

LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE
AUSTRALIAN STUDIES PROGRAM 2017
Indigenous Australian Studies

Summary

The *Indigenous Australian Studies* course introduces students to the world's oldest living culture, emphasising the diversity and dynamic nature of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultures. With a high proportion of the teaching provided by Aboriginal Australians, this course focuses on indigenous perspectives of traditional life and life since European settlement. This approach also highlights the continuity that exists between millennia-old traditions and 'modern' lifestyles, while not ignoring the serious challenges faced by many Aboriginal people. A vital component of *Indigenous Australia* is the five-day camp, where students will have the unique opportunity to learn directly from Aboriginal elders and other community members as well as participate in elements of everyday life for male and female members of traditionally oriented Aboriginal communities.

Objectives

By the end of this course students should be able to:

- describe Australia's place in the evolution of humanity and the cultural diversity of indigenous Australians using archaeological evidence;
- explain aspects of the culture of Australia's Aboriginal people including spirituality, relationships to land and the physical environment, social and kinship structures, material culture, language, music, dance, and art;
- understand and explain the historical factors that have transformed Aboriginal lives and that continue to have an impact on contemporary lifestyles;
- outline key contemporary social, economic and political issues affecting Aboriginal Australians;
- discuss issues related to Aboriginal cultural heritage and its place within contemporary Australian society;
- demonstrate knowledge and practice of Aboriginal storytelling, dance, music and craft and discuss their meanings and purposes; and
- evaluate the lessons learnt through Aboriginal dance, music, art and teaching and consider how these might be applied in non-indigenous social contexts.

List of activities

Sydney

- IA-L1** Australia's place in the evolution of humanity
(*archaeological evidence: Lake Mungo, Kow Swamp, etc.*)
- IA-L2** Cultural diversity amongst indigenous Australians
(*geographic and temporal isolation, environmental variation, linguistic diversity*)
- IA-D1** Introduction to linguistic competence in Australia
(*history, vocabulary, guidelines for non-discriminatory language use*)
- IA-L3** Introduction to traditional Aboriginal perspectives I
(*Aboriginal spirituality: the Dreaming, the land, totems, ceremonies*)
- IA-L4** Impact of European occupation of Australia on Aboriginal Australians
(*displacement from country, cultural destruction, health, enforced resettlement, enforced family separation*)
- IA-Ex1** Aboriginal history and culture – the Dreaming and Sydney Harbour
(*walking tour of Sydney Harbour starting at The Rocks*)
- IA-V1** View film *Babakiueria*
- IA-V2** View the film *The First Australians*
- IA-V3** View film *Our Generation*
- IA-V4** View Video *Blood Brothers; Freedom Rides*
- IA-Ex2** From the Dreaming to self-determination and land rights
(*visit Australian Museum – "Indigenous Australia" exhibition*)
- IA-Ex3 & IA-L6** Traditional and contemporary Aboriginal art
(*visit the Yiribana Gallery in the Art Gallery of New South Wales – lecture: forms, functions and geographical diversity of Indigenous art*)
- IA-V5** View video *Dhuway*

Brisbane

- IA-L7** Cultural and ethical issues in archaeology and anthropology
(removal of human remains, cultural sensitivities, conflicts of interest, stewardship)
- IA-Ex4** Contemporary approaches to protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage
(visit the Queensland Museum – public exhibitions, working with communities, repatriation programs)
- IA-L5** Introduction to traditional Aboriginal perspectives II
(Brisbane songlines: families, kinship, social responsibilities)
- IA-Wsp1** Aboriginal storytelling II
(Indigenous literature: history of Aboriginal writing, major writers, common themes, examples)

Aboriginal Camp

- IA-Ex5** Aboriginal culture
(four day field camp with Aboriginal Elders and other community members)

Carnarvon Gorge

- IA-Ex6** Aboriginal culture, art and use of natural resources
(bushwalk at Carnarvon Gorge)