

DISSERTATION

UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENT'S ATTITUDES TOWARD NATIVE
AMERICANS AND THEIR NATIVE STUDIES COURSE EXPERIENCES: A CRITICAL
MIXED METHODS STUDY

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

UNDERGRADUATE COLLEGE STUDENT'S ATTITUDES TOWARD NATIVE AMERICANS AND THEIR NATIVE STUDIES COURSE EXPERIENCES: A CRITICAL MIXED METHODS STUDY

This mixed method study seeks to understand the attitudes of predominately White or Euro-American students enrolled in a Native studies course as measured by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale and the Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS). Quantitatively, the study seeks to understand attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by a newly adapted attitudinal scale and qualitatively the study seeks to understand student's experiences of taking a Native studies course and what they learn or unlearn through the process. The use of mixed research methods provides a more complex and nuanced understanding of student's attitudes and experiences in the course. Epistemologically, the study is grounded in a complementary fusion of critical/transformational/Indigenous paradigms which seeks to "express and illuminate some of the vexing issues" of our times, "transform systems of oppression" and serve the needs of Indigenous communities (Merriam, 1991; Mertens, 2010; Hart 2010). The study is also informed by Tribal Critical Race Theory (an offshoot of Critical Race Theory) and provides a valuable framework for understanding the role Native studies courses play in deconstructing dominant narratives regarding the lives, histories, and experiences of Native people. Currently, there is not an available measure that accounts for Native American's liminal status as both political and racial beings. Additionally, there are few studies that research predominately White student's attitudes toward Native Americans and their perceptions from an Indigenous perspective based on a review of the literature. The findings from the mixed method study suggest that quantitatively, there were statistically significant

differences between undergraduate college student's pre and post-PRATNA scores ($p=.001$), between students who have take Native studies courses in the past and those who have not ($p=.028$), and between students who have taken past cultural diversity courses and those who have not ($p=0.47$). The qualitative findings suggest that three overarching themes can be constructed around the experience and process of taking Native American studies courses: 1) Learning and Unlearning: Past, Present, and Future; 2) Awareness, Emotion, and Moving Toward Action; and 3) Locus of Change. Students seem to move through the themes as a continuum, or do not, based on personal and educational factors. The appropriateness of mixed methods was discussed to explicate the ways both quantitative and qualitative data strengthened this study, and allowed for nuances to be seen that would be neglected by the use of one method alone. Lastly, the emergent finding of students' experiences participating in distance focus groups was explored to understand the benefits and drawbacks of the method.

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DEDICATION

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I love you all,

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

During the spring semester of 2010 on a large land grant University campus in a Western state, undergraduate college students created a Facebook page for purposes of galvanizing the school spirit of their fellow students. A sophomore male encouraged his fellow students to dress up as “Indians” to attend a basketball game with school rivals as a demonstration of school pride. This event sparked campus racial tensions and heated debate as Native students, Native faculty, a multitude of ALANA (African, Latino, Asian and Native American) faculty, student organizations, and White allies called out the use of stereotypical, racist Native representations. Through the social networking site Facebook, and editorials in the campus and local newspapers, both students and community members expressed confusion, ignorance, anger, and resistance in trying to understand why this event could be viewed as offensive. Reactions to editorial commentary ranged from expressing ignorance of Native concerns and issues and backlash against supposed political correctness, to overtly racist comments such as this one posted to Facebook:

To all "offended" morons, go cry to the American sports teams still named after Native Americans like the Redskins, Reds, Indians, etc. As for the Native Americans vs. Cowboys theme and considering this race to have been hurt, was the expanding and far more advanced European people supposed to leave the entire continent alone because some primitive race wanted to worship the hallucinations they had while smoking peyote? Of course not. Only the hippies today would sacrifice the well being of the rest of their countrymen for the sake of a culture who prided itself in their

ability to conquer each other just like we did to them yet still respect nature so much that they were unable to become socially, economically and technologically advanced like our peoples. So don't even try to draw sympathy from such pathetic events in history back when hippies like you were put in their place. If it weren't for our annihilation of that piss poor culture you wouldn't even have this basketball game. (Undergraduate college student comment on Facebook, February 2010)

Comments such as this one point to the fact that racism is not a thing of the past in our society. Despite progress that has been made toward increased racial sensitivity, as a society we still have a long road toward equity, true acceptance, and reconciliation. Though institutions of higher learning are often thought to be centers of acceptance and an equalizer for everyone who enters, this is often not the case. This comment, though not generalizable, is one indicative example that college campuses are not utopias and that racial tensions still run high. Comments such as the one above and the debates that ensued on campus created a feeling of unease for students of color across the campus.

Native students and those students aligned as Native allies engaged in online debates with fellow classmates and began organizing on-campus speak outs, open forums to discuss issues of Native representation and stereotypes, and movie viewings to include, “In Whose Honor” and the “Canary Effect” to help educate the campus. Though many Native students framed the incident as a teaching moment for their fellow undergraduate students, during the two weeks that this incident was at the center of campus and community discussion, Native students suffered the backlash. Some Native students reported feeling unsafe on campus and being engaged in hostile

conversations with fellow students. Engberg (2004) states, “a central problem facing higher education today is how to move from a status of desegregation, in which psychological effects threaten the success of underrepresented students, to a more integrated community, characterized by positive intergroup relations” (p. 474). Creating positive, accepting campus climates are integral to social justice goals and creating conditions that support diverse students.

Overview: Situating the Need for Native Studies and its Relationship to Student

Attitudes and Perceptions

At the time of the Cowboys and Indians incident, I was an instructor in the Ethnic Studies Department teaching a course entitled *Native American Cultural Expressions*. In this interdisciplinary undergraduate class, my teaching task was to introduce approximately 90 undergraduate, predominately White college students to Native American history and contemporary lives through cultural expressions. I take a critical approach to teaching Native topics and reject a ‘stones and bones’ approach. We explored themes of resistance, accommodation, acculturation, self-definition, and empowerment through Native cultural expressions in addition to examining tribal community’s strengths, challenges, and their continuing struggle to assert sovereignty in the 21st century. My class of 86 undergraduate college students became the staging ground for another round of intense debates that challenged me both as an instructor and as an Indigenous woman. The “Cowboys and Indians” campus incident (as it came to be known) and undergraduate college student’s reactions to it within the context of Native American course led to this dissertation study.

This study seeks to explore predominately White undergraduate college student’s attitudes toward Native people and their experience of taking Native studies courses. In this chapter, I explore the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, define

the terms I use throughout the study, the study's delimitations and limitations, significance, and researcher's perspective.

Statement of the Problem

Native American studies courses are often taken as required diversity courses by undergraduate college students, however we have little information about the attitudinal changes and experiences that occur there. To fully understand the influences of Native studies courses, a baseline understanding of attitudes toward Native Americans is needed and an understanding of students' experiences taking Native studies courses is required to strengthen the learning and teaching experience for all. To date, this study is one of the first of its kind and helps provide a baseline for future research on the teaching and learning of Native studies courses. This study also adds to the literature that examines student attitudes toward Native Americans to improve the campus-learning environment for all students.

Benefits of Cultural Diversity on Campus

The benefits of cultural diversity on college campuses are multifold. Diversity and multicultural research has sought to understand the benefits of cultural diversity in terms of contact with individuals from diverse cultures for predominately White students. Chang (1996) found that for White students "socializing with someone of a different racial group or discussing racial issues contributes to the student's academic development, satisfaction with college, level of cultural awareness, and commitment to promoting racial understanding" (para.6). This statement points to the benefits of contact with students from diverse groups for White students, but does not address the benefits for ALANA students or address the efficacy of diversity requirements.

For many undergraduate college students, the first opportunity to openly explore racial and ethnic attitudes, perceptions, misconceptions and stereotypes often occurs in college courses,

often taken as required “diversity” classes (Chang, 2002). As our society becomes increasingly segregated and our wealth divide grows, undergraduate college students often enter relatively diverse college environments from homogenous, segregated high schools and neighborhoods (Laird, Engberg and Hurtado, 2005, p. 449). Racial incidents are still prevalent in our country and across college campuses. These incidents range from bias-related incidents, to insensitive stereotyping, to physical assaults.

Role of Native Studies

As mentioned above, Native studies departments and courses grew out of the resistance of Native students. Native students wanted Native American studies courses that were designed for them and were more responsive to the needs of tribal communities. The context of this current study does not fit the initial conceptualization of a Native studies department. In the present study context, Native studies courses are taught under the umbrella of an Ethnic Studies department. At the present land grant institution where this study is being conducted, Ethnic Studies is a strong fit for Native studies courses because of its departmental focus on the intersections of socially constructed identities, historical legacies of dominant and marginalized groups, and its strong commitment to community outreach, service and engagement (Ethnic Studies Department, Colorado State University 2012).

In many universities the majority of students enrolled in Native American courses and Ethnic Studies courses are not Native American, with the majority of those students being White. Native studies course makeup reflects the demographics of the university overall. This racial makeup provides many opportunities to move students toward higher levels of critical thinking and toward an orientation to social justice, but it also creates challenges for instructors to deliver the content in meaningful ways for all students.

Many students who take Native studies courses have had little contact with Native people and the All University Core Curriculum (AUCC) diversity course requirement may be their first experience with Native American studies content and, in some cases, an instructor of color. Native Americans make up fewer than 2% of the United States population (American Community Survey, 2009) so many non-Native people have few direct interactions with Native people, though according to Ducote-Sabey (1999), everyone has attitudes about them. A great deal of the information White students learn about this country's original inhabitants "is through historical writings, the media or hearsay" which excludes the Native voice and much of which is a holdover from contentious early White-Indian relationships (p. 3). As a Native studies instructor, I would anecdotally add that in my experience, many students who enroll in Native studies courses often have a surface interest in Native Americans and want to learn about stereotypically Native contributions such as jewelry, art and dance, but are hesitant to engage in deeper critical thinking regarding historical and contemporary policies that have severely damaged Native communities. Students' lack of critical engagement with the content is supported by Johansen (2003), who states that many of his *Introduction to Native Studies* students "arrived expecting lightweight fare about arrowheads and rain dances" or "hoped to reinforce their New Age stereotypes" (p. 265-266). The appropriation of the Native image and the normativity of racist, stereotypical images in our society create additional challenges when teaching Native content. There are additional issues when specifically looking at the dearth of literature in the area focused on attitudes toward Native Americans.

An analysis of literature regarding attitudes toward Native Americans and the impact of course based interventions revealed that much of the literature focuses on Native people as the center of inquiry. There is literature regarding best practices for teaching Native students; a

plethora of literature on the problems of Native communities, and a plethora of research on the health-related issues Native communities face (examples: domestic violence, mental health, child sexual abuse, PTSD, diabetes). However, there is very little research that puts White students at the center of inquiry and discusses the most promising practices for teaching dominant identity students Native studies topics. Though there is some research in the area of multicultural education, pre-service teacher preparation, and the impacts of general diversity requirements, there is no empirical study to date that focuses on White student experiences of learning Native studies topics. Courses fitting the diversity requirement often address issues of power, privilege, racism, oppression, and justice. Much of the literature examining attitudes toward Native Americans focuses on attitudes toward Native mascots in college sports. This literature is helpful to understand the current racial attitudes and racial tensions that still run high on college campuses and informs the current study.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The overarching purpose of this study is to better understand White college student's attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale and better understand their experiences in Native studies courses. This study includes small sample of students of color whose experiences are discussed and contrasted. This study also seeks to gain more nuanced data on students' experiences as learners in a Native studies course. The overarching research questions are as follows: (1) What are college student's attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the newly developed PRATNA? (2) How does taking a Native studies course influence these undergraduate college student's attitudes toward Native Americans, their history, and contemporary experiences? (3) To what extent and in what ways do student's open-ended responses on the PRATNA, focus

group interviews with students, and interviews with Native Studies professors contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of college student's PRATNA scores and course experiences? These questions will be revisited in more detail in chapter 3. In the next section, I discuss some of the important terms used throughout this dissertation project.

Important Definitions

Throughout my dissertation I use the terms *Native*, *Native American*, *American Indian* and *Indigenous* interchangeably. There is a tension around these terms that stems from a historical legacy of colonization. Most Native people prefer to be called and are defined by their tribal citizenship and affiliations and not by pan-Indian terms. At present the term that seems to have the most political recognition and acceptance is Native American, but this term often neglects Native Hawaiians and Alaska Natives. Pan-Indian terms vary from region to region and often have political meaning. 'Native American' is widely used, but there is debate over this term because there is ambiguity over when a person becomes "native". In essence the question is, how many generations do you need to live in a place to be considered "native?" For the purposes of this study given that individual tribal naming is impossible, the term Indigenous is preferred. Indigenous is defined as "people, communities, and nations who claim a historical continuity and cultural affinity with societies endemic to their original territories that developed prior to exposure to the larger connected civilization associated with Western culture"(Babylon Free Doctionary, 2012). The United Nations defines Indigenous people as,

Peoples who are regarded as Indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest or colonization or the establishment of present state boundaries and who,

irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions (United States Development Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples Issues, p.8).

Native and *Native American* are also used because of majority culture's familiarity with the terms. In the survey research and attitudinal scales administered as part of this study, *Native American* was used because best research practices dictate the use of terms research participants are familiar with, despite researcher's preferences. The terms 'Native' (with a capital *N* and inclusive of Native Hawaiians and Alaska Natives) are used along with 'Indigenous'.

The term "Native studies", which is synonymous with the terms American Indian, Indigenous American, Aboriginal, Native American, or First Nations studies, is broadly defined as an "interdisciplinary academic field that examines the history, culture, politics, issues and contemporary experience of Native peoples in North America" (Heitshu and Marshall, 2007, p.10). In some instances I have used the acronym *ALANA* to stand for African American, Latino/a, Asian American and Native American but have also used the term 'person of color'. However, terms such as 'person of color', 'students of color', 'communities of color' to name a few are widely used, these terms can be reminiscent of times when African Americans were specifically referred to as 'colored'. 'People of color' is also a term that lumps all non-White groups together, which seems to point to the pervasiveness and normativity of Whiteness. With this said, there are no easy answers to issues of 'naming' and defining.

Study Limitations and Delimitations

Delimitations

The current study was delimited to Native studies courses at a single land grant University in a western state. This study focused on predominately White students enrolled in

two Native studies courses and this study was delimited to one semester. Some of the courses meet the general diversity requirement. The majority of courses that meet the general diversity requirement are lower division courses (100-200 level).

Limitations

Given the nature of most social science research, the ability to randomly select and assign students to treatment groups was hampered. Therefore, the lack of random assignment and selection makes the research ungeneralizable, though still offers valuable insight into the phenomenon studied. Given that college students choose their own courses this characteristic makes random assignment impossible. This study's design does not allow for causal statements because there is no intervention, as a result there could be threats to internal validity such as maturation, history, selection bias, and attrition (Morgan, et al., 2010). These threats have been mitigated as much as possible, though they should be acknowledged. External validity is "the degree to which the conclusions in your study would hold for other persons in other places and at other times" (Social Research Methods, 2010).

Traditionally-aged college students across settings have some similarities, which may provide a level of transferability. Given that the majority of social science research with college students will have many of the same internally validity threats, it seems safe to say that the replication of this study might have similar threats. Despite efforts to strengthen the construct validity of this measure, as mentioned above, social desirability may be present in this research. The measures used contain social desirability measures, but this is still a threat. A threat to construct validity makes it unclear whether measures actually represent their intended constructs" (Jo, Nelson and Kiecker, 1997, p. 429) and can lead to the reporting of inaccurate results. This sample had relatively low attrition because the target population was enrolled in a

college course for credit, and college students are in many ways accustomed to university research studies.

