Indigenous Food Systems Graduate Certificate

The goal of this 12-credit graduate certificate program is to prepare professionals in a variety of disciplines for Indigenous food systems work using Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy. Coursework themes include the buffalo culture lifeway food system, ancestral health and nutrition, food sovereignty: policy and infrastructure, and traditional food system knowledge of plants and animals: plant, processing/preparation, tending the land, buffalo caretaking, and animal knowledge. Potential research areas include: cultural knowledge recovery, 21st century policies and infrastructure, wholistic foods systems research.

Students will enter and exit the program as a cohort. Based on an Indigenous appreciation of the cyclical nature of life and learning (sometimes referred to as a “Seasonal Round”) student cohorts will enter the program during the spring semester, completing a 6-credit course covering Indigenous practices associated with Spring and Summer. In the fall, they will enroll, again as a cohort, in a 6-credit course covering Indigenous practices associated with Fall and Winter. Successful graduates of each year’s cohort will have the opportunity to mentor cohorts in the following year. Students are expected to finish the Certificate in one year.

Because of the place-based nature of Indigenous food systems, IFS students will be asked to work with community knowledge holders and mentors if possible, and therefore should identify the community they will be working within. First cohorts will apply through Buffalo Nations Food Systems Initiative, and if accepted, will receive scholarships to cover tuition and fees. Priority admission for the first 3 years of the program will be given to tribal college instructors/staff and others engaged directly in the Indigenous food sovereignty work of their communities. Cohorts will be limited to 8-12 students each year, depending on availability of funding.

Prerequisites: Bachelor’s degree.