

# M.A. in Native American Studies

Native American Studies offers a Master of Arts (MA) degree in Native American Studies with an inter-disciplinary approach which makes the best possible use of university resources. The program allows each graduate student the opportunity to select a course of study that combines Native American Studies and a student's particular area of interest (e.g., history, business, literature, political science). The 30/31-credit program is designed so that each graduate student could complete the program within three to four semesters of concentrated work. Students will be expected to attend at least two full semesters on campus. Students who have completed the graduate certificate in Native American Studies may transfer 9 credits of classwork to the Master's degree. The program's mission, purpose, and objective emphasis is to graduate, in a timely manner, knowledgeable professionals and academicians well grounded in Native American issues and scholarship.

The Master's program offers two plans: **Plan A – Thesis Option** or **Plan B – Professional Paper/Project Option**.

**Plan A** requires course work, oral defense of a research prospectus, a written thesis, and an oral defense of the thesis. This option is preparation for doctoral work in Native American Studies or a related field of study.

**Plan B** requires course work, oral defense of a research prospectus, and completion of a professional paper or project. The non-thesis option is preparation for employment in tribal, state, or federal government, a small or large business, and/or a tribal college.

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## Admission

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is May 15 for Summer, August 15 for Fall, and December 15 for Spring. For detailed Graduate School requirements, please see the Policies and Procedures (<http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/policy/dates-deadlines.html>) online. Successful applicants must have their applications accepted by The Graduate School (with departmental endorsement) before an individual is considered a graduate student at MSU.

A bachelor's degree or equivalent from an accredited institution is required for admission to the Master's program in Native American Studies. The Graduate School recommends that prospective applicants reach out to the Native American Studies Department by email or phone call in order to ascertain the suitability of the program for the applicant.

Each applicant must submit the following during the online application process (<http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/admissions/apply.html>) through The Graduate School (which includes a non-refundable \$70 application fee) :

1. Official transcripts of all university/college degree(s) conferred (students must have a minimum GPA of 3.00 for the last two years of undergraduate study). The applicant does not need to submit transcripts from a degree awarded from MSU.
2. Two academic writing samples, demonstrating the applicant's graduate-level research and writing capabilities.
3. A 2-5 page statement of purpose and goals which includes applicant's experience and knowledge of historical and contemporary American Indian issues, work background, and how the M.A. in NAS will help the applicant reach long range goals, and benefit American Indian peoples/communities.

4. Three letters of recommendation addressing the applicant's potential as a graduate student, preferably by academic sources. The applicant will be prompted to submit contact information of their recommenders directly in the online application.
5. A current curriculum vita or resumé.
6. International Applicants ONLY: Mandatory English proficiency test score are required for all applicants who are not U.S. Citizens are are not from countries where English is the "official" language. Minimum scores required are as follows: TOEFL [80], IELTS [level 6.5] or PTE [54].

**Limited slots are available, and admissions are competitive.**

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## Deadlines & Assistantships

For students applying for graduate teaching assistantships, the application deadline is April 15 for the following academic year.

For all other applicants, the deadline is August 15 for fall semester, December 15 for spring semester and May 15 for summer semester. Applicants must be formally accepted by The Graduate School with departmental endorsement from Native American Studies.

## Financial Assistance

Graduate Teaching Assistantships, awarded on a competitive basis, are available in NAS to formally admitted graduate students. The GTA includes a 6 credit tuition waiver and stipend. Selected graduate students will teach a section of Introduction to Native American Studies and/or other NAS courses. See the Graduate Assistantships sections on the Graduate School website for detailed information on appointment criteria.

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## Further Information

For further information regarding the program, contact Native American Studies at (406) 994-3881 or e-mail [nas@montana.edu](mailto:nas@montana.edu). In addition, you may refer questions to The Graduate School (<http://www.montana.edu/gradschool/>). Students are expected to be familiar with the degree requirements of both the department and The Graduate School.

