American Indian Studies (Tribal Leadership and Governance), MS

Your focus within this program on the preeminent issues facing Indigenous populations will lead you to new perspectives on a variety of issues pertaining to American Indian life.

Program Description

Degree Awarded: MS American Indian Studies (Tribal Leadership and Governance)
The MS in American Indian studies is a transdisciplinary program that provides students with an intellectual and practical understanding of the issues facing American Indian populations and helps students strengthen their ability to apply that knowledge. Students acquire problem-solving skills useful in a range of professional arenas, including governmental, private and nonprofit agencies.

The program focuses on languages, cultures, arts, activism, histories, legal policy and education from an American Indian studies paradigm and perspective. Delivery is through in-person courses.

The tribal leadership and governance concentration explores traditional and modern concepts of Indian education leadership, tribal government leadership, tribal governments, decision-making and legislation, constitutional reform, planning, economic development, community development, nation rebuilding, tribal courts, administration and planning.

At a Glance

• College/School: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
• Location: Tempe
Concurrent Program Options

Students can choose to create their own concurrent degree combination to match their interests by working with their academic advisor during or after their first semester of study. Some concurrent combinations are not possible due to high levels of overlap in curriculum; students should speak with their academic advisor for more details.

This degree is also offered as a concurrent program with the following:

Public Administration, MPA

Compare Programs

Accelerated Program Options

This program allows students to obtain both a bachelor's and master's degree in as little as five years. It is offered as an accelerated bachelor's and master's degree with:

American Indian Studies, BS

Acceptance to the graduate program requires a separate application. During their junior year, eligible students are advised by their academic departments to apply.

Degree Requirements

30 credit hours and a thesis, or
30 credit hours including the required applied project course (AIS 580)

Required Core (9 credit hours)
AIS 501 American Indian Studies Paradigms (3)
AIS 502 American Indian Studies Research Methods (3)
AIS 503 Contemporary Issues of American Indian Nations (3)

Concentration (9 credit hours)

Electives (6 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (6 credit hours)
AIS 580 Practicum (6) or
AIS 599 Thesis (6)

Additional Curriculum Information
Students may select a thesis or nonthesis option. Thesis students are involved in a major research project under the direction of their faculty advisors, culminating in a thesis. This is the option students should select if they have an interest in a research-oriented position within an organization or agency or wish to pursue a doctoral degree. Nonthesis students complete an applied project that identifies and addresses an applied problem or issue relevant to a partner agency or organization under the direction of their faculty
advisors. This is the option students should select if they are interested in a leadership or managerial level position within an organization or agency.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university of recognized standing in a related field such as history, justice studies, sociology, ethnic studies, anthropology, political science or education.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information
An applicant whose native language is not English must provide proof of English proficiency regardless of current residency. Students should visit https://admission.asu.edu/international/graduate/english-proficiency for more information.

Career Opportunities

After leaving ASU, many graduates:

- conduct academic research
- participate in tribal leadership and government
- direct or manage performing Indigenous companies or Native-related organizations
- facilitate Indigenous community partnerships and projects

Contact Information

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