Significance of the Study

Currently, little empirical research examines college student's attitudes toward Native Americans and even less research seeks to understand their experiences in a Native studies course. Moreover, due to the unique history, political status, Native nationhood, and the sovereignty of the country's original inhabitants, there are unique issues associated with Native studies that differ from other diversity-focused courses. Therefore, a more focused inquiry is required. Understanding attitudes toward Native Americans is necessary to strengthen college student's experience and process of taking Native studies and can help to provide more effective, impactful instruction. General diversity requirements were instituted to prepare students for life and work in an increasingly pluralistic society, to increase understandings of unique ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and reduce discrimination and prejudice (Yamane, 2001). This study is also significant because it offers a unique researcher voice and unique methodological perspective given its use of mixed research methods within the critical/transformational/Indigenous paradigm.

Researcher's Perspective

As an Arapaho/Saponi descendant and Indigenous Puerto Rican woman, I have a unique perspective and lens through which I view the world and thus my research questions. The current research project is uncharted territory in many ways because there is little guidance or vetted methodology to study predominately White students as a non-White 'other'. There is an even deeper dearth of information regarding the study of college students and Whiteness from an Indigenous perspective. Moreton-Robinson (2003) conducted a study on White feminist

academics in Australia from an Indigenous standpoint and she elucidated her perspective as an Indigenous researcher to say,

The personal is political and informs the standpoint from which I research. All Indigenous women share the common experience of being Indigenous women in a society that deprecates them.

Accordingly, there will be common characteristic themes dominant in an Indigenous woman's standpoint. Such themes include sharing the legacy of dispossession, racism and sexism; resisting and replacing disparaging images of ourselves with self-defined images; continuing our activism as mothers, sisters, aunts, daughters, grandmothers and community leaders as well as negotiating sexual politics across and within cultures. (p.74)

This statement resonated with me as I started a journey toward a dissertation with many traditional academic tools, but without a tried and true roadmap. Moreton-Robinson's statement also resonated well with me as I have explored my own reasons for studying White students instead of using my 'cultural insider' perspective to study Indigenous issues. I have the perspective that understanding White student's experience of taking Native studies courses can move them toward being social justice allies and that through learning the counterstory of Native people, dominant, harmful discourse can be disrupted. Johansen (2003) says this well when discussing his experience of teaching Native studies courses to mostly White students, "I told Euro-American students that while they are not personally responsible for past cruelties they should know history as it really happened-- and they should work actively to prevent such

inhumanity in the future. We are each responsible for our own lives and actions in the present and future tenses. The past tense is a rudder by which we steer” (p.265).

This work is a fusion of methods within a transformative/critical/Indigenous paradigm. The study is also influenced by my own intersecting identities. Indigenous people have been researched on and theorized about at length, typically by non-Native researchers. This makes Native people the ‘subject’ of research and Native communities and individuals are often problematized or seen as deficient in comparison to their White counterparts. When we continue this pattern of research without studying the normativity of Whiteness, the status quo is maintained.

Standpoint feminism as posited by Nancy Harstock (1997) makes the case that individuals are both oppressed in some situations and in relation to some people while at the same time are privileged in others. Many of my identities are subjugated, but in relationship to undergraduate college students I recognize my educational privilege. This theory also posits that because women's lives and roles in almost all societies are significantly different from men's, women hold a different type of knowledge. This different type of knowledge is a form of truth that is valued or devalued, legitimated or delegitimized by the dynamics of dominance inherent in wider cultural forms within a given society (Giroux and Shannon, 1997 and Olsen, 2000). This new type of knowledge can also be framed according to Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s (1999) theory of decolonization in regards to research with Indigenous communities. The researcher suggests the concept of including subjugated ways of knowing is about “centering our (referring to Indigenous peoples in her work) meaning and world views and then coming to know and understand research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes” (Smith, 1999, p.39). Though I am not researching Indigenous people or using Indigenous methods, I still feel a sense

of obligation to ‘study up,’ or in essence study power. I seek to understand how members of the dominant group respond to new information from a Native, non-dominant knowledge perspective.

This research study sits firmly within the critical perspective and within a transformative paradigm and is influenced by Indigenous perspectives. Critical scholars conduct research to improve social justice and remove barriers and other negative influences associated with social oppression (Giroux, 1982). Transformative research has similar social justice aims. Though researchers have traditionally used the transformative paradigm to study the experiences of people with subjugated identities some scholars have argued that the transformative paradigm can be a powerful tool to explore the experiences of individuals from dominant groups (Delgado, 1989; Mertens, 2010). By understanding the ways that dominant group members understand power and privilege and, more specifically, the Native counterstory in this case, scholars and activists can work to break down systems of oppression. An Indigenous woman's standpoint also includes challenging existing knowledge and power structures; to do this “we must engage critically with White theory in order to destabilize it” (Moreton-Robinson, 2003, p. 74).

Tribal Critical Race Theory (Tribal Crit) has been a theory that has helped provide theoretical guidance for this study and for me personally as an Indigenous researcher. Brayboy (2005) explicated in Tribal Crit that, “theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars *must* work toward social change” (p.430). Working for social change, social justice, reconciliation, and moving students toward social justice is the foundational purpose of this study.

Summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, defined the terms I used throughout the study, addressed the study's delimitations and limitations, significance, and researcher's perspective. As general diversity requirements become more prevalent across university settings we must understand their efficacy for predominately White undergraduate college student's preparation for life and work in our diverse world. Understanding attitudes toward Native Americans and the process of taking Native Studies is also important to explore for the purpose of creating more equitable campus climates for ALANA students. Though the research regarding the efficacy of general diversity requirements on campuses has become more prevalent, research has not been conducted to understand the influence of a Native studies course to meet the requirement. Given the unique historical, political, and cultural experience of Native people, a more focused inquiry is needed. It also important to recognize that the reduction of prejudice and stereotypes are necessary on college campuses to create positive, inclusive campus climates for all students.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the literature review to follow, I provide context for exploring the attitudes toward Native Americans of predominately White undergraduate college students. I briefly discuss my method of obtaining and analyzing the literature. I provide historical and contemporary context to situate Native American studies courses in relationship to general diversity course requirements. I explore relevant theoretical frameworks that guide this study to include White Racial Identity Development, Modern Racism (Prejudice) and Tribal Critical Race Theory. I give brief historical background on the history of Native American and White relationships in the United States and how this shapes contemporary attitudes. Lastly, I give an overview of diversity related courses and their impact on predominately White undergraduate college student's racial attitudes.

Framework for the Review of Literature

A review of the literature to date, suggest there are few studies that seek to measure undergraduate college students attitudes and their experiences of a Native studies course. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the major elements of the literature and the interactions present. The three primarily variables are: (1) Native studies as general diversity course requirements, (2) Attitudes of White students toward Native Americans, and (3) 'Diversity courses to influence racial attitudinal change. As theory interacts with all of the variables and provides a lens for understanding and exploring these variables, it is the fourth element.

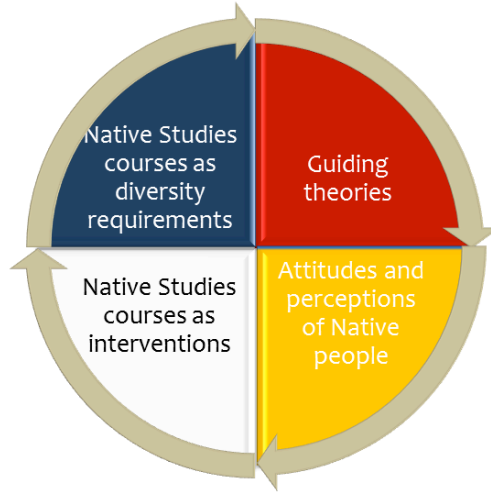


Figure 2.1: Literature Review Visual

Conducting the literature review began with very narrow keyword searches such as ‘Native American course’ AND ‘attitudinal change’. The searches became broader after multiple searches without article hits did not amount to new resources. Broad keyword searches included: Native studies, diversity course interventions, attitudes toward Native Americans, racial attitudes, Whiteness, Indigenous studies, critical race theory, power, Native stereotypes, and mascots. The search engines used were: Web of Science, Google Scholar, Academic Search Premier and a MetaLib search of multiple databases. I did not find all of my resources through traditional search engines. As some of my colleagues in Ethnic Studies came to understand my research questions, they handed me helpful books in the hallway, pointed me to dissertations that are relevant to my topic, and theoretical articles to guide my conceptualization of the issues. All of these resources in combination have helped provide the framework for the review of literature to follow.

Native Studies Courses in Relationship to General Diversity Course Requirements

Universities' awareness of their role to help improve race relations in the U.S. and globally created support for diversity course initiatives (Chang, 2002). Garcia and Smith (2002) posit that Universities are asking, "what type of curriculum will support the goal [of preparing students for life in a diverse, complex world] and are recognizing the campus community itself becomes a micro setting in which issues about democratic pluralism come into play" (p. 502). In response, many Universities require undergraduate college students to enroll in diversity courses as part of their general education or All University Core Curriculum (AUCC) requirements. Oftentimes general diversity requirements are fulfilled by enrolling in an Ethnic Studies Course (to include the study of African American, Latino/a's, Asian Americans and Native Americans historical or contemporary experiences), multicultural studies courses or internationally focused courses. In a national survey conducted of U.S. colleges and universities conducted in 2000, sixty-three percent of colleges and universities reported that they either have in place a diversity requirement or they are in the process of developing one"(Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2000). This number has likely grown over the last decade.

Historical Overview

General Diversity Course Requirements

The move to require diversity curriculum as part of the undergraduate college experience was borne out of student movements in the 1960's and 1970's. The first requirements were institutionalized at Denison University (1979) and at Indiana University-Bloomington (1980) (Yamane, 2001). Indiana University and Denison University were vanguards in their efforts to require a form of diversity education for undergraduate college students, but the height of this movement for curricular change was fairly recent, merely 21 years ago in 1989. College

students from ALANA groups galvanized by the energy of the Civil Rights movement advocated for courses, professors, programs, departments, and centers to meet their needs and the inclusion of diverse voices and perspectives. The University of Wisconsin at Madison is one of the Universities with the most prominent stature (alongside University of California at Berkeley) where student movements for multicultural general education requirements garnered national attention (Yamane, 2001). African American students, with other minority students, in solidarity with White student's allies, took action through strikes, sit-ins, were arrested, organized marches and endured physical assaults by police. They made demands on the university for "the creation of Black Studies department controlled by Black students and faculty leading to a Black studies degree" (Yamane, 2001, p. 15). Movements for Native and Indigenous Studies were occurring simultaneously across the country to challenge the dominant narratives being taught at predominately White institutions.

Native Studies as a Discipline

The term "Native studies" which is synonymous with the terms American Indian, Indigenous American, Aboriginal, Native American, or First Nations studies is broadly defined as an "interdisciplinary academic field that examines the history, culture, politics, issues and contemporary experience of Native peoples in North America" (Heitshu and Marshall, 2007, p. 10). Native studies courses are often housed in Ethnic Studies departments, which as a field has sought to "recover and reconstruct the histories of those Americans whom history has neglected; to identify and credit their contributions in the making of U.S. society and culture; to chronicle protest and resistance; and to establish alternative values and visions, institutions and values" (Hu-DeHart, 1993, p. 53).

Native American studies as a discipline, like departments of Ethnic Studies and multicultural courses grew out of resistance movements during the 1960s. The late 1960s and early 70's brought increased attention to Native issues as groups like the American Indian Movement (AIM) used violent and non-violent resistance to bring attention to Native right issues. There was also a *written* literary explosion by Native writers that came of age during the Civil Rights era to include N. Scott Momaday, Gerald Vizenor, Leslie Marmon Silko, Simon Ortiz, and Paula Gunn Allen. I emphasize *written* literacy because Native people have a strong *oral* tradition that is often invalidated in comparison to the written word valued by Western society. An example of notable texts of the times include, "Pulitzer Prize winner, N. Scott Momaday's, *House Made of Dawn* (1968) and theologian and Indian scholar, Vine Deloria Jr.'s, *Custer Died for Your Sins* (1968). The texts gave mainstream society a glimpse into American Indian perspectives (Harrison, 2006). Their work helped create a new knowledge base for Native studies as a discipline.

At the height of the curricular reform, Native students advocated for courses taught by Native faculty, taught for Native students, and that served the interest and needs of Native communities. Indigenous scholars worldwide have sought to have Indigenous knowledge, viewpoints, and historical and contemporary experiences acknowledged in the curriculum. Addressing questions of "how is knowledge legitimated, who creates this knowledge, and whose realities are accepted as valid?" has worked toward disrupting the master narratives around U.S. history. 'Counterstorying', or telling unheard stories from the viewpoint of those who voices have been subjugated, is "a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counterstories can shatter complacency; challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform" (Solórzano and Yosso, 2002, p.32). Indigenous

scholars have used counterstorying through their scholarship and activism for social justice to speak back against the oppressive forces of colonialism and the master narrative concerning Native experiences.

Standalone Native American studies departments often see themselves as distinguishable from departments in which Native studies courses are taught and housed. Native American studies departments also see themselves as distinguishable from “racial, ethnic, and multicultural studies” due to its unique focus on Indigenous sovereignty, political/treaty rights, land use, and federal-to-state relationships in addition to Native Americans unique historical and political contexts. Native scholar Elizabeth Lynn-Cook (1997) asserts in her conceptualization of Native studies as a discipline:

This discipline (Native American studies) would differentiate itself from other disciplines in two important ways: it would emerge from *within* Native people's enclaves and geographies, languages and experiences, and it would refute the exogenous seeking of truth through isolation (i.e., the "ivory tower") that has been the general principle of the disciplines most recently in charge of Indigenous study, that is, history, anthropology, and related disciplines all captivated by the scientific method of objectivity(p.11).

Native studies as it was conceptualized at its inception was not meant to be an objective study of Native people, but as a means for Native people to “name” themselves, to name the issues that are most important to Native communities and people, and as a mechanism for political activism for Native rights. One of the ways Native scholars have sought to strengthen Native political rights and assert sovereignty is through partnerships. Native studies increasingly

seeks to strengthen itself through international relationships such as those with the global Indigenous movements (Larson, 2009, p.25). Recently, Indigenous scholars have critiqued the exclusion of interrogating Whiteness and colonial structures as part of the role of Native/Indigenous studies departments. Morenton-Robinson and Andersen (2009) advocate for the inclusion of a critique regarding the ways Whiteness frames indigeneity and how Indigenous people know Whiteness as an integral course of study (p. 94). There are programs that align with the original conceptualization of Native studies as a discipline, but there are many that do not.

Contemporary Justification for General Diversity Requirements

Through higher education experiences, undergraduate college students can be provided opportunities for meaningful cross-racial interactions and can learn about the importance of promoting greater social justice and equity in our society in addition to civic responsibility (Barber, 1992; Lawson, Komar, and Rose, 1998; Smith et al., 1997; Chang, 2002). Universities have a larger role to play with their overall greater purpose being, "to participate in the building of a more just society and to make the nation more civil and secure" (Boyer, 1996, p.13). The Association of American Colleges and Universities asserted that today's college students "must learn, in every part of their educational experience, to live creatively with the multiplicity, ambiguity, and irreducible differences that are the defining conditions of the contemporary world (Laird, Engberg and Hurtado, 2005, p. 448).