## Master's Degree Requirements

### Plan A – Thesis Option, 31 credits required:

- 10 credits minimum Thesis (590) credits
- ½ of total credits must be at 500 level
- Maximum of four (4) Independent Study (592) credits

### Plan B – Non-thesis - Professional Paper or Project, 30 credits required:

- Maximum of 6 Professional Paper/Project (575) credits
- 15 credits minimum at 500 level
- Maximum of six (6) 570 credits
- Maximum of six (6) Independent Study (592) credits
- Pass/Fail – Maximum of 3 credits allowed (excluding thesis)

### Requirements for both Plan A and Plan B:

- 490, 492/470, 494/400, 498/476, 588, 589 credits – Not allowed on the program of study
- 594/500, 598/576, 592/570 credits – May not exceed 1/3 of total credits required for degree (10 credits)

- Non-Degree/Reserved credits – Maximum of six (6) to nine (9) credits allowed depending upon admissibility at the time the course(s) were taken. (See **graduate catalog**)
- All Course work credits may not be more than six (6) years old at time of graduation.
- Transfer credits – May not exceed 9 total credits on program.
- Grade performance for courses on Program of Study – Grades below “C-“ must be repeated. “I” grades must be resolved before graduation.
- 3 credits (minimum) Registrar Registration required during term of comprehensive exams, defense of thesis, and graduation.
- 3 credits (minimum) Registrar Registration required for continuous enrollment. Continuous enrollment applies to all master’s students who have passed a comprehensive examination or students who have completed program content coursework (excludes thesis credits).

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### Required Content Courses

NASX 505	Proseminar Native Amer Studies	3
NASX 530	Federal Law and Indian Policy	3
NASX 542	Research Praxis in Native American Studies	6
	(OR)	
	or NASX 540 AND NASX 541	
NASX 540	Theoretical Positions in NAS	3
NASX 541	Critical Approach to NAS Methods	3

### Graduate classes in Native American Studies

The Following upper division and graduate level courses are offered in Native American Studies:

NASX 405	Gender Issues in Native American Studies	3
NASX 415	Native Food Systems	3
NASX 430	American Indian Education	3
NASX 440	Montana Indian Literature	3
NASX 450	History of American Indians	3
NASX 470	Indigenous Planning: Strategic Economic and Human Development Approaches	3

NASX 476	American Indian Policy and Law	3
NASX 490R	Undergraduate Research	1-6
NASX 490Z	Undergraduate Research	1-6
NASX 491	Special Topics	1-4
NASX 492	Independent Study	1-3
NASX 494	Seminar	1
NASX 498	Internship/Cooperative Educ	2-12
NASX 505	Proseminar Native Amer Studies	3
NASX 515	Native Food Systems	3
NASX 520	Fem/Gender Theories IN NAS	3
NASX 521	Tribal Government: Yesterday & Today	3
NASX 523	Am Indians/Minority in High Ed	3
NASX 524	Contemporary Issues in American Indian Studies	3
NASX 525	Indigenous Philosophies/Sacred Ecologies	3
NASX 530	Federal Law and Indian Policy	3
NASX 542	Research Praxis in Native American Studies	6
NASX 550	Native Americans: Dispelling the Myths	3
NASX 551	Native North America: Art, Agency, Activism	3
NASX 552	Indigenous Nations of Montana	3
NASX 553	Indigenous Literature and the West	3
NASX 560	Native American Lit Tradition	3
NASX 570	Indigenous Planning: Strategic Economic and Human Development Approaches	3
NASX 571	Native Grantsmanship	3
NASX 575	Professional Paper	1-6
NASX 589	Graduate Consultation	1-3
NASX 590	Master’s Thesis	1-10
NASX 591	Special Topics	1-4
NASX 592	Independent Study	1-3
NASX 594	Seminar	1-4
NASX 598	Internship	1-6

### Faculty

#### Chair

Walter Fleming  
PhD

#### Professor

Matthew Herman  
PhD

#### Associate Professor

Kristin Ruppel  
PhD

#### Assistant Professor

Anita Moore-Nall  
PhD

#### Professor Emeritus

Wayne Stein  
EdD