of Encounters

The course gives an overview of the current lives of indigenous societies in different parts of the world (North America, South America, Africa, and Asia). We will examine major topics that mark their encounters with nation-states: political power, economic development, gender relations, collective rights, healthy, formal education, and religion. The course compares a variety of ethnographic cases (through movies and texts) to expose the difference and similarities between ‘indigenous peoples.”

ANTH 056 PZ          Run to the Forest                                                   *Leda Martins*

This course is a visual, artistic and intellectual reflection about the insertion of traditional Amazonian indigenous knowledge within local and global discourses of nature, sustainability and development. This course explores art as a form of dialogue about nature, time, consumption, and cosmology for Amazonian indigenous peoples.

PSYC 156 SC           Native American Psychology                             *Sheila Walker*

This course examines the psychological research conducted with indigenous peoples of North America. Course topics include identity, mental health, and family issues. These topics and others will be discussed within the context of the particular historical conditions that have given rise to the behavioral patterns under discussion (e.g., genocide, displacement, cultural loss).

ASAM 188 Decolonizing Education  *Kathy Yep*

This project-based seminar will explore theoretical work on decolonizing education drawing Asian, Asian American and Pacific Islander scholar/activists. For this upper-division seminar, students should have familiarity with theories of coloniality, intersectionality, and racial formations. Work-load is high. Community teaching.

ASAM 189 Globalization and Oceania: Hawai’i and Tonga *Kathy Yep*

Globalization in Oceania has included the multidirectional circulation of goods, information, people, and ideologies.  This class examines the experience and impacts of globalization as traced through the histories, migrations, and the current economic, health, and education status of Pacific Islander communities.

**Literature**

ENGL 056 PO                      Contemporary Native American Lit                     *Valorie Thomas*

In the Native American context, English is the language of holocaust; to write in English necessitates “Reinventing the Enemy’s Language” for purposes of indigenous survival and self-representation. This course engages fiction, essays, poetry, film and critical theory while considering the implications of genocide, political invisibility and experiencing diaspora in one’s homeland.

ENGL 058 PO          Native American Women Writers                *Valorie Thomas*

This course focuses on issues of memory and identity in writing by indigenous women writers in the Americas. Readings will focus on memoir, poetry, fiction, essays and criticism, including works by Leslie Silko, Paula Gunn Allen, Joy Harjo, Louise Erdrich, Wendy Rose, Gloria Bird and others. Letter grade only.

**Art History, Music, or Religion**

ARHI 137 PZ           Trad/Trans Native N American Art                                 *Bill Anthes*

Tradition and Transformation in Native North American Art. This course offers an introductory survey of the visual and material culture of the Native peoples of North America in terms of materials, technique, cultural, historical and philosophical/spiritual contexts. This class will also consider patterns of cultural contact and transformation, the collecting of Native American art, Federal government Indian policy and education institutions, and modern and contemporary Native American art and cultural activism.

ARHI 138 PZ           Native American Art Collections Research           *Bill Anthes*

This seminar focuses on original student research with Native American artworks from the collection of the Pomona College Museum of Art. Working collaboratively, students will study these artworks in detail, develop bibliographies in relevant secondary literature, write weekly research progress reports, make a formal research presentation, and a final paper.

ARHI 139 PZ           Seminar Topics: Native American Art History     *Bill Anthes*

Examines in-depth one or more themes or critical issues in Native American art history, or artworks from a local collection or cultural center.

ARHI 133 PO          Art, Conquest and Colonization                            *Frances Pohl*

Examines how images were enlisted in and helped shape the systematic exploration, conquest and colonization of North America (Canada, the U.S. and Mexico) by Europeans from ca. 1500 to 1800. Considers how images were used by indigenous populations to resist attempts to erase their cultures and to control the manner in which they assimilated into European settler cultures.

**Community Studies**

ASAM 111               Pacific Islanders and Education         *Kehaulani Vaughn*

This course will explore various topics within Indigenous education. Through a variety of mixed methods, this seminar will examine previous and current educational policy and its affects on diverse Indigenous peoples. It will also examine education as a tool for empowerment, resistance, and healing within varied Indigenous communities. Course topics covered include: Native/Indigenous epistemology, decolonizing methodologies, settler colonialism, cultural reclamation, and critical pedagogy. In addition to the course materials, students will engage in service learning by partnering with the Saturday Tongan Education Program (STEP). Participating in STEP will allow students to actively participate in an Indigenous educational initiative that directly relates to the course content and discussions.

Listed below are additional courses that we identified as potential candidates for NAIS courses. We currently need additional information on these courses in order to gauge if the courses sufficiently address Native American or Indigenous issues to be incorporated into a NAIS minor program.