The benefits of cultural diversity and need for the University requirement are multifold. As our society becomes increasingly segregated and our wealth divide grows, undergraduate college students often enter relatively diverse college environments from homogenous, segregated high schools and neighborhoods (Laird, Engberg and Hurtado, 2005, p. 449). Racial incidents are still prevalent in our country. These incidents range from bias related incidents, to

insensitive stereotyping, to physical assaults (Dalton, 1991). These incidents are exacerbated according to Dalton (1991) by a number of factors have contributed to prevalence of racial incidents: “lack of knowledge, experience, and contact with diverse peers; peer-group influence; increased competition and stress; the influence of off-campus groups and the media; alcohol use; changing values; fear of diversity; and the perception of unfair treatment” (as cited by Engberg, 2008, p.473). Though evidence that suggests that university diversity efforts *can* have positive impacts that work to “minimize the resiliency of the segregation trend” (Laird, Engberg and Hurtado, 2005, p. 449), a review of the literature suggests that there are key problems and gaps when measuring the impacts of diversity courses on college students to include socially desirable responding and the difficulties of measuring racial attitudes.

Guiding Theoretical Frameworks

To help explicate the complexities of understanding Native studies courses as possible sites to positively shift the attitudes of predominately White undergraduate college students, I draw on three theories. Two branches of Critical Race Theory—Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) and Whiteness Theory help me to understand White students’ understandings of Native issues and attitudes toward Native people in relationship to their cultural and racial backgrounds. The theory of Modern Prejudice helps me understand and explore new forms of prejudice that are less overt and more subtle and helps situate the experience of White college student’s experiences in higher education and the relationship to Native studies.

Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit)

Brayboy (2005) first articulated TribalCrit in the article *Toward a Critical Race Theory in Education*. Native scholars in the U.S., Indigenous scholars globally, and those who study Indigenous issues have drawn on this theory to help give voice to the Indigenous experience.

TribalCrit has its beginning in Critical Race Theory (CRT), which was inspired by what legal scholar Derrick Bell saw as a lull in the progression to racial justice after the Civil Rights movements of the 1960's. As clarified by foundational CRT scholar Gloria Ladson Billings, CRT's overarching tenants are: "(1) racism appears normal and natural to people in this society, (2) storytelling illustrates the myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that make up the dominant view of race; (3) a critique of liberalism, which focuses on deliberate, incremental change in the legal system and society; and (4) the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation have been White women (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 264); Though CRT provides a valuable framework for analysis, it excludes the unique historical and contemporary experiences of Indigenous people who share the common, unique bond of colonization. Tribal Crit is "rooted in the multiple, nuanced, and historically- and geographically-located epistemologies and ontologies found in Indigenous communities" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427). Native issues need a more nuanced analysis and guiding theoretical framework that takes into account "Indians' liminality as both legal/political and racialized beings" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427). There are nine tenants of TribalCrit, but for the purposes of this study focuses on the following four:

1. Colonization is endemic to society.
2. U.S. policies toward Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and a desire for material gain.
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of our identities.
4. The concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens.

The four outlined tenants provide context for many of the assumptions the current study is based in and provide a background for the factors that may be influencing student's attitudes.

Whiteness Theory

Understanding Whiteness is integral to situating White undergraduate college students in Native studies courses, as are college student development theories. Student development theory conceptualized the change experienced by college students as part of their higher education experience. A subset of this theory explains how they come to understand themselves as beings with intersecting identities (Evans, Forney, Guido, Patton, and Renn, 2010). It's important to understand that students may understand course content differently depending on internal development factors. Student's racial identification may also influence their understandings of Native Studies concepts. The majority of students at the current institution are White (85%+) so it is helpful to have brief background on Whiteness as a construct and studies that explore Whiteness with college students.

Evans, Hole, Berg, Hutchinson and Sookraj (2009) provide a helpful overview of Whiteness as a construct. They state that Whiteness has three interrelated components. (1) Whiteness can be understood as a structural advantage that White people occupy in society. (2) "Whiteness is a standpoint from which White people understand the world and their position in it" (p. 898). Whiteness is a set of cultural practices that are also unmarked and unnamed. Whiteness is normative and taken for granted in a "hidden framework that gives meaning to events, social actions, and phenomena; and, it privileges White people over all others in such spaces" (Evans, Hole, Berg, Hutchinson and Sookraj, 2009, p.898).

The components discussed above are seen in the study with White students by Jackson where students named their Whiteness as normative and felt little need to adapt. Jackson (1999)

facilitated focus group interviews with White college students. He asked college students who participated in the study if they felt compelled to change their communication or behavior while interacting with people racially different from themselves. Students responded vehemently and expressed that they should not have to change anything and moreover, they were "...appalled that that would even be an expectation of them" (p. 47). The idea of Whiteness as normative and the ability to privilege one type of knowledge over others is present in De La Mare's study with White teachers,

De La Mare (2009) discusses White conceptions of time in space in relationship to Indigenous conceptualizations. A difference in understanding time has implications for contextualizing history and the part we all share in it. Whites perceive the past, the present, and the future as distinct parts. As such, "Whites pay little attention to larger temporal relationships, which often translates to an inability to understand how the past informs the present; and the past and present inform the future" (De La Mare, 2009, pp. 60-61). Understanding the ways Whiteness may affect student attitudes and experiences in a Native studies course are important to understand and contextualize PRATNA scores, their perceptions, and course experiences.

Theory of Modern Prejudice and the Modern Racism Scale

The theory of modern racism was conceptualized by McConahay in 1986 to address more subtle forms of racism stemming from ambivalence toward people from a marginalized group. The theory of modern prejudice was conceptualized alongside the development of the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) to measure prejudicial attitudes toward African Americans. The result of ambivalence for modern racist is a tension due to the negative affect toward certain marginalized groups and their belief in equality and meritocracy (McConahay, 1986). Modern racist expresses their prejudicial attitudes by suggesting:

(1) Discrimination is a thing of the past because blacks now have the freedom to compete in the market place and to enjoy those things they can afford. (2) Blacks are pushing too hard, too fast, and into places where they are not wanted. (3) These tactics and demands are unfair. (4) Therefore, recent gains are underserved and the prestige granting institutions of society are giving blacks more attention and the concomitant status than they deserve (McConahay, 1986, p. 92-93).

The theory of modern prejudice has been used to understand prejudice and racism against other marginalized groups. The MRS has been used to measure attitudes of multiple marginalized groups and has been adapted for situated context in South Africa, Brazil, and Australia for example to provide more nuanced measures of racism and prejudice. The PRATNA is an adaptation of the MRS with added components influenced by Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) to account for both Native American's racial status and political statuses.

Attitudes Toward Native Americans: Where Do They Come From?

In order to understand attitudes toward Native Americans and have a better understanding of studies that seek to answer this question, historical context regarding Native American-White relations is helpful. I also provide an overview of contemporary Native issues and the challenges of measuring attitudes toward Native Americans.

Historical Overview of Native American-Euro American Relationships

To understand our present we must understand our past, and in order to understand where attitudes toward Native people stem from, historical background is necessary. In primary school we all sing and learn that *in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue*, and thus many students believe that this was the way America was discovered. It is highly arguable that it is impossible

to discover a place already inhabited by millions of Indigenous people. Pre-colonial population estimates at the time of contact vary from 10-75 million people in North America pre-Western contact. At the point of contact Native worldviews and Western worldviews collided. Those oppositional worldviews were broadly in the areas of “economic, politics and culture” (Beauvais and La Boueff, 1985, as cited by Ducotey-Sabey, 1999), land acquisition and wealth accumulation were large factors. As increased numbers of Western settlers came and land became less plentiful conflict increased: this resulted in the U.S. government using tactic warfare, massacres and forced removal of Native people to solve the “Indian problem.”

Conservative estimates suggest that the population of Indigenous people was reduced by at least two-thirds between 1500 and 1900 (Weaver, 1998). Snipp (1989) estimates that in the first two hundred years of colonization, 90% of the Indigenous population was eliminated (as cited in Ducote-Sabey, 1999). The term Indigenous is defined as “people, communities, and nations who claim a historical continuity and cultural affinity with societies endemic to their original territories that developed prior to exposure to the larger connected civilization associated with Western culture”(Babylon Free Dictionary, 2012).

Exposure to Western society had devastating impacts on this continent’s first inhabitants to include: disease, the policies of forced removal off of traditional homelands, the introduction of alcohol, war, and assimilationist schooling policies have all had devastating effects on Native people (Weaver, 1998). Yellow Bird (2007) states, “that colonization has resulted in the loss of major rights such as land and self-determination but that most of our (Indigenous people) struggles (poverty, family violence, chemical dependency, suicide, and the deterioration of health) are also direct consequences of colonization” (p. 2). Native people have experienced both physical and cultural genocide as a result of the colonization of the Americas. Prior to the Civil

War the U.S. had a policy of physical genocide of Indigenous people. Biological warfare was one strategy of genocide to reduce the numbers of Native people through the introduction of unknown diseases in America. Though the initial discovery on the effect of disease on Native people was most likely accidental, susceptibility of Native people to life threatening disease became a tool colonizers used. 'Gifts' of diseased blankets exposed to small pox/and or malaria were frequently given to Native people as a form of biological warfare (Weaver, 1998).

Forced relocation was another strategy that both eliminated large numbers of Indigenous people and disrupted Native lifeways forever. The *Trail of Tears* of the Cherokee and the *Long Walk* of the Navajo (also known as Dine) are two examples. Using the Trail of Tears as an example, to make room for White settlers Native people (to include women, children, the elderly, and the sick) were marched approximately a thousand miles from their traditional homeland to present day Oklahoma with only their barest possessions in winter (National park Service: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2010). Approximately 50% of Cherokee people died of "disease, exposure, and malnutrition along the way" (Weaver, 1998, p. 205).

Physical acts of genocide to include warfare and massacres of Indigenous people continued well into the middle of the 19th century with an open governmental policy of "complete extermination of any native people who resisted being disposed of their lands, subordination to federal authority, or assimilating into the colonizing culture (Stiffarm and Lane, 1992, p.34).

Physical acts of genocide after the Civil War were out of favor and cultural genocide became the next tactic. Captain Richard Pratt who developed Carlisle Indian Industrial boarding school for Native children based on his past training with the military and prisoners stated, 'Kill the Indian, save the man.' This statement elucidates the policy toward Native people well into

the early 1970s, as the U.S government attempted to assimilate Native people through cultural genocide. Richard Pratt’s boarding school model involved the placing of Native children into boarding schools to learn the benefits of civilization. During the boarding school era, Native children often as young as five were removed from their parents. This practice separated children from their caregivers for roughly five generations and forbade them to speak their Native languages or practice traditional culture or spirituality (Weaver, 1998). Without the care and protection of their families, many Native children were physical, mentally, and emotionally victimized under the boarding school system.

There were additionally two other forms of assimilationist policy for Native people to include termination of tribes and relocation to urban areas. Native history is complex and cannot be fully explicated here, but to help conceptualize the historical progression to the present day the following table has been provided.

Table 2.1

Native American Historical Overview and Key Federal Indian Policies

| TIME PERIODS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEY EVENTS |
|---|--|
| Pre-Colonial (Prior to 1492) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse tribal groups • Over 500 languages • Varied Economies • 10-75 million Indigenous people |
| Colonial Period (1493-1776) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied cultural perspectives from colonialists • Doctrine of Discovery • Formal Treaties • Authorized child kidnapping for the purposes of acculturation • Three distinct forms of exploitation occurred: • Extraction of local products and resources • Forced labor or slavery • European worldview |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Government “friendly” relations policy • First treaty between the U.S. and Delaware people in |

| | |
|--|---|
| Early U.S. Indian Relations (1776-1830) | <p>1778</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1789 Congress established official federal policy by assigning itself authority to involve the federal government in “Indian Affairs” and established legal responsibilities through the treaty process. • Louisiana Purchase led to changes in attitude and policy • Bureau of Indian Affairs established in 1824 under the Department of War |
| Removal Era (1817-1850) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in White settlers led to desire for additional lands • 1830 Indian Removal Act: Thousands of Indian people forced off tribal land • Exchange of Lands Policy • Assimilation Movement • Establishment of Civilization Fund in 1819 (Annual Appropriations from Congress) • Marshall Trilogy |
| Mid-Century Reservations and Wars (1850-1880) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1890 Wounded Knee • Widespread disease • Increase in formal reservations • 1867 report to Congress stated the need to separate Indian children from their families • 1879 Carlisle Indian Training School established • 1880 written policy makes it illegal for Native languages to be used in federal boarding schools • 1884 “placing out” of Indian children to learn “values of work and the benefits of civilization” |
| Assimilation and Allotment (1880-1930) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genocide of whole nations • 1887 General Allotment Act (Dawes Act) “Civilized” Indians given title to land • 1910 Bonuses given to “kid snatchers” • 1924 Indians “granted” citizenship in the U.S. • 1928 Meriam Report was the study of Indian administration |
| Indian Reorganization Act (1930-1945) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift in federal policy acknowledging the rights of “tribes” • 1934 Indian reorganization act ended allotment • Restoration of Indian land • Economic development • Johnson O’Malley Act (Brought state government into providing services to Native people) |
| Termination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1943 study resulted in 1949 Hoover commission “full and complete integration” • Termination of federal protection-shift to state |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| (1945-1965) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1953 Public Law-280 • 1956 Relocation to urban areas • Multiple adoptions of Indian children • Loss of 2.5 million acres • Over 100 tribes lost legal status |
| Self-Determination (1965-1980) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy change under L.B. Johnson • 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act • 1968 American Indian Movement (AIM) formed in Minneapolis • 1970 Nixon supports self-determination • Indian Self Determination and Education Acts (638 contracts) • 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) |
| Self-Governance (1980-current) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reagan slippage • Tribal political forces join=more tribal control • 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act • Rise in economic development especially gaming • Successful court cases re: fishing and treaty rights |
| Unique Status | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual citizenship • Tribes are governments with special political trust relationship with federal governments • Sovereign nation status defined as “<i>internationally recognized power of a nation to govern itself</i>”(AIPC) • Tribes retain most powers of governments • States do not have inherent power (jurisdiction) on reservations • Congress deals with legal interactions with tribes |

Contemporary Indigenous Issues

Native individuals and communities continually struggle to assert sovereignty in the twenty first century and maintain Native identities in spite of multiple attempts at assimilation and genocide. The ability to withstand such threats, points to the strength and resiliency of Indigenous people. Though healing and increased empowerment are evidenced throughout Native communities, there are still serious challenges faced. Writer (2008) summarized many of them concisely to include:

Native feminisms, sexual violence against Indigenous women, boarding school abuses, environmental issues and contamination, Indigenous identity, language destruction and revitalization, research issues and ethics in Indigenous communities, Indigenous representations and stereotypes, Indigenous perspectives of historical events, [de]colonization, sovereignty and self-determination, religious freedom and repatriation, Indigenous education, and Indigenous knowledge and intellectualism(p.10).

For the purposes of providing context for the development of White college student's attitudes toward Native people, I focus on miseducation in United States K-12 education system and Indigenous representations and stereotypes.

Miseducation in U.S. K-12 Education

History is created by those who have the privilege to tell it. Those privileged tell history traditionally, have been White, male property holders. The 'master narrative' of American history seeks to legitimize and solidify power, while subjugating voices and knowledges that work to destabilize that power (Good, 2009). The retelling of Native history from an Indigenous perspective seeks to trouble the master narrative and legitimize Native versions of truth. Native voices are often left out and a master narrative of the discovery of America is replayed in classrooms all over the country. The story of Thanksgiving is an excellent example of a false narrative that perpetuates a false history and maintains White dominance:

The Thanksgiving holiday, as it is popularly celebrated across classrooms across the U.S. is one of the rare times American Indians are discussed in school. Teachers across the nation tell their students the mythical story of

how the Indians helped newly arrived pilgrims adapt to the land, and in celebration the two shared a friendly meal (Brayboy and Searle, 2006, p.).

