

American Indian Studies (AIS) Certificate

General Studies

Washington State University (WSU)

Program status and Rationale:

The intent is to offer the AIS program as a new certificate available in the WSU Global Campus. Per this request, the AIS program proposes no new changes to the certificate. This request is to solely expand the AIS certificate program to all Global Campus students.

As a land grant institution WSU upholds its democratic mission to extend access, openness, accessibility, and service to a diversity of people. This is reflected in the University's commitment to its 1994 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with twelve tribes throughout the State of Washington and their desire to support a regionally focused academic and cultural center at WSU for American Indian studies (AIS). Our current certificate in AIS "Promotes Native American studies and educational programs throughout the University, while serving the needs of Native American students, other students, and the Signatory Tribes."

In 2008 WSU entered into an Inter-institutional MOU with the University of Idaho, Lewis and Clark State College, North Idaho College and the Northwest Indian College in Lapwai, Idaho. This collaborative partnership was developed to utilize the cooperative development and delivery of educational services and scholarly endeavors as related to the academic discipline of Native American Studies. A fundamental component of this collaboration is the sharing of the respective institution's relative AIS coursework. The proposed partnership with the Global Campus will significantly advance our commitment and involvement in this regional program by allowing more access through online AIS courses taught here at WSU. Recently the University of Idaho has employed our AIS online courses, as an option for their students to acquire needed electives to fulfill the requirements for their AIS degree program. The expansion of our AIS certificate program through the Global Campus will provide undergraduate students and non-degree-seeking professionals a more robust program that will expand one's knowledge, abilities and interests in Native American studies; including history, culture, politics and contemporary issues. A recent Native American Studies market analysis revealed that an affiliation with the Global Campus can better offer interested students an important asset as they enter a professional world that involves interaction directly or indirectly with tribal communities, enterprises and business partners.

The certificate in American Indian Studies requires 18 semester hours which shall include a required core (9 hours) and 9 hours of electives. 15 of the credits must be taken at WSU, and 9 hours must be at the 300-400-level. A minimum of 12 credits must be taken for a letter grade and a grade of C or better must be earned in each of the required and recommended courses in order to qualify for the certificate. Any currently enrolled degree-seeking student is eligible to enroll in the certificate program. Other students must meet the existing admissions standards for non-degree seeking students. The university undergraduate certificate fee will apply.