* Colonization, Racialization, and Renewal: Indian Nations of Southern California (First Year seminar, Steinman)
* Indigenous Peoples of the Americas: Colonization, Identity, Resistance (sociology, Steinman)
* Indigenous Societies: Histories of Encounters (Anthropology, Martins)
* Nature and Society in Amazonia (Anthropology, Martins)
* Indians in Action (Anthropology, Martins)
* Seminar: Topics in Native American Art History (Art History, Anthes)
* Ethnoecology (Environmental Analysis, Faulstich)
* California Landscapes: Diverse Peoples and Ecosystems (Environmental Analysis, Herrold-Menzies)
* Healing Ourselves and Healing Our Communities (Ontario Program, Hicks Peterson)
* Resistance to Monoculture (Intercultural Studies, Joseph Parker)
* Historical Archaeology (ANTH 111, Miller)
* Religion, Race, Civil Rights Movmts (RLST 084, Yonemoto)
* Intro to Latin-America Cultures (HIST 095, Sarzynski)
* Race and Ethnicity in Brazil (HIST 117, Sarzynski)
* History of Central Americans in the US (CHLT 072, Portillo)
* Food, Culture, and Power in Asia and the Pacific (HIST 100F, Yamashita)
* Mexico-United States Border (HIST 100N, Tinker Salas)
* Race, Culture, and Identity in Latin America (HIST 100I, Summers Sandoval)
* Women of Honor, Women of Shame (HIST 036, Mayes)
* Colonial Latin American History (HIST 031, Mayes)
* Religion American Culture: Toleration (RLST 105, Dyson)
* Religion, Literature, and Environment (ENGL 097, Winiarski)
* American Inequality (HIST 127, Summers Sandoval)
* The Anthropology of Sports (ANTH 158, Gladney)
* Hybrid Identities: Spanish Empire (HIST 170, PZ)
* Perspectives on Photography (MS 111, PZ)

Although the range of course options is currently not sufficiently well-rounded, the number of course are enough to start a department. In terms of the core focus of study and potential requirements for a major or minor in Native American & Indigenous Studies, students should be required to take courses within the department, which discuss the following topics:

* Native American histories
* Colonization, sovereignty, the reservation, and Indian law
* Identity politics and blood quantum
* Gender and sexuality
* Comparative ethnic studies course i.e. “Africans in Indian Country”
* Science, geography, and/or medicinal practices
* Native American arts (including visual arts, literature, dance, music, film, and other medias)
* Community engagement / fieldwork with Indian tribes
* Native language courses recommended but not required

In addition, it is imperative that the Claremont Colleges commit to hiring AI-AN-NH faculty members to ensure that Native American and Indigenous Studies stays rooted within indigenous communities. Hiring AI-AN-NH faculty would also support efforts to diversify faculty at the Claremont Colleges through the mission of the Consortium for Faculty Diversity at Liberal Arts Colleges.

**Resource Library**

The Indigenous Student Alliance received funds from Scripps Presidential Advisory Committee on Diversity & Inclusivity (PACDI) to build a resource library for Native American and Indigenous Studies. The library will be housed at Scripps, location and name to be determined, and will be open to all students, faculty, and staff. We hope to launch the opening of the library in Fall 2014.

**The Indigenous Student Alliance**

The Indigenous Student Alliance is a 5-C organization founded by students in November 2012.

**Mission Statement:** The Indigenous Student Alliance (ISA) aims to inspire a critical consciousness among the 5C community about indigenous experiences and issues both historical and contemporary by directly engaging and collaborating with local tribal communities, students, and faculty. In addition, our alliance seeks to provide academic, cultural, and spiritual support for self-identified indigenous students during their time at the Claremont Consortium.

In the past year the Indigenous Student Alliance has sponsored the following events and/or accomplished the goals below to bring awareness to indigenous issues on campus:

* “Mascots Oppress: Dismantling Stereotypes with Charlene Teters” – Film Screening of *In Whose Honor*, followed by discussion led by Spokane activist Charlene Teters.
* “Indigenous People’s Day or Columbus Day? You Decide” – Mural on Walker Wall (Oct. 2013)
* Official retiring of the ‘peace pipe’ trophy for the annual CMS/PP football game (Nov. 2013)
* “Rethink Thanksgiving: 5 Myths about Thanksgiving” – Flyers distributed throughout campus dispelling commonly held myths about Thanksgiving. (Nov. 2013)
* “Decolonizing Education through Native American & Indigenous Studies” – Panel discussion featuring professors and staff from UCLA and UCR Native American Studies Departments & Programs (Feb. 2014)
* “Quantum Leap: Blood & Identity in Indian Country” – Group discussion, featuring a student performance art piece, about identity issues in Native American communities. Collab w/ Multi-Ethnic and Racial Group Experience (MERGE) (Feb. 2014)
* “American Red & Black: Stories of Afro-Native Identity” – Group discussion w/ OBSA and MERGE to discuss intersections of identity between native and black communities.
* “Indigenous Environmental Justice” – film screening of *Tambien la Lluvia* with Cafe Con Leche, to discuss indigenous environmental justice issues (March 2014)
* “Frybread & Funnies II” – Community building study break w/ frybread making and watching Native Comedic Group, 1491’s videos. (March 2014)

Here is a sampling of additional events pertaining to Native American or Indigenous Issues sponsored by other organizations or departments at the Claremont Consortium.