As De Le Mare (2009) notes in her dissertation, Thanksgiving was celebrated for the first time in 1637 and again 40 years later to celebrate the annihilation by the colonizers of the Pequots and later the Wampanoags. Gross misrepresentations of history and the fact that Native people are only brought into the school curriculum at one time during the academic year, has led many to believe that Indigenous people are a people of the past. There is often little to no recognition of Native people as resilient, not static, and adaptive to the present times. This has led to gross misrepresentations and romanticized stereotypes.

Indigenous Representations and Stereotypes

There are many popular stereotypes about Native people and their representation is used to sell everything from religion, to military airplanes, to butter, to sports teams, to cigarettes. The commodification of the Native image has led many individuals who have no authentic contact with Native people to rely only on stereotypes in the attitude formation. To many White Americans at the turn of the century, it must have seemed that Native people were being rapidly and successfully assimilated into the fabric of America. Kirkpatrick states, “With the transformation of tribal governments, the acquisition of citizenship for some, and the forced schooling of children away from their families, American Indians seemed well on their way to becoming just plain Americans. Indians were no longer perceived as an overt threat, and a nostalgic image of the historical noble savage, the vanishing ‘first’ Americans, became increasingly popular” (p.17). Additional negative stereotypes persist and were perpetuated in the media beginning with silent film.

Tan, Fujioka and Lucht (1997) outline some of the most prevailing stereotypes regarding Native people as follows: (1) Native Americans are alcoholic, (2) Native people have special rights and/or unearned advantages just because they are Native, (3) Native people are lazy, (4) Indians live on reservations because they can't make it in the 'real' world (p. 265-267). Stereotypes impact the formation of our racial attitudes, so understanding current attitudes is necessary to impact change. It could be assumed that though attitudes have become generally more accepting in regards to Native people that some of the prevailing negative stereotypes still have an impact of college student's attitude formation.

Diversity Courses to Influence Racial Attitudes

One of the most traditional ways to measure attitudes is through quantitative methods. Typically, survey instruments and questionnaires are administered. There are a handful of studies to date that seek to measure the attitudes toward Native Americans in a U.S context. Due to the dearth of research in this area, it is also helpful to draw on studies from international Indigenous contexts and studies can measure attitudes toward diversity more generally.

The Challenge of Measuring Racial Attitudes

Measuring racial attitudes and racial bias through surveys and questionnaires is challenging in its complexity. "Prejudice is typically defined as a negative attitude" (Engberg, 2004, p.475). Prejudice has been operationalized according to more general attitudinal models and includes a cognitive component (thoughts or beliefs about an attitude object), an affective component (feelings or emotion associated with the attitude object), and a conative component (behavioral predisposition toward an attitude object) (Esses, Haddock, and Zanna, 1993; Zanna and Rempel, 1988). As mentioned above the complexity of measuring racial attitudes and bias is immense and this is compounded by social desirability in research participant's responses.

Socially desirable responding is defined as a phenomenon in which, “the research participant may believe the information they report (self-deception), or may ‘fake’ to conform to socially acceptable values, avoid criticism, or gain social approval” (King and Brunner, 2000, p. 81; Huang et al., 1998, p. 517). Socially desirable responding challenges researchers to find the best methods to get honest assessments of individuals’ actual views on issues of race and ethnicity. As stated in Chang (2002), “Psychologists have linked internalized views about race and ethnicity, which operate on conscious and unconscious levels, to discrimination and racism” (p.23).

Impacts of Diversity Related Courses on College Students’ Attitudes

Studies that have investigated the impacts of diversity courses on students’ changes in attitudes have had varying results. Research has been conducted both qualitatively and quantitatively to explore the problem. Meta-analyses conducted by Engberg (2004) on the influence of educational interventions and the impacts of diversity requirements on racial bias demonstrated an equal division of interventions that have resulted in racial attitude changes, other studies that did not, and others that have inconclusive findings. A sample of these studies follows for comparison.

Chang (2002) studied the effects of completing university required diversity courses. The researcher’s primary research question was “whether or not diversity course requirements reduced racial prejudice and promoted intergroup understanding?” (p. 25). To answer this question university students were sampled and according to which courses met the university diversity requirement, they were then randomly assigned to a pretreatment group (13 courses) or treatment group (12 courses). Chang’s sampling procedure resulted in an n equal to 340 subjects that excluded students who had already completed their diversity requirement. The pretreatment

groups were administered the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) in the week prior to class. The treatment group received a post-test only. A between subjects design was employed to avoid testing effects or revealing the instrument's intent.

The findings from Pearson Correlational analyses ($n = 141$) suggest that those who have stronger negative attitudes toward African Americans (lower MRS scores) tend to also report a lower likelihood ($p < .01$) of becoming acquainted ($r = .23$) or having serious discussions ($r = .21$) with students of another race or ethnic background. Chang's results also indicated that completing a diversity requirement changed student's level of prejudice toward African Americans ($p = .014$). Since lower scores indicated more negative racial attitudes, the results show that students who had just begun their diversity requirement (mean = 3.487) were more prejudiced than those who had nearly completed their requirement, suggesting that those students who had nearly completed the diversity course requirement had more favorable views in general toward diversity. This researcher's results indicate that diversity course requirements can positively impact students' racial views. One critique of the study is the use of a scale that only measures student's attitudes toward African Americans. In Chang's study effect sizes and confidence intervals were not reported. This study tells us that student's racial attitudes can be influenced by diversity courses and provides further justification for their need.

Measuring Attitudes Toward Native Americans

Many students who take Native studies courses have had little contact with Native people and the AUCC diversity course requirement is their first experience with Native American content and in some cases a Native American instructor. Native Americans make up fewer than 2% of the United States population (American Community Survey, 2009) so many non-Native people have few direct interactions with Native people though, according to Ducote-Sabey

(1999) everyone has attitudes about them. There are additional challenges when specifically looking at the dearth of literature in the area focused on attitudes toward Native Americans. Much of the literature examining attitudes toward Native Americans to date focuses on attitudes toward Native mascots in college sports.

Steinfledt and Wong (2010) studied attitudes toward Native-themed mascots after multicultural training courses in the context of color-blind racial attitudes. This study used a quasi-experimental design in which one multicultural counseling class served as the control group and the other class as the experimental group. The control group received a 45-minute training on Native American issues in counseling without specifically discussing Native-themed mascots. The experimental group received a 45-minute training that included training on Native-themed mascots. The Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS) and the Awareness of the Offensiveness of Native-Themed Mascots (AONTM) scale was administered to both groups of students as a pre and posttest. Multiple regression analyses indicated that participants with high levels of color-blind racial attitudes tended to be less aware of the offensiveness of Native-themed mascots. The overall regression model was significant, $R^2 = .30$, $F(2, 40) = 8.56$, $p = .001$, which is a large effect size (Cohen, 1998).

Paired samples t-test suggests the intervention resulted in a greater increase in awareness of the offensiveness of Native-themed mascots for experimental participants compared with control participants. Two paired-samples t tests revealed that after the intervention, the AONTM mean score for the experimental group increased significantly from 3.15 ($SD = 1.30$) to 4.52 ($SD=1.16$), $t(20) = 5.52$, $p < .001$, whereas the control group did not report a significant change in AONTM, $t(21) = 1.45$, $p > .05$ (pre-intervention $M = 3.38$, $SD = 1.37$; post-intervention $M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.58$). The most significant changes in awareness occurred among students with

high color-blind racial attitudes. The researcher's results also indicate that this training intervention on Native-themed mascots contributed to lower color-blind racial attitudes, thus increasing the students' awareness of societal racism. The number of multicultural courses was not significantly associated with AONTM, $p > .05$. The previous studies provide the foundation for the current study regarding attitudes towards Native people utilizing the newly developed PRATNA measure.

Ancis, Choney, and Sedleck (1996) measured university student's attitudes toward American Indian students in university settings to work toward eliminating racism in higher education. Sedlacek and Brooks (1976) "have noted the importance of assessing racial attitudes as one step in eliminating racism in higher education" (as cited in Ancis, et al., 1996). One of the primary goals of this work is to improve university campus climates for marginalized groups. To measure students' attitudes the SAS was administered to 201 entering freshmen (76% White, 14% African American, 6% Asian, 3% Hispanic, and 1% Other) who attending a summer college orientation program. Students were administered to versions of the scale (open race neutral and one race specific). Forty-two percent of the students were women and 58% were men. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 20 years, with 85% aged 18 to 21.

The data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The MANOVA showed a significant effect due to the differences in the forms (race neutral or specific) $F(10,188) = 14.76, p < .05$, but not due to Gender, $P(110,188) = 1.44, p > .05$, and not due to the Gender and form interaction, $F(10,188) = .81, p > .05$. These results suggest there were differences in the student's responses depending on whether they had completed the race unspecified or the American Indian form. Gender differences were not significant. Overall, the results indicated positive attitudes toward American Indian students as measured by the SAS.

One of the questions garnered a negative response from students when they were asked about their attitudes toward Native student's receiving free health care. The researchers caution against putting too much emphasis on their findings because there may be issues with students responding in socially desirable ways. The mixed method design of this study, the development of the PRATNA as an adaptation of the widely used MRS instrument with the influences of TribalCrit, and the literature discussed provides a theoretical framework for this study and guides my orientation

Summary

In this section I provided context for exploring Native studies courses as possible interventions for attitudinal change in predominately White undergraduate college students. I discussed my method of obtaining and analyzing the literature. I provided historical and contemporary context to situate Native American studies courses in relationship to general diversity course requirements. I explored relevant theoretical frameworks that guide this study to include College Student Development Theory, White Racial Identity Development, Modern Racism (Prejudice), and Tribal Critical Race Theory. I gave brief historical background on the history of Native American and White relationships in the United States and how this shapes contemporary attitudes. Additionally, I gave an overview of diversity related courses used as interventions to impact predominately White undergraduate college student's racial attitudes. Though Native studies courses were not designed as a front-line defense against racism, they may have the power to reduce its effects on Native students, others ALANAs, and contribute to more positive campus climates.

Currently, there is little empirical research that examines the impacts of Native Studies courses on non-Native and predominately White undergraduate college students. Moreover, due

to the unique history, political status, Native nationhood, and the sovereignty of the country's original inhabitants there are unique issues associated with Native studies that differ from other diversity-focused courses. Therefore, a more focused inquiry regarding the impacts of Native studies courses is needed to explore attitude and perception changes on non-Native and predominately White students. Understanding the impacts of a Native American course-based intervention and the effects on student attitudes and perception is necessary.

College campuses are still places where racial tensions run high despite the perceived racial progress we have experienced as a nation. Racialized incidents such as undergraduate students who vote to dress up as "Indians" for campus sporting events, or students who vehemently support racist mascots underscores a lack of cultural sensitivity and knowledge of Native culture. AUCC requirements were instituted to prepare students for life and work in an increasingly pluralistic society, to increase understandings of unique ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and reduce discrimination and prejudice (Yamane, 2001). Native studies as a course-based intervention must be studied to understand if the AUCC goals are achieved and may have a broader reach toward moving pre-dominantly White students toward being allies.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Utilizing mixed methods, this study seeks to understand and explore predominately White undergraduate college student's attitudes toward Native people, and understand their experience in the course and its power to address past miseducation, reduce prejudice, and negative stereotypes. This study also provides valuable data about the ways the master narrative regarding Native people plays out in higher education contexts and its possible deconstruction by way of a Native studies class as a counterstory. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) states, "To hold alternative histories is to hold alternative knowledges" (p. 34). Understanding predominately White student's attitudes toward Native Americans and their learning experience after a Native studies course can provide practical knowledge back to the field of Native studies, and also add to the literature on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

The overarching research questions are as follows: 1) What are college student's attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the newly developed Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale? (2) How does taking a Native studies course influence these undergraduate college students' attitudes toward Native Americans, their history, and contemporary experiences? (3) To what extent and in what ways do students' open-ended responses on the PRATNA, focus group interviews with students, and interviews with Native Studies professors contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of college students' PRATNA scores and course experiences?

Research Design

In the section to follow, I discuss the critical/transformational paradigm and Indigenous approach this study is based in to include the metaphysics and assumptions of the paradigms. Additionally, I explore the benefits, challenges, and fit with the chosen paradigms within a

mixed methods tradition. Lastly, I describe the qualitative and quantitative procedures, data collection, and analysis in this study.

Paradigmatic Stance: A Fusion of Critical and Transformative Paradigms with Indigenous Approaches

The concept of paradigms as an organizing metaphysical framework to enable researchers to examine the underlying belief systems that guide their work comes out of foundational theory work by Denzin, Lincoln, and Guba. A paradigm is defined as “a worldview, a general perspective, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world...are deeply embedded in the socialization of adherents and practitioners; they tell us what is important, legitimate, and reasonable, they are also normative, telling the practitioner what to do” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 15). An important note about paradigms is these, “fundamental beliefs, perspectives, or worldviews, often go unquestioned” (Creswell, 2007; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Denzin, Lincoln, and Guba outlined four basic belief systems that constitute a paradigmatic viewpoint: 1). *Axiology* (the nature of ethics); 2). *Ontology* (the nature of reality); 3). Epistemology (the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and that which would be known); 4). Methodology (the appropriate approach to systematic inquiry) (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Guba and Lincoln, 2005). Another important aspect is *teleology* which asks the question, “To what end ought we apply such knowledge?”(Lynham, 2011). It is important to understand research paradigms because they “underlie, inform, and direct our practice of inquiry” (Lynham, 2011).

Pragmatism: A third paradigm.

Paradigms are a way of seeing, but they can also be a way of not seeing (Kuhn, 1962; Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Feilzer, 2010). Mixed methods research often considers itself to

operate from a third paradigm outside the opposing paradigms debates of positivism/postpositivism and constructivism/interpretivism (Feilzer, 2010). Pragmatism is viewed by some researchers as, “as an alternative paradigm....(that)sidesteps the contentious issues of truth and reality, accepts, philosophically, that there are singular and multiple realities that are open to empirical inquiry and orients itself toward solving practical problems in the “real world” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p. 20-28). I do have a paradigmatic stance and it is best to make it explicit by discussing the fusion of paradigms brought together and the commensurable metaphysics in the transformative, critical, and Indigenous paradigms.

The transformative paradigm.

As defined by Mertens (2010), the transformative paradigm is described as “a framework of belief systems that directly engages members of culturally diverse groups with a focus on increased social justice” (p. 470). Researchers traditionally have used the transformative paradigm to explore the experiences of marginalized groups and are driven by its axiological values of “enhancement of social justice, furtherance of human rights, and respect for cultural norms” (Mertens, 2010, p. 471). Though the paradigm has traditionally been used with groups that are marginalized in society, some scholars argue for its use in studying the experiences of oppressors (Delgado, 1989; Mertens, 2010). The perspective is also situated in the work of anthropologist Nader (1969) who introduced the idea of studying up. Studying up is defined as the study of the colonizers rather than the colonized, and the study of the culture of power rather than the culture of the powerless. This study seeks to study up by focusing inquiry on students from the dominant group. Understanding the ways that dominant group members understand power and privilege, scholars can work to break down systems of oppression; this stance is closely aligned with the fundamental emancipatory principles of the critical paradigm.

The critical paradigm.

Critiquing power, privilege, and oppression are central to the critical paradigm. Guido, Chavez, and Lincoln (2010) state, “Critical paradigms promote the deconstruction and critique of institutions, laws, organizations, definitions, and practices for power inequities and inequities of effectiveness for varying populations” (p.9). In this paradigm, “research is driven by the study of social structures, freedom and oppression, and power and control. Researchers believe that the knowledge that is produced can change existing oppressive structures and remove oppression” (Merriam, 1991, p. 52). Critical theory has been instrumental--spurring multiple hybrid and alternative theories, analysis, discourses, and methods to include among others: Critical Race Theory (CRT), LatCrit, Tribal Crit, Whiteness Studies, and Critical Indigenous Pedagogy (CIP).

Indigenous approaches

This perspective seeks to connect Indigenous epistemologies (ways of knowing) “with emancipatory discourses, critical theory, and critical pedagogy” (Denzin, Lincoln and Smith, 2008). This perspective focuses on the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges, worldviews, and the decolonization of Indigenous thought (Hart, 2010; Wilson and Yellow Bird, 2005; Smith, 1999). To frame our understandings, a definition of both colonization and decolonization are helpful. Colonization refers to “both the formal and informal methods (behaviors, ideologies, institutions, policies, and economies) that maintain the subjugation and exploitation of Indigenous people” (Wilson and Yellow Bird, 2005, p.2). Decolonization as defined by scholars Waziyatawin and Michael Yellow Bird is, “the intelligent, calculated, and active resistance to the forces of colonization that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our [meaning Indigenous people] minds, bodies and lands” (p. 2). When discussing racial, ethnic, border,

liminal, and postcolonial paradigms (of which Indigenous paradigms can also be included) there is a focus on,

The recovery of an untouched experience, insofar as possible, by Eurocentric exposure. Failing that, these scholars mount a critique of how these ideas have reshaped Indigenous, border, liminal, minority, and subaltern experiences, and brought about the loss of valuable cultural resources (e.g., language). Increasingly, such work is undertaken by members of these communities, and Indigenous voices ‘talking back’ to Eurocentric approaches, modernism, and Western cultural values. (Grande, 2004; Green, 2007; Mehesuah and Wilson, 2004; Villegas, Neugebauer, and Venegas, 2008)

There is also a strong research responsibility that comes with the Indigenous paradigm for those that engage in it. In the book *Research as Resistance: Critical Indigenous Anti-Oppressive Approaches* (Brown and Strega, 2005) the authors’ state, “Those of us who have pursued academic study and dipped our toes into the murky pool of research have obligations to use our skills to improve the socio-economic conditions of Indigenous peoples” (Kovach, 2005, p. 32). Thus, Indigenous scholarship should be conducted to transform the oppression of Indigenous people and work for social justice ends. This study seeks to work toward social justice ends by shedding light on attitudes towards Native Americans that can help provide a baseline for attitudinal change.

A Hybrid Paradigm: Fusing Transformative, Critical, and Indigenous Approaches

Guba and Lincoln’s (2011) note that “new-paradigm inquiry grows daily” and point to the “blurring of genres” (p. 191). The authors also note that the emergence of new paradigms

often leads to paradigms that are less distinct, less oppositional, and more integrative” (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). “Blended paradigms are often established to transform social institutions and overturn traditional practices by providing concrete evidence of multiple perspectives, realities, and unmet needs” (Guido, Chavez and Lincoln, 2010, p.11). Whether the transformative paradigm is its own paradigm or can fit firmly within the critical tradition is a debate for another time and place. What’s important is that the theoretical underpinnings of all three ‘paradigms’ are commensurable. Commensurability asks the question, “Can the paradigm accommodate other types of inquiry?” (Guba and Lincoln, 2005, p. 200). I argue that both critical and transformative paradigms are commensurable with Indigenous perspectives in their unified purpose to transform oppression and include subjugated voices and knowledge. The fusion of paradigms and approaches is best suited for the research questions and my personal worldview and is highlighted in Table 3.1

Table 3.1

Blending Transformative and Critical Paradigms and Indigenous Approaches

| | TRANSFORMATIVE Fundamental Principle: Driven by axiology: <i>Enhancement of social justice, furtherance of human rights, and respect for cultural norms.</i> | CRITICAL Fundamental Principle: <i>Emancipation of non-dominant groups in order to alter their oppression, transformation of the status quo, and structural/historical insight</i> | INDIGENOUS Fundamental Principle: <i>Encompasses an Indigenous way of knowing and understanding the world. It situates Indigenous people as knowers and works toward decolonization</i> |
|---|---|--|---|
| Axiology Axiology refers to the values associated with the ethics of a paradigm and | Enhancement of social justice, furtherance of human rights, and respect for cultural norms. | Attempt to conduct research to improve social justice and remove barriers and other negative influences associated | Social justice and decolonization oriented. Research should be conducted for and by Indigenous peoples, using |

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| <p>answers the question, “what is the nature of ethics?” (Mertens, 2010, p. 10)</p> | | <p>with social oppression (Giroux, 1982).</p> | <p>techniques and methods drawn from the traditions and knowledges of those people” (Evans, et al, in Denzin, Lincoln and Tuhiwai Smith, 2008, p. x).</p> <p>Morenton-Robinson and Andersen (2009) would also add that a critique of how Whiteness frames indigeneity and how Indigenous people know Whiteness could be an integral part of the paradigm (p. 94).</p> |
| <p>Ontology What is the nature of reality? (Creswell, 2007).</p> <p>Ontology is “a theory about what the world is like—what the world consists of, and why. Another way of thinking about ontology is to think of it as a world view” (Strega, 2005, p.199).</p> | <p>Recognizes that there are many versions of what is considered to be real, yet holds that there is one reality about which there are multiple opinions (Mertens, 2010).</p> | <p>The nature of reality is historically situated and shaped by our positionality and values (Guba and Lincoln, 2008).</p> <p>Embraces “systems of knowing that counter a dominant Eurocentric epistemology” (Bernal, 2002, p. 115).</p> | <p>Indigenous ontology is relational, values the equality of all life and reciprocity, and values that which we can and cannot see to include the spiritual realm (Hart, 2009).</p> |
| <p>Epistemology “Defines the nature of the relationship between the knower and the</p> | <p>Transformative epistemology asks the questions, “What should my relationship as a researcher be with the people in the study?”</p> | <p>Interaction/knowledge is socially constructed/those in power create “reality” which has to be changed to include</p> | <p>Situates Indigenous people as knowers (Andersen, 2009).</p> <p>“Subjectivity, where the researcher</p> |

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| <p>would-be known and the relationship between the researcher and participants” (Mertens, 2010).</p> <p>"A system of knowing" that is linked to world views based on the conditions under which people live and learn (Ladson-Billing, 2000).</p> | <p>“How should I interact with the people in the study?” “If I am to genuinely know the reality of something, how do I need to relate to the people from whom I am collecting data?”</p> | <p>alternative epistemologies as valid (Bernal, 2002).</p> <p>Just as the material realities of the powerful and dominated produce separate [social and historical experiences] ...each [racial or social group] may have distinctive epistemologies or theories of knowledge” (Collins, 1991, p. 204 as cited by Bernal, 1997).</p> | <p>acknowledges that she or he brings his or her subjectivity to the process and openly and honestly discusses this subjectivity (Hart, 2009, p.10).</p> <p>Epistemologically an Indigenous paradigm values, (a) “experience as a legitimate way of knowing; (b) Indigenous methods, such as storytelling, as a legitimate way of sharing knowledge; (c) receptivity and relationship between researcher and participants as a natural part of the research “methodology”; and (d) collectivity as a way of knowing that assumes reciprocity to the Community (Kovach, 2005).</p> |
| <p>Methodology What is the process of research? (Creswell, 2007).</p> <p>“The description, explanation, and justification underlying methods and not the methods</p> | <p>Critical analysis of power relationships (Mertens.</p> <p>Transformative methodological belief system incorporates the explicit address of issues of power in terms of interrogating both the research methods themselves and the interventions that may or may not be in the control of the researcher</p> | <p>Critical analysis of power relationships (Mertens, 2009).</p> <p>Dialogic, transformative methodology – eliminates false consciousness and energize and facilitate transformation. (Guba, 1990, p. 25)</p> | <p>“Uses methods critically, for explicit social justice purposes”</p> <p>“Values authentic/organic techniques in data collection” (Kovach, 2005, p.29).</p> <p>“Personal performance narratives and</p> |

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|--|---|---|--|
| <p>themselves” (Kaplan, 1964, p. 18 as cited by Guido, Chavez and Lincoln, 2010, p.3).</p> <p>“When we talk about methodology, we are talking about how you are going to use your ways of thinking (epistemology) to gain more knowledge about your reality” (Wilson, 2001, p. 175).</p> | <p>(Mertens, 2007, 2009).</p> <p>Asks the questions, “What are the best methods for collected data? Numbers, so I can be objective? Words and pictures, so I can get a deep understanding? Mixed methods so I get both? How do I use these methods to get the “real picture”? (Mertens, p.472)</p> <p>Mertens (2009, 2010) has been a strong advocate of mixed research methods within a transformative paradigm.</p> | <p>“...scholarship done for the explicit political, utopian purposes, a discourse of critique and criticism, a politics of liberation, a reflexive discourse constantly in search of an open-ended, subversive, multivoiced, participatory methodology” (Lather, 2007, in Denzin, Lincoln and Tuhiwai Smith, 2008, p. x)</p> <p>The critical paradigm accommodates both quantitative and qualitative methods though leans toward qualitative methods.</p> | <p>testimonios”</p> <p>Researcher is “self-aware”(Hart, 2009, p. 10)</p> <p>The Indigenous paradigm resist efforts to adhere to a single interpretive strategy (Denzin, Lincoln, Tuhiwai Smith, 2008, p.2)</p> |
| <p>Teleology To what end ought we apply such knowledge?</p> | <p>To solve practice problems for social justice ends.</p> | <p>Critical research involves a commitment to organized deliberate, and prudent action-action that will change for the better a social situation of those involved” (Merriam, 1991, p.52)</p> | <p>Knowledge should be used in service to Native and Indigenous communities.</p> <p>To transform oppression</p> |

Above table 3.1 provides an overview of the metaphysics of the three blended approaches. In the discussion to follow, terms are outlined and the blended approaches are described in more detail. Axiology asks the question, “How should we act in acquiring, accumulating and applying knowledge? (Lincoln and Guba, 2005). Axiology also refers to the values and ethics of a paradigm (Mertens, 2010). The axiology of the transformative paradigm focuses on social justice as a primary value while the critical paradigm “attempts to conduct research to improve social

justice and remove barriers and other negative influences associated with social oppression (Giroux, 1982).

Axiologically, an Indigenous research approach values resistance to oppression as a goal, more specifically resistance to a legacy of colonization. The approach also values work toward decolonization in scholarship. All three paradigms and approaches value safety and respect for research participants, their stories, and ways of knowing. Part of this commitment to the safety of research participants is in the form of research protections and in some case participatory models in which participants engage as co-researchers.

Ontology asks the question, “What is the nature of reality?” (Creswell, 2007). Strega (2005) defines it as, “a theory about what the world is like—what the world consists of, and why. Another way of thinking about ontology is to think of it as a world view” (Strega, 2005, p.199). All three paradigms see the world through an ecological model which views individual interactions on multiple systems levels and acknowledges influencing factors and relationships. The transformative paradigm recognizes the multiple viewpoints each one of us brings to a problem. Critical and Indigenous paradigms value subjective realities and view the world in its present reality, but also couch these views in historical antecedents. Indigenous ontology extends the relational nature of what constitutes reality to include the natural and spiritual world (Hart, 2009).

Epistemology can be defined as “the nature of the relationship between the knower and the would-be known and the relationship between the researcher and participants” (Mertens, 2010). Gloria Ladson-Bills expands that definition to include, “A system of knowing that is linked to world views based on the conditions under which people live and learn (Ladson-Billing, 2000). In much of the transformative research, the research acts a co-researcher with

participants and seeks to engage in co-construction. Epistemologically, the current study is more in line with a critical/Indigenous epistemology. This study seeks to understand student's *experiences and process* as a legitimate way of knowing. The students will have engaged in course experience that situates Indigenous/Native people as knowers or holders of valid knowledge. Given the nature of study up or studying power, there will be a delicate balance between discussing my subjectivity with student participants and their willingness to engage in a conversation openly and honestly.

Methodology can be described as “the description, explanation, and justification underlying methods and not just the methods themselves” (Kaplan, 1964, p. 18 as cited by Guido, Chavez, and Lincoln, 2010, p.3). The transformative paradigm asks methodological questions in the form of, “What are the best methods for collected data? Numbers, so I can be objective? Words and pictures, so I can get a deep understanding? Mixed methods so I get both? How do I use these methods to get the “real picture”? (Mertens, p.472) The use of mixed methods is very much aligned with the transformative paradigm and easily lends itself to mixed method approaches. Both critical and Indigenous methodologies methods are dialogic in nature and use transformative methodology to eliminate false consciousness, energize, and facilitate transformation (Guba, 1990, p. 25). In this study both the quantitative and qualitative procedures used allow for self-reflection. Through engaged conversation with classroom peers in a focus group context, students have the opportunity to challenge their personal perspectives and respectfully those of their peers for social justice purposes.

Teleology asks the question, “To what end ought we apply such knowledge?” Collectively, all three paradigms seek to transform oppression and work for social justice purposes with a special focus of historically marginalized groups. All three paradigms seek to

add the voices and experiences of members of our society whose voice have been historically and presently subjugated. These paradigms are also very commensurable because the research process can be empowering for both researchers and participants. Understanding paradigmatic stances helps frame why particular research questions are asked in certain ways, for what purposes, using which criteria for rigor, through which lens, and to what end. The utilization of research methods is commensurable with these blended approaches.

Overview of Mixed Methods Research

The field of mixed methods and the language used to describe its methods are fairly new, but its use in social science research and evaluation is not. Current debates center on mixed methods and the paradigmatic stance it assumes as a third paradigm. For the purposes of this paper, I will not engage the debate. I will explicate why a mixed methods study is a good fit for my research questions and overall inquiry purposes.

Mixed Method Fit

Mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Plano Clark and Creswell, 2010). Green (2007) defines mixed methods an approach to investigating the social world that ideally involves more than one methodological tradition and thus more than one way of knowing, along with more than one kind of technique for gathering, analyzing, and representing human phenomena, all for the purpose of better understanding (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007). Green's definition is helpful because it views mixed methods as a more holistic way to understand important and complex issues. The study of human nature is

complex and the issues associated with understanding attitudes are complex. To understand between group differences, the possibilities for student's to experiences attitudinal in addition to understanding their experiences and process we need a multidimensional lens. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), advocate for the use of mixed methods in a single study, to minimize the weaknesses of one method alone and maximize the strengths of both methods. For the purposes of this study, the quantitative data are not sufficient. The interpretation of the qualitative data will seek to understand student's process of taking a Native studies course and allow them to reflect on their own experiences. The quantitative and qualitative portions of this study hold equal weight, all leading to greater understanding.

Use of a Transformative Convergent Mixed Method Design

In this study, I have employed a transformative convergent mixed methods research design in order to integrate different but complementary data (Creswell, 2003). In a convergent mixed methods design qualitative and quantitative stands of data are given equal priority. The two strands are conducted separately yet concurrently and merged at the point of interpretation (Plano-Clark and Creswell, 2011). In this design, qualitative data and quantitative data were collected both before and after a Native studies course with the overall inquiry aim of transformation. Mertens (2010) discusses the use of transformative mixed methods "as a framework for researchers who place a priority on social justice and the furtherance of human rights" (p.469). This study seeks to engage in inquiry for transformative aims while critiquing societal power structures that constrain Indigenous people--thus extending the transformative paradigm in new ways. The diagram below in Figure 3.1 is a graphical illustration of the transformative convergent design employed in the study.

Transformative Convergent Mixed Method

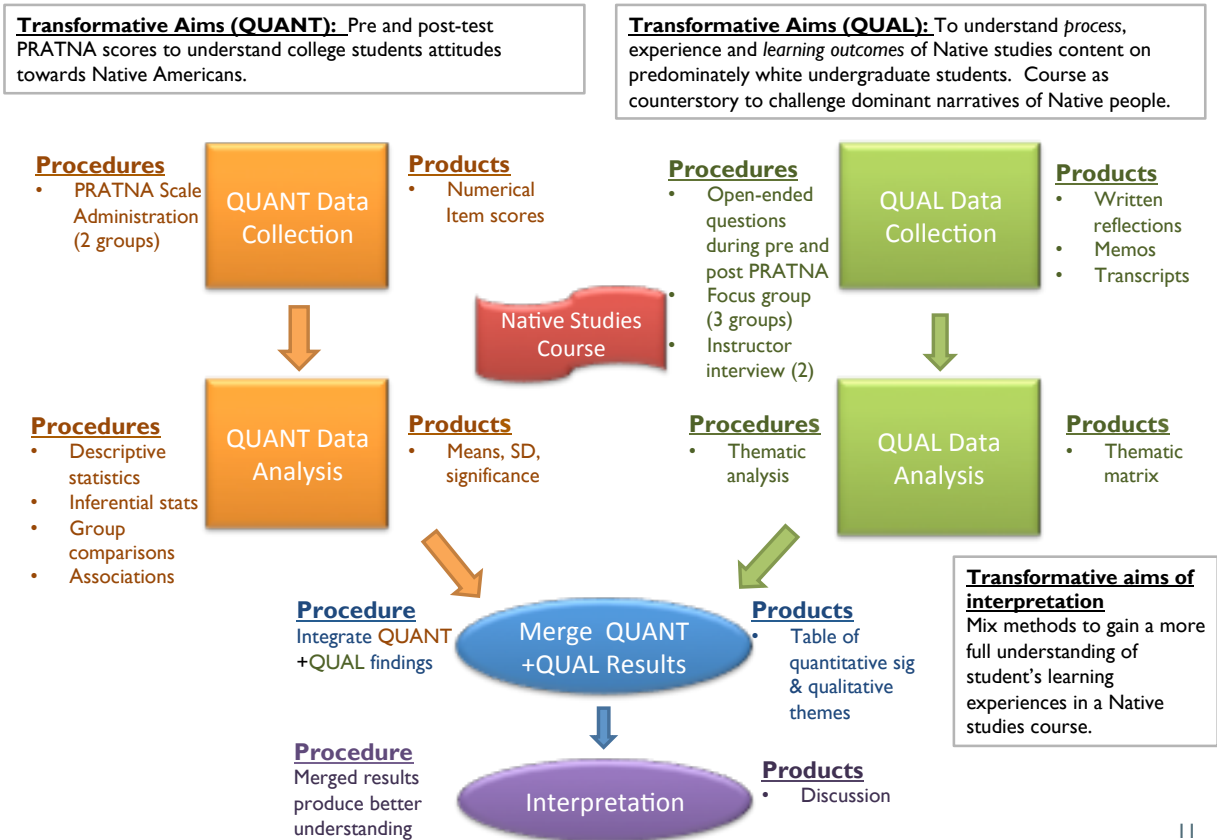


Figure 3.1: Research Design

Quantitative Research Questions and Procedures

The current study uses mixed methods to measure student’s attitudes towards Native Americans as evidenced by the PRATNA and explore student’s process and experience of taking Native studies courses. The quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method questions are outlined below. The overarching quantitative questions are as follows:

Quantitative Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a difference in the pre and post-test Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores of undergraduate college students that complete a Native studies course?

RQ2: Is there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students who take the Native studies course as a diversity requirement versus those that do not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

RQ3: Is there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students that have taken Native studies courses prior to current semester and those that have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

RQ4: Is there a difference in the pre-course scores of students that have taken past cultural diversity courses on the PRATNA?

RQ5: Is there a difference in the scores of males and females in regards to their PRATNA scores?

RQ6: Is there a difference in student's PRANTA Scores based on their self-identified racial identification?

RQ7: Is there an association between student's classification in college and their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

RQ8: Is there an interaction between gender and Native studies course enrollment in regards to the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

RQ9: Is there a difference in the scores of undergraduate students enrolled in Native American History Course and Federal Indian Law on the PRATNA?

RQ10: Which PRATNA item statements elicit more unfavorable student responses?

Table 3.2

Research Question, Statistic, and Effect

| Quantitative Research Questions | Statistic | Effect size |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------|
| RQ1: Is there a difference in the pre and post-test Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores of undergraduate college students that complete a Native studies course? | Paired sample t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ2: Is there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students who take the Native studies course as a diversity requirement versus those that do not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale? | Independent samples t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ3: Is there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students that have taken Native studies courses prior to current semester and those that have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale? | Independent samples t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ4: Is there a difference in the pre-course scores of students that have taken past cultural diversity courses on the PRATNA? | Independent samples t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ5: Is there a difference in the scores of males and females in regards to their PRATNA scores? | Independent samples t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ6: Is there a difference in student's PRANTA Scores based on their self-identified racial identification? | Independent samples t-test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ7: Is there an association between student's classification or year in college and their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores? | Pearson <i>r</i> | <i>r</i> |
| RQ8: Is there an interaction between gender and Native studies course enrollment in regards to the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores? | Factorial ANOVA | <i>eta</i> |

| | | |
|---|------------------------------------|----------|
| RQ9: Is there a difference in the scores of undergraduate students enrolled in Native American History Course and Federal Indian Law on the PRATNA? | Independent samples <i>t</i> -test | <i>d</i> |
| RQ10: Which PRATNA item statements elicit more unfavorable student responses? | Descriptive | |

Quantitative Research Procedures

Participants and Settings

The participants for this study were drawn from a convenience sample of undergraduate college students enrolled in two Native studies courses in a medium sized university town in a Western state. The courses of focus for this research may meet general diversity requisites that require students to complete a number of courses related to understanding unique and diverse perspectives as a graduation requirement. To conduct this study the sample included two Native studies courses that took place during the Spring 2012 semester.

Instrumentation

The review of literature provided direction to develop an instrument to measure attitudes toward Native people. There is a dearth of literature that seeks to measure college students' attitudes towards Native Americans and few instruments that serve this purpose. The few instruments that exist to measure attitudes toward Native people come from research on the impact of college mascots. I was able to locate four possible instruments through the literature review. Further research and analysis of the literature has led me to draw on theory to gain additional insights.

Overview of Pertinent Instruments

The researcher's choice of possible instruments comes from the review of existing literature that measures attitudes towards Native Americans, attitudinal changes from diversity-focused courses, and Indigenous, critical, transformative paradigmatic orientation. The literature suggests that general diversity requirements may affect college students' orientations toward social justice and equity-eventually moving them toward being social justice allies. To achieve this end, we must understand their attitudes. While conducting the initial literature review, I found the Situational Attitudinal Scale- American Indian (SAS-AI) (Ancis, Choney and Sedlacek, 1996) in a doctoral dissertation from the University of Oklahoma. Finding the scale led to an initial adaptation of the SAS-AI instrument. Consequent searches of the literature led me to the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) (McConahay, 1986), the Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS) (Neville, 2000), and the Prejudiced Attitudes Toward Aboriginals Scale (PATAS) (Morrison, 2007).

Situational Attitudinal Scale-American Indian (SAS-AI).

Ancis, Choney and Sedlecek (1996) measured university students' attitudes toward American Indian students in higher education for the purpose of working toward eliminating racism in higher education. Sedlacek and Brooks (1976) "have noted the importance of assessing racial attitudes as one step in eliminating racism in higher education" (as cited in Ancis, et al., 1996). One of the primary goals stated in this study was to improve university campus climates for marginalized groups specifically. To measure students' attitudes the SAS was administered to 201 entering freshmen (76% White, 14% African American, 6% Asian, 3% Hispanic, and 1% Other) who attended a summer college orientation program. Students were administered two versions of the scale (one open race neutral and one race specific). Forty-two percent of the

students were women and 58% were men. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 20 years, with 85% aged 18 to 21. Alpha coefficients on this measure range from .70 to .89. The data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The MANOVA showed a significant effect due to the differences in the forms (race neutral or specific) $F(10,188) = 14.76$, $p < .05$, but not due to Gender, $F(10,188) = 1.44$, $p > .05$, and not due to the Gender and form interaction, $F(10,188) = .81$, $p > .05$.

Modern Racism Scale (MRS).

As mentioned Chapter 2, the theory of modern prejudice was conceptualized by McConahay in 1986 to address more subtle forms of racism stemming from ambivalence toward people from a marginalized group. The theory of modern prejudice was conceptualized alongside the development of the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) to measure prejudicial attitudes toward African Americans. The alpha coefficient for the scale is .81. The theory of modern prejudice has been used to understand prejudice and racism against marginalized groups. The MRS has been used with multiple marginalized groups and has been adapted by others to provide more nuanced measure of racism and prejudice. The development of the PRATNA draws heavily on the MRS. The MRS instrument contains the following questions:

1. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.
2. Over the past few years, the government and news media have shown more respect for Blacks than they deserve.
3. It is easy to understand the anger of Black people in America.
4. Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the United States.
5. Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.
6. Blacks should not push themselves where they are not wanted.

Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS).

In a recent study on the effectiveness of a multicultural training on attitudes toward Native –themed mascots the Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS) (Neville, et al, 2000) was used which prompted me to explore its possibilities. The COBRAS has three subscales or constructs within it: Unawareness of racial privilege, unawareness of institutional racism, and unawareness of blatant racial issues. Higher scores on the COBRAS indicate greater levels of color-blind racial beliefs, which in turn indicate a lower awareness of racial inequalities in society. The alpha coefficient for COBRAS in the study was .85. Validity has been established on the basis of the relationship between CoBRAS and a wide range of social attitude indexes. Questions from the scale were adapted for use in the PRATNA.

Prejudicial Attitudes Toward Aboriginal Scale (PATAS).

The Prejudicial Attitudes Toward Aboriginals Scale (PATAS) (Morrison, 2007) was developed as part of a Canadian student’s master’s thesis to “measure the discrepancy found between the expressed attitudes and behavior toward Aboriginal Canadians” (Nesdole, 2009, p. 48). This measure was adapted from the widely used Modern Racism Scale (MRS) measure mentioned above. The PATAS consists of two constructs: an old-fashioned racism scale and a modern racism scale. The alphas range from .91 to .93, with higher scores indicating greater levels of prejudice toward Aboriginals (Morrison, 2007).

The PATAS has been found to “possess a high degree of internal consistency, and some preliminary evidence suggesting the measure demonstrates evidence of construct validity” (Nesdole, 2009, p. 48). Nesdole’s study indicated support for the notion that the PATAS demonstrates evidence of criterion related validity. Table 3.3 below provides a general overview

of the instruments discussed above and provides a preview to the development of the newly developed Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale.

Development of the PRATNA

In the pilot tests, which I discuss in more detail below, the Situational Attitudinal Scale-AI was piloted as it was adapted by Ducotey-Sabey (1999) and an adaptation of the Modern Racism Scale (MRS) to be more specific to Native American contexts was also piloted. Though widely used, the SAS-AI is not a good fit for the study given student's limited contact with Native people. The SAS-AI is based on students being in contact with Native people and responding to how they might feel in certain social or educational situations. Because Colorado's Native people are situated primarily in the urban center of Denver and in the southernmost part of the state, many students do not have personal contacts on which to base their responses. In the pilot, students seem to respond negatively to the bipolar semantic differential scale used and often responded by choosing the center-neutral option. Not having an opinion is a valid choice, but it may point to social desirability concerns.

The MRS Scale was adapted initially in the spring of 2009 and piloted in a Native Studies course. In retrospect, I also drew on the Symbolic Racism Scale in my initial attempts to modify an instrument for Native contexts that accounts for their political and racial status. The scales are provided in the appendix for reference. The scales below were designed for African Americans and are not Native American specific.

Table 3.3

Matrix of Relevant Instruments

| Instrument | Population Used With | Type of Scale | Constructs | Validity and Reliability | Fit for the current study |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Prejudiced Attitudes Toward Aboriginals (PATAS) (Morrison, 2007) | College students | Likert (5 levels) | Old fashioned prejudice Modern prejudice | Alpha: .87 | Designed for the Indigenous Canadian contexts. Offered questions that point to political nature of Aboriginal status |
| Situational Attitudinal Scale- American Indian (SAS-AI) (Ancis, Choney and Sedlacek, 1996). | College students | Semantic differential (5 levels) | Personal contact Negative stereotypes Modern Racism | Alpha: .70 to .89 | In pilot 1. Students had difficulty with the bipolar semantic scales. Constructing meaning end statements was difficult. |
| Modern Racism Scale (MRS) (McConahay. 1986) | College students | Likert (5 levels) | Old fashioned prejudice Modern prejudice | Alpha: .81 | Designed to measure attitudes toward African Americans. Has |
| Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (COBRAS) (Neville, 2000) | College students | Likert (6 levels) | Unawareness of Racial Privilege Unawareness of Institutional Discrimination Unawareness to Blatant Racial Issues | Alpha: .85 | Is designed to measure colorblind racial attitudes broadly without specific reference to Native people |
| *Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale | College students | Likert (6 levels) | Modern Racism Unawareness to Blatant Racial Issues Unawareness of Native political status | Pilot 1 Alpha: .83 Pilot 2 Alpha: .81 Study Pre-test .83 Study Post-test .87 | A first attempt to measure attitudes toward Native American people in the U.S. that accounts for liminality as both racial and legal/political groups and individuals. (TribalCrit). |

Review of relevant literature has led to further adaptation after encountering Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) in the literature. TribalCrit has expanded my thinking from measuring race

alone, to focusing on the situated contexts of Native people on the borderlands of their political and racial status. As stated by Brayboy (2005) TribalCrit is “rooted in the multiple, nuanced, and historically- and geographically-located epistemologies and ontologies found in Indigenous communities” (p. 427). Native issues need a more nuanced analysis and guiding theoretical framework that takes into account “Indians’ liminality as both legal/political and racialized beings” (Brayboy, 2005, p. 427). The adaptation of the PRATNA has been adapted to take that into account by including questions on Native sovereignty and contemporary Native community struggles. Given the unique experience of Native people in the U.S., I have drawn from multiple instruments with the goal of measuring college student’s attitudes. The six point likert scale response categories are: 1) Agree Strongly, 2) Agree Moderately, 3) Agree Slightly 4) Disagree Slightly 5) Disagree Moderately, and 6) Disagree Strongly. The PRATNA has 19 questions that are found below:

1. In the last decade Native Americans have gotten more than they deserve economically.
2. Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos.
3. Over the past few years, the government has shown increased attention to Native American issues-more than they deserve.
4. It is easy to understand the anger of Native American people.
5. Too much money is spent on programs and services that only benefit Native Americans.
6. Discrimination against Native Americans is no longer a present problem in the United States.
7. Generations of historical injustices have created conditions that make it difficult for Native Americans and their communities to thrive.
8. Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better.

9. Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive.
10. Native Americans should forget about the past, stop talking about it and move on.
11. Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left.
12. Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty.
13. Native Americans still need to protest and advocate for stronger legal protections.
14. It is now unnecessary for the U.S. government to honor their treaty obligations to Native tribes.
15. It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.
16. It is important for public schools to teach about Native American history and the contribution of racial and ethnic minorities.
17. Racial problems in the U.S are rare, isolated situations.
18. Racism against Native Americans may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.
19. Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.

The full PRATNA scale is found in Appendix B. After developing the instrument, I found the PATAS which as mentioned above was developed for the Canadian Aboriginal context and has its roots in the Modern Racism Scale. Looking at this scale's conceptualization of the questions has added some validity to my own adaptations and provided ideas for even more nuanced questions.

Reliability and Validity

Gliner, Morgan, and Leech (2009) provide guidance on ways to evaluate the validity and reliability of an instrument. To help determine reliability of the instruments, using Cronbach's

alpha as an index of reliability, the PRATNA in pilot tests had good levels of reliability (.84, .83 and .81), which is positive. In terms of content validity, throughout my process I have consulted with Native content experts for their input and suggestions on my adaptation.

