BA in American Indian Studies

The American Indian Studies Department advances and promotes knowledge integral to Native peoples through research, teaching, and community service. It is the largest and most comprehensive program of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. American Indian Studies approaches its teaching and research from a decolonized, community based, and global perspective. The AIS major is an open major: students with a cumulative UW GPA of at least 2.0 can declare the major at any time.

The American Indian Studies degree prepares students for a variety of careers, including community-based and university-based research; cultural resource management; education; writing; fundraising; tribal administration; academic advising and administration; museum curation; resource management; and many other careers. The degree also provides a foundation for graduate study in indigenous studies, law, museology, tribal administration, documentary filmmaking, education, history, and other areas of study.

Declaring a Major

See Declaring a Major. Students may declare the American Indian Studies major at any time, as long as they are in good academic standing (minimum 2.0 cumulative UW GPA). In order to declare the major, please email Kai Wise, adviser, at kaiwise@uw.edu to schedule an appointment.

Bachelor of Arts Major in American Indian Studies

Where to start in American Indian Studies:

Considering American Indian Studies, but aren't sure? Start with some of these courses.

- AIS 102 - Introduction to American Indian Studies
AIS 103 - The Indigenous Pacific Northwest
AIS 170 - American Indian Art and Aesthetics
AIS 202 - Introduction to American Indian Contemporary and Social Issues
AIS 203 - Introduction to Indigenous Knowledges
AIS 209 - The Unsettling of the Red Continent: American Indian History to 1815
AIS 210 - Inconvenient Indians and the "American Problem": American Indian History since 1815

Departmental Admission Requirements

Students in good academic standing may declare this major at any time. Students may declare the major at any time in the quarter. Transfer students must be enrolled at the UW before applying.

Major Requirements:

In order to graduate with the Bachelor of Arts in American Indian Studies, students must complete 55 credits as follows (in addition to the general education requirements of the university and college):

1. **Introductory courses** (10 credits):
   - AIS 102 Introduction to American Indian Studies (taught every Autumn quarter)
   - AIS 103 The Indigenous Pacific Northwest (taught every Winter quarter)

2. **Content courses** (10 credits): Two courses selected from:
   - AIS 170 American Indian Art and Aesthetics
   - AIS 202 Introduction to American Indian Contemporary and Social Issues
   - AIS 203 Introduction to Indigenous Knowledges
   - AIS 209 Unsettling of the Red Continent: History to 1815
   - AIS 210 Inconvenient Indians and the “American Problem”: History since 1815

3. **Concentrations** (25 credits total, 5 credits minimum chosen from each concentration, additional courses available as listed in time schedule and with special approval by academic advisor):
   1. Governance Concentration Courses:
      - AIS 212 Indigenous Leaders and Activists
      - AIS 230 Contemporary Indian Gaming and Casinos
      - AIS 270 Native Peoples of the Pacific Northwest
      - AIS 335 American Indians and the Law
      - AIS 444 Criminality and "Deviance" in Native Communities
      - AIS 446 American Indian Economic History
      - AIS 461 First Nations Government and Politics in Canada
      - AIS 480 Indigenous Resistance and Resurgence Movements in the US, Canada, and Mexico
   2. Environment and Health Concentration Courses:
      - AIS 308 American Indians and the Environment
      - AIS 311 The Indigenous History and Environment of the Salish Sea
      - AIS 340 Indian Children and Families
      - AIS 451 Critical Conversations in AIS
   3. Culture and History Concentration Courses:
      - AIS 215 Puget Sound Indian Literature in English
      - AIS 313/314/315 American Indian Language - Salish (Southern Lushootseed)
      - AIS 360 American Indians in Cinema
- AIS 376 First Nations Literature
- AIS 377 Contemporary American Indian Literature
- AIS 378 Contemporary American Indian Literature: A Northwest Focus
- AIS 379 Powwow: Tradition and Innovation
- AIS 425 Indians in Western Washington history
- AIS 431 History of American Indian Education
- AIS 443 Indigenous Films, Sovereign Visions
- AIS 465 First Nations Filmmaking in Canada
- AIS 466 Producing the Documentary Short

4. **Electives** (10 credits): two courses in AIS or approved courses taught by AIS Adjunct Faculty

5. A minimum of 30 credits must be completed at the 300 level or above

For additional help in planning the major, students can refer to our [Planning Worksheet](https://ais.washington.edu/ba-american-indian-studies) or schedule an appointment with Kai Wise, academic advisor ([kaiwise@uw.edu](mailto:kaiwise@uw.edu)).

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