* “Continuing Invasion: Resistance, Resilience, and Reinvention among North American Indigenous Peoples.” Scripps Humanities Institute Spring 2012 Theme
* “Colonialism=Genocide: Applying the Sartean Equation to the U.S. Context” Scripps Core Program Nov. 2013
* “Indigenous Perspectives on Food Sovereignty: Efforts on the Navajo Nation to Rebuild a Self-Sufficient Food System” Scripps Humanities Institute Nov. 2013
* “Hearing Radmilla” – film screening and discussion with first bi-racial Miss Navajo, Radmilla Cody. OBSA March 2014
* “Disorderly Histories: Revisiting the Canton Asylum for Insane Indians, 1902-1934” Scripps Core Program & Disability, Illness, and Difference Alliance (DIDA) March 2014
* “Hawaiian Women and the Nationalist Politics of Indigeneity” Scripps Humanities Institute, Apr 2014

**Testimonials**

Here is a sampling of testimonials collected from students from the spring 2012 semester’s Humanities Institute lecture series on “Continuing Invasion: Resistance, Resilience, and Reinvention among North American Indigenous Peoples.” The audiences attending the semester’s events were the largest ever recorded for any Humanities Institute series.

“I chose to take this course because I felt that my utter lack of knowledge about the history and experiences of indigenous peoples in North American was a huge gap in my education. I saw it as an opportunity to expand my understanding of my country.”

- Julia Hughes

“It has definitely made me more aware of colonization and its forces both within me and in the world. It's also made me really want to help, to make a solid, tangible impact for change.”

- Natalie Cannon

“I think many themes within Native American studies intersect with themes and struggles of the indigenous peoples in Latin America and I guess other minority groups living within the United States.”

- Marisa Mendoza

“[The topic of this semester’s Humanities Institute does not intersect with] my current classes. However, it does make me reexamine the American Literature survey requirements I have taken, which I now realize almost entirely exclude native voices.”

- Julia Hughes

“While my previous courses helped me to more easily accept and embrace North American Indigenous Peoples as complexly human, I'm not sure I was prepared for just how much complexity accompanied this particular community of people, as looking into how people narrate their own experiences mandates that you look at all aspects of their life rather than one, specific social movement. It was a truly eye opening and challenging experience, but one that I think was incredibly valuable to my own personal growth as a human being.”

- Anonymous member of the Spring 2012 Humanities Institute Junior Fellows

“I think our experiences this semester have only scratched the surface on what could be done if a Native American Studies Department were to be established here at the Claremont Colleges.”

- Anonymous member of the Spring 2012 Humanities Institute Junior Fellows

**Testimonials**

Below is a sampling of testimonials collected from the online petition for a Native American and Indigenous Studies Department.

“I'm a Scripps alum and last year I wrote my thesis about the provisions for American Indian women in the Violence Against Women Act. I was very disappointed to find that only a few faculty have expertise in this area.”

-Rosemary McClure

“I spent one year at Pomona before transferring. I think this would improve the academic experience for everyone at Pomona.”

-Clair Adler

“When I was at Pomona, we were able to finally establish an Asian American Studies department after years of struggle. This was a tremendously formative experience and resource for myself and fellow students. This was also only possible because of the support from our colleagues in Black Studies and Latin@ student activists. We all understood that building these resources benefited us as a whole community. An Indigenous Studies Department would be an important next step in increasing knowledge for all students.”

-[Weston Teruya](http://www.change.org/u/84576904)

“The establishment of this intercollegiate department is long overdue at the Claremonts, as an alumna, I only wish the existence of such a program was possible when I was a student.” -LeeAnn Wang

“I was a student at Scripps and feel like this would have been amazing when I was there and would be an amazing resource and experience for students now.”

-Janice Chou

“As a former Claremont student I understand the amount of ignorance on the campuses surrounding the histories of all minorities but especially pertaining to indigenous puerile. I would have benefited greatly from classes like this and so will the rest of the student body.”

-Ralph Martin

“I am an alumna of the college, and I think that indigenous studies is an important, but unacknowledged part of the ethnic studies department. Just like Asian American / Africana / Chican@ Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies is important to Native American / Indigenous students in helping to understand their experience in a historical / sociocultural context.”

-Alexis Takahashi

**Works Cited**

*A Proposal for American Indian Studies at Montana State University*. Montana State University. *Educational Resource Information Clearinghouse*. Feb. 1971. Web. 24 Apr. 2012. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED082889.pdf>.

Adams, Nicole, Tashina Etter, and Sarah Hernandez. "Relationships, Respect and Revitalization: Grantmaking Strategies: A Guide for Native American Education and Philanthropy." (2006). *Education Resources Information Clearinghouse*. Web. 29 Apr. 2012. <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED527094.pdf>.

Cook-Lynn, Elizabeth. "Who Stole Native American Studies?" *Wicazo Sa Review* 12.1 (1997): 9-28. Print.

Quinones Akee, Randall, and Tarajean Yazzie-Mintz. ""Counting Experience" among the Least Counted: The Role of Cultural and Community Engagement on Educational Outcomes for American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Students." *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 35.3 (2011): 119-50. *Education Resources Information Clearinghouse*. Web. 28 Apr. 2012.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2010. Washington D.C.