Pilot Tests

In the spring of 2010 (n=40) and during the Spring of 2011 (n=52) two pilot tests were conducted with four Native American Studies courses. The initial pilot tests were conducted to explore potential research questions, methods of survey administration, and to run reliabilities on the PRATNA instrument. Undergraduate students enrolled in Native studies courses during the two spring semesters were invited to participate in the pilot study with the permission and cooperation of Native studies instructors. Students were asked to participate in the study if they felt comfortable and confident that their participation or lack thereof, would not influence their course grades. Students were asked to complete a consent form and an anonymous questionnaire that measured their attitudes in response to a number of educational, social, and personal situations (PRATNA). Students were asked to report basic demographic information such as their age, race, gender, college class level, and participation in Native American events.

Of the 65 students enrolled in the Spring 2010 course, 40 participated in the study using pen and paper to answer the questionnaire packet during class time. The student response rate was 70%. Students that chose not to participate in the study worked on assigned course readings or other related material. The questionnaire packet was administered in the middle of the semester so that students had adequate exposure to the course content. In the spring 2011 survey 52 students participated using the online survey tool Qualtrics.

In both instances, once all data had been collected, entered, and cleaned, SPSS was used to explore data frequencies. To understand gender differences and those who take diversity

courses versus those who do not on the PRATNA, independent sample t-tests were run. To make associations between variables the Chi-Square test was used. Where it was appropriate p-values and effect sizes were reported.

The majority of the group (77.5%) self-identified as White/ European and 70% were traditionally aged college students. Overall, 85% of student’s parents had either graduated from college or had some experience attending college. Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency of the PRATNA instrument that was .81 in the spring 2010 and .84 in spring 2011. In the spring 2010 pilot differences in PRATNA scores based on gender and the experience of taking past cultural diversity courses were examined. The findings showed that while gender was significant, the experience of taking past cultural diversity courses was not. This pilot sample differed from the study because in the spring pilot there was more gender balance. The current study’s sample had very few males. In the Spring 2011 pilot, differences between students who had taken past cultural diversity courses were examined, gender differences, past Native studies courses, and student’s racial self-identification were examined. In the pilot gender and the experience of taking past cultural diversity courses did not demonstrate statistically significant findings, while the experience of taking Native studies courses and students racial self-identification did have statistically significant differences. Tables 3.4 and 3.5 below summarize the research questions examined and the results.

Table 3.4

Spring 2010 Pilot Research Questions and Summary Results (n=40)

| Questions | P-value and Effect size | Significance |
|--|-------------------------|---|
| Differences in the PRATNA scores based on gender were examined | $p=.020$ $d=.79$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| Difference in PRATNA scores based on taking past cultural diversity classes. | $p=.073$ $r=-.20$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |

Table 3.5

Spring 2011 Pilot Research Questions and Summary Results (n=52)

| Questions | P-value and Effect size | Significance |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| Cultural Diversity Courses and PRATNA Scores | $p=.208$ $d=.39$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| Gender and PRATNA Scores | $p=.257$ $d=.32$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| Past Native Studies courses and PRATNA Scores | $p=.027$ $d=.7$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| Racial Self-identification and the PRATNA | $p=.001$ $d=1.14$ | Statistically significant difference found |

The pilot studies were a first, exploratory attempt to examine the attitudes of college students toward Native Americans and explore between group differences. The pilot experience helped narrow the research questions and some questions were discarded. The findings from the pilots supported past research on student’s attitudes and in some regards had different outcomes. The inconsistencies around gender and the influence of past diversity courses needs further examination with larger sample sizes. The pilot data informed the development of the data collection for this study which will be discussed in the section to follow.

Quantitative Data Collection Procedures

In the spring of 2012, students enrolled in two Native studies courses (NA 255 and NA 444) were invited to participate in this dissertation study with the permission and cooperation of their Native studies instructors. The pre course sample yielded 45 responses and the post course sample yielded 33 responses. Native American History and Federal Indian Law students may differ in regards to their interest in Native topics and maturity as lower or upper level division students. NA 255 is more introductory and draws students that need to complete their All

University Course Curriculum AUCC general diversity requirements, while NA 444 draws students that are interested in Federal Indian Law and may be planning to go to law school.

Given the nature of most social science research, the ability to randomly assign and select students to treatment groups was not possible. After Institutional Review Board approval was obtained, students were asked to participate in the study if they felt comfortable and confident that their participation or lack thereof, would not influence their course grades. Students were asked to complete a consent form and an anonymous online questionnaire that measured their attitudes in response to a number of hypothetical educational, social, and personal situations (PRATNA). Students were asked to report basic demographic information such as their age, race, gender, college class level, and participation in Native American events.

With the instructor's permission, students were contacted via email requesting their help, explaining the current study, the data collection procedures, the time needed to complete the study, and the benefits and drawbacks of participation. The instructors that participated agreed to give participating students 2 extra credit points on their first quiz. An alternative extra credit option was also provided. After giving sufficient time for students to contact me with questions (2-3 days), a follow-up email was sent with the IRB informed consent form and a link to the Qualtrics survey. The PRATNA was administered online to both Native studies courses in the first two weeks of class. In the middle of the semester interviews were scheduled with the Native studies instructors to explore their perceptions of student's key understandings of Native topics and places where students have difficulty with the content. Approximately two weeks before the end of the semester, students were asked to complete the PRATNA again. The final phase of data collection involved running three focus groups with students that were willing to participate in follow up research to explore their experience of taking a Native studies course.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The data analysis for the quantitative portion of this project includes descriptive and inferential statistics using the statistical tool SPSS. Table 3.2 (above) provide a reminder of the quantitative research questions and the accompanying quantitative analysis. In this study the independent attribute variables include: course taken as an AUCC requirement (dichotomous), Past Native studies course (dichotomous), cultural diversity course in the past (dichotomous), gender (dichotomous), ethnic group (dichotomous coded as White/non-White), parental education (nominal), college classification (ordinal) and socioeconomic status of parents (ordinal). The dependent or outcome variable is the PRATNA scale scores. The pre PRATNA scale scores are approximately normal while the post-PRATNA scores were skewed and therefore ordinal. Though the quantitative data can provide important information regarding sample differences and among which groups attitudinal shifts may occur, qualitative data is needed to provide context for students' experiences in the course. In the section to follow, I discuss the qualitative research questions, collection, and analysis.

Qualitative Research Questions

The overarching research question is *How does taking a Native studies course influence undergraduate college student's attitudes toward Native Americans, their history, and contemporary experiences?*

Qualitative Data Collection Procedures

The qualitative data collected includes open-ended questions as part of the PRATNA at pre and post course, course syllabi, focus groups with students, and interviews with course instructors. The collection of multiple data sources helped provide a more complete understanding that in turn helped answer the research questions. Artifacts such as the course

syllabus were collected to add depth to the data and context for students' learning experiences and instructor goals.

Open-ended Survey Responses

Opened ended survey responses were included as part of the online administration of the PRATNA both pre and post course. The pre-course PRATNA questions focused on students' course expectations. The post-course PRATNA focused on students key learning experiences after taking the Native studies course.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were conducted with three groups of student learners. They are a way “of collecting qualitative data, which—essentially—involves engaging a small number of people in an informal group discussion around a particular topic or set of issues” (Wilkinson, 2004, p. 177). Focus groups have been described as being less threatening to many research participants, and this environment is helpful for participants to discuss perceptions, ideas, opinions, and thoughts (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Onwuegbuzie outlines some of the benefits of conducting focus groups in social science research:

- Focus groups are an economical, fast, and efficient method for obtaining data from multiple participants (Krueger and Casey, 2000).
- Focus groups are conducted in the environment, which is socially oriented (Krueger, 2000).
- The sense of belonging to a group can increase the participants' sense of cohesiveness (Peters, 1993) and help them (focus group participants) to feel safe to share information (Vaughn, Schumm, and Sinagub, 1996).

- The interactions that occur among the participants can yield important data (Morgan, 1988), can create the possibility for more spontaneous responses (Butler, 1996).
- Focus groups can provide a setting where the participants can discuss personal problems and provide possible solutions (Duggleby, 2005).

In this study, the focus groups were conducted from a distance using conference call technology. There is little published about the technical aspects of using distance technology to conduct focus groups and much of the data about using this method comes out of the business and marketing research worlds.

Conducting Distance Focus Groups.

To conduct the focus groups, this researcher fused tips from the business world in terms of ways to facilitate online meetings, with traditional focus group best practices, and best practices for discussing sensitive content. The focus group began with the facilitator trying to make participants feel comfortable and thanking them for joining the call. We made small talk about the end of the semester as we waited for all confirmed participants to join the call. After everyone was on the free conference call line and was able to see the broadcasted PowerPoint, as a group we walked through introductions, community discussion guidelines, technical tips for participating in a distance focus group, and created a virtual focus group space before moving into the focus group questions. Appendix D contains the PowerPoint for the focus group.

To help insure the rigor of the data, the focus group space was opened by telling participants that the researcher would reframe participants responses to check for understanding of their comments. Participants were encouraged to correct and clarify reframing statements that were incorrect or partially correct. The statement encouraged participants to add more information and allowed the researcher to check for understanding. After a brief introduction to

the study we did introductions. Students were given the option to state their name or pseudonym, year in college, major, and what drew them to take a Native studies course.

Next, we discussed community discussion guidelines and some of the challenges of discussing sensitive issues. Given more time the participants would have generated the guidelines as a group, but for this focus group the researcher outlined possible guidelines. The participants were asked for their agreement for disagreement with the guideless and had the option to add others. The participants felt comfortable with the discussion guidelines as outlined. The community discussion guidelines were: 1) Listen actively -- respect others when they are talking, 2) Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing ("I" instead of "they," "we," and "you"), 3) Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks -- focus on ideas, 4) Participate to the fullest of your ability -- community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice, and 5) The goal is not to agree -- it is to gain a deeper understanding.

In the next phase of the focus group we discussed a few tips for participating in a distance focus group. The tips are helpful for participants while also helping insure better recording and transcribing clarity of the researcher. Participants were asked to announce themselves before they began speaking. This practice is helpful when creating a visual space for the focus group, simply knowing who is speaking and for transcription because you cannot see participant's faces and voices can sound somewhat alike. The next tip was to prepare for possible crosstalk. In cases where participants start speaking at once, participants were asked to jot down their comment so they could come back to it later, and lastly participants were asked to mute their lines if they were in a place with background noise (i.e. dogs barking, traffic noise, etc) that could potentially make it difficult for all participants to hear clearly.

Our last step before beginning the focus group questions was to create a virtual focus group space. The image below is included in the PowerPoint in Appendix X. Participants were asked, where would you like to sit? Participants selected a seat that provided a map for the researcher and also the participants to help make the focus group experience less foreign and bounded.



Figure 3.2: Virtual Focus Group Space

I chose a graphical display to create the space, but drawing a clock with hands can also do this. Participants can occupy a space on the clock. The steps outlined above helped to create a safer space for participants to share information, and also offered ways to be most effective in a foreign environment.

Native Studies Instructor Interviews

Two phone interviews were conducted with the instructors of the Native studies courses in which the undergraduate students in the study were enrolled. Each interview was scheduled at the instructors' convenience and lasted for an hour to an hour and a half. Individual interviews were scheduled with the instructors to better understand their experience and background, approach to teaching Native studies courses, and their overall goals for student learners in the course.

Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

The text data obtained through collection of additional text artifacts, interviews, open-ended survey questions, and focus group data were coded and analyzed for themes using thematic analysis and emergent grounded theory methods (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Charmaz, 2000, 2005, 2009). Thematic analysis helps draw out the strands that tie student's experiences together (Spradley, 1980). Charmaz states, "Constructivist grounded theory celebrates firsthand knowledge of empirical worlds, takes a middle ground between postmodernism and positivism, and offers accessible methods for taking qualitative research into the 21st century. This method assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects' meanings (2000, p.510). The use of emergent grounded theory helps keep the participants words and experience at the forefront and provides valuable insight into the ways participants construct their worlds. The analysis techniques involved coding and categorization by emerging themes. Charmaz (2006) describes this process of coding and categorization to generate increasingly abstract theoretical descriptions, whilst remaining 'grounded' in the data. Emergent grounded theory involves taking comparisons from data and reaching up to construct abstractions and then

down to tie these abstractions to data. It means learning about the specific and the general – and seeing what is new in them – then exploring their links to larger issues or creating larger unrecognized issues in entirety (p. 181).

I have used a combination of data analysis methods to analyze the data within Microsoft Word, and included highlighting the text data and using index cards to categorize themes. Those themes have become data charts and graphical displays to provide a representation of the constructed themes. First, I read through all the qualitative data several times, to get acquainted with major patterns, meanings, and discrepancies. Then I analyzed the focus group transcripts through inductive coding to examine major themes regarding student knowledge of Native Americans and Native studies and perspectives of participants regarding what they learned about Native Americans through the course and what aspects of the course influenced their learning. I then grouped the codes into major themes. Next, I examined the open-ended survey responses of the pre-test by coding for the participants' expectations of what they would learn and wanted to learn through the course. I created a matrix displaying five categories of what students expected to learn and also examined the language within the written responses to further explore attitudes and understanding of Native Americans expressed through word choice (e.g., othering language such as "they" and "them," references to stereotypical images of Native Americans regarding spiritual practices and art, or reference to Native Americans as a static culture of the past). For the post-test survey, where the open-ended responses referred to what was learned in the course, the complexity of responses led me to construct a taxonomic analysis of multiple themes and sub-themes about lessons learned or unlearned through the course. Lastly, the instructor interview transcripts were reviewed and the data helped provide context for student's learning experiences and the instructor's approach to teaching the course.

Mixed Method Research Question

The mixed method question is, *To what extent and in what ways do students open-ended survey responses, focus group with students, and interviews with Native studies instructors contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of student's PRATNA scores and course experiences?*

Mixed Method Data Analysis

The study uses a transformative, convergent mixed method design where both the quantitative and qualitative strands are conducted separated, yet concurrently to both form a more complete understanding of an issue and work toward social justice goals. The data analysis involved converging the qualitative and quantitative research strands to gain a more complete understanding of students' attitudes toward Native Americans and process of taking Native studies courses.

Summary

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the paradigmatic stance this study is situated in. I explored the commensurability and fusion of transformative, critical, and Indigenous paradigms. Next, I provided the research questions that guide this study. I explored the paradigmatic fit with the mixed method design and more specifically a transformative convergent design. Next, I described the participants, setting, and methods for the study. Qualitative and quantitative procedures and methods were described to include data, collection, and analysis. Though quantitative and qualitative data were collected separately, additional analysis of both data sets merged to inform each other in the analysis/interpretation phase. Data analysis techniques were multidimensional to capture attitudinal shifts that occurred, along with data to understand student's experiences in a Native studies course through focus groups.

Collecting qualitative and quantitative data while giving equal weight to each strand, serves the purposes of gaining a more complete picture of undergraduate student's attitudes and process, while also allowing for critical reflection by students to more fully engage them in the process.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The overarching purpose of this study is to better understand college student's attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale and better understand their experiences in Native studies courses. This chapter presents the results of the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method research questions that were introduced in chapter 3. The quantitative data will be presented first, followed by the qualitative data, and then lastly the mixed methods convergence will be presented.

Quantitative Results

To answer the quantitative research questions SPSS Statistics 20 was utilized for analysis. Ten quantitative research questions follow, each under their own heading for clarity. Table 4.1 below provides a general overview of the demographics of the sample that participated in the online survey. The students that participated in the online portion of the research were largely female (80%), White (78%), traditionally aged college students (63%), students who are upper classman (76%), 50% took the course to fulfill the diversity requirement, and over half have a parent with a four year degree or higher (61%).

Table 4.1

PRATNA 2012 Demographic Table

| Characteristic | n | % |
|--|----------|----------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 8 | 20% |
| Female | 33 | 80% |
| Transgender | 0 | 0% |
| Ethnicity | | |
| African American or Black | 2 | 5% |
| Mexican or Mexican American | 2 | 5% |
| European American or White (non-Hispanic) | 32 | 78% |
| Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander | 0 | 0% |
| American Indian, Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian | 4 | 10% |
| Other Hispanic or Latino/a | 2 | 0% |
| Puerto Rican | 0 | 5% |
| Multiracial | 2 | 5% |
| International | 0 | 0 |
| College Classification | | |
| Freshman | 2 | 5% |
| Sophomore | 8 | 20% |
| Junior | 13 | 32% |
| Senior | 18 | 44% |
| Age | | |
| Under 18 | 0 | 0% |
| 18-21 | 26 | 63% |
| 22-25 | 14 | 34% |
| 26-30 | 1 | 2% |
| 31-35 | 0 | 0% |
| 36-40 | 0 | 0% |
| over 40 | 0 | 0% |
| AUCC Requirement | | |
| Yes | 21 | 50% |
| No | 8 | 19% |
| Not sure | 42 | 31% |
| What is the highest level of schooling your mother completed? | | |
| Did not complete high school | 1 | 2% |
| Completed high school | 6 | 15% |
| Completed some college | 4 | 10% |
| Completed an associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.) | 5 | 12% |
| College graduate (B.A., B.S., etc.) | 12 | 29% |
| Graduate degree (M.A., J.D, Ph.D., etc.) | 13 | 32% |

Understanding the students' demographic information helps provide context for students experiences in a Native American studies course. The section to follow outlines the findings from the research questions in order.

To begin, overall the undergraduate students enrolled in both Native studies courses had mostly positive attitudes toward Native Americans as evidenced by their higher than average mean scores on the PRATNA. These data are not surprising based on the results of the few, past studies that have sought to understand attitudes toward Native Americans in higher education settings. The current study sought to understand possible between group differences, but also to provide insight regarding which individual response items garner more unfavorable student responses.

RQ1: Difference Between Pre and Post Course PRATNA Scores

The first research question asks if there is a difference in the pre and post-test Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores of undergraduate college students that complete a Native studies course. Forty-one students completed the PRATNA one week into their Native studies course. Thirty-one students completed the PRATNA post course. Only the scores of students that took the course pre and post were utilized for analysis. This question involved repeated measures so paired sample t-tests were utilized as recommended by Gliner, Morgan, and Leech, 2009.

Figure 4.1 provides a visual of student's individual pre and post course PRATNA scores and the change in the pre and post scores. Table 4.2 shows that on average college students post-course PRATNA scores (94.32) were significantly higher than their pre-course PRATNA (84.91) scores, $t(31) = -4.76$, $p < .001$, $d = -1.17$. Higher PRATNA scores indicate more accepting attitudes towards Native Americans. The difference in pre and post course scores is statistically

significant, and a larger than typical effect size according to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines. This finding demonstrates support that Native studies courses can influence college student’s attitudes positively since post-test scores were significantly higher than pretest scores. Higher scores indicate more accepting attitudes toward Native Americans. This finding has been supported in past studies such as the Ancis, Choney and Sedlecek (1996), which suggest that college students generally have accepting attitudes toward Native Americans, but have less accepting attitudes to particular instrument item questions.

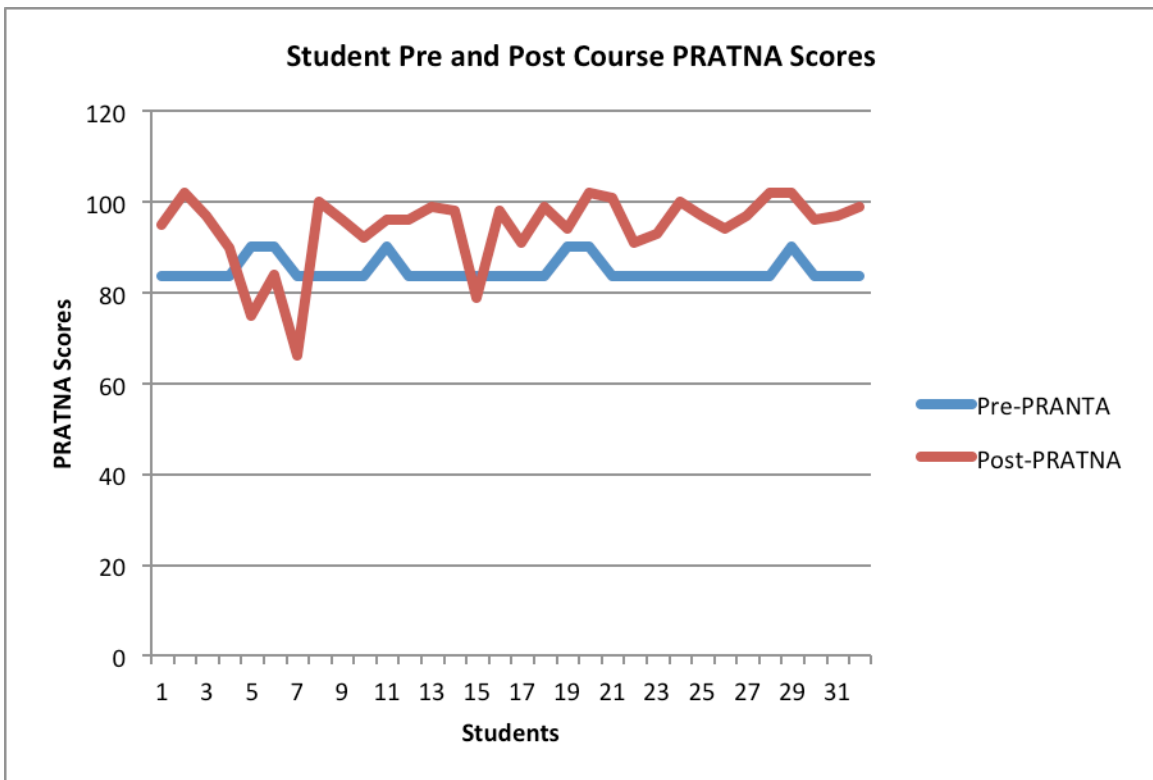


Figure 4.1: Student Pre and Post Course PRATNA Scores

Table 4.2

Comparison of Pre-course and Post-course Student Scores on the PRATNA (n=31)

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> |
|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| PRATNA Score | | | -4.785 | 31 | .001 |
| Pre-course | 84.91 | 7.952 | | | |
| Post-course | 94.31 | 8.117 | | | |

RQ2: Difference Between Course as an AUCC General Diversity Requirement on the PRATNA

The second research questions asks if there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students who take the Native studies course as an All University Core Curriculum (AUC) diversity requirement versus those that do not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people on the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale? To answer the overarching research question is broken down into two sub-questions focusing on pre course scores and post course scores on the PRATNA. To answer both sub questions an independent samples t-test was used.

Sub Q2a: Is there a difference in pre-course scores of undergraduate college students who take the Native studies course as an AUCC diversity requirement versus those that do not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

Using an independent samples t-test, students that enrolled in the Native studies course as an All University Core Curriculum (AUCC) diversity requirement and those that did not, did not differ significantly in regards to their pre-PRATNA scores ($p = .677$).

Sub Q2b: Is there a difference in the post-course scores of undergraduate college students who take the Native studies course as an AUCC diversity requirement versus those that do not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

Because the dependent variable (post-PRATNA) was skewed (-2.043), Mann-Whitney U tests were performed to compare students who took the course as an AUCC and those students who did not. Students taking the course as an AUCC and those who were not, do not differ in a statistically significant way on the PRATNA. Mean ranks were 14.83 and 18.64 respectively, $U=96$, $p=.27$, $r=.04$.

RQ3: Difference in the Scores of Students Who Have Taken Native Studies Courses and Those Who Have Not

The third research question asks if there is a difference in the scores of undergraduate college students who have taken Native studies courses prior to the current semester and those who have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale? To answer the overarching research question it is broken down into two sub questions focusing on pre course scores and post course scores on the PRATNA. To answer both sub questions an independent samples t-test was used.

Sub Q3a: Is there a difference in the pre-course scores of undergraduate college students that have taken Native studies courses prior to current semester and those that have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of those students who have taken a Native studies course prior to this semester and those students who have not on the pre course PRATNA. Table 4.3 shows that students who have taken Native studies courses in the past and those students who have not differ significantly on the pre-course PRATNA ($p=.028$). The average pre-course PRATNA scores for students who have taken Native studies courses prior to this semester (90.11) was significantly higher than the scores for students who did not (83.44). Higher scores on the scale indicate more accepting attitudes toward Native Americans. The difference between mean scores is 6.67. The effect size d is approximately .94 which indicates a larger than typical effect size according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

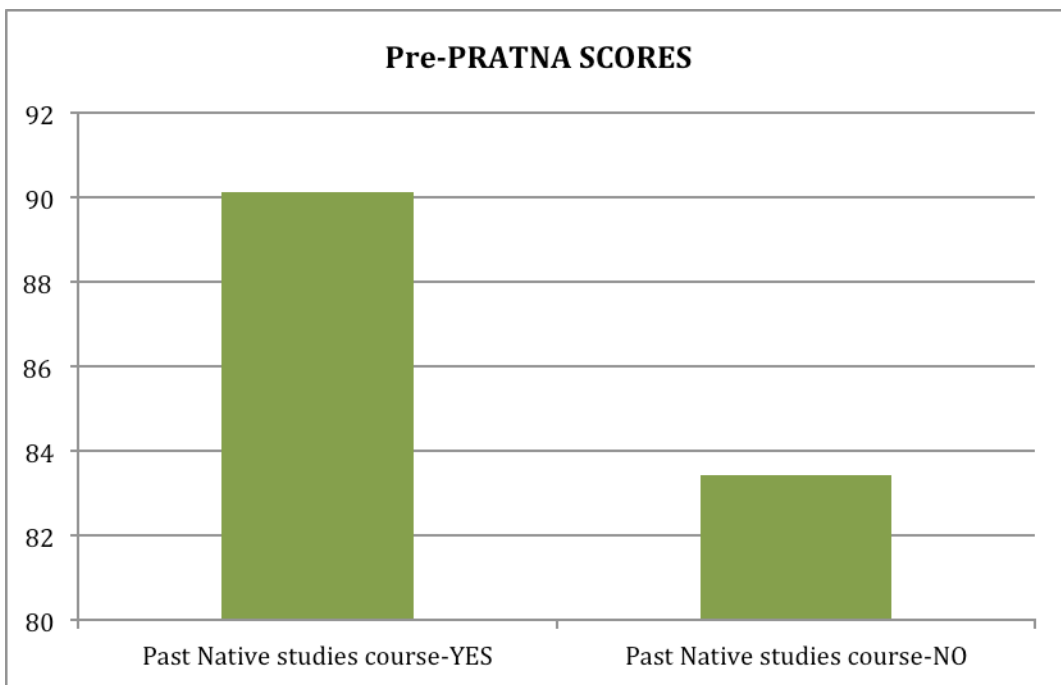


Figure 4.2: Comparison of Students Who Have Taken a Past Native Studies Course and Those Who Have Not on the Pre-Course PRATNA (n=9 Yes and 32 No)

Table 4.3

Comparison of Students Who Have Taken a Past Native Studies Course and Those Who Have Not on the Pre-Course PRATNA (n=9 Yes and 32 No)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Pre-course PRATNA Score | | | 2.286 | 39 | .028 |
| Past Native Course Yes | 90.11 | 5.87 | | | |
| Past Native Course NO | 83.437 | 8.15 | | | |

Sub Q3b: Is there a difference in the post-course scores of undergraduate college students that have taken Native studies courses prior to current semester and those that have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

Because the dependent variable (post-PRATNA) was ordinal and the variances were unequal, Mann-Whitney U test were preformed to compare students who have taken a Native studies course prior to this semester and those students who have not on the post-course PRATNA. Students taking the course as an AUCC and those who were not, do not differ in a statistically significant way on the PRATNA. Mean ranks were 18.86 and 15.21 respectively, $U=78.5$, $p=.681$, $r=.073$.

RQ4: Cultural Diversity Courses and PRATNA Scores

To answer the research question, *Is there a difference in scores of undergraduate college students who have taken past cultural diversity courses and those that have not in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?* The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean

scores of students that took a cultural diversity course prior to the current semester and those who have not on the PRATNA. The results are shown in Figure 4.2 below and in Table 4.2 below, and indicate that students who have taken cultural diversity courses in the past, differed significantly from those students who had not taken cultural diversity courses on their pre-PRATNA scores ($p = .047$). The effect size d is approximately .07 which indicates a medium to large effect size according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

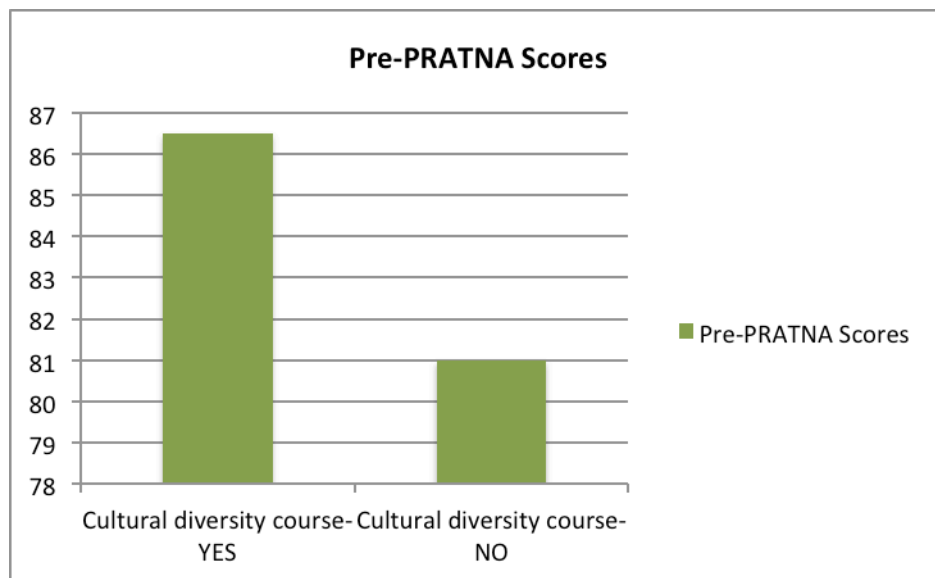


Figure 4.3: Students Who Have Taken Cultural Diversity Courses and Those Who Have Not on the PRATNA

Table 4.4

Comparison Between Students Who Have Taken Cultural Diversity Courses Before and Those Who Have Not on the PRATNA (n=12 yes and 29 no)

| Variable | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|
| PRATNA Score | | | -2.054 | 39 | .047 |
| Diversity course NO | 81.0 | 7.24 | | | |
| Diversity course YES | 86.5172 | 8.047 | | | |

RQ5: Gender Differences and the PRATNA

This research question asks if there is a difference in the scores of males and females in regards to their PRATNA scores. To answer the overarching research question it is broken down into two sub questions focusing on pre-course scores and post-course scores on the PRATNA. To answer both sub questions an independent samples *t*-test was used.

Sub Q5a: Is there a difference in the pre-course scores of males and females in regards to their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

The independent samples *t*-test was used to compare the mean scores of male and female students on the pre and post course PRATNA scores. The independent sample statistic that resulted was -.490 with statistical significance *p*=. 627 on the pre-course PRATNA, indicating that there was no statistical significance between the groups, however the number of males (8/41) was quite small.

Sub Q5b: Is there a difference in the post-course scores of males and females in regards to their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

Because the dependent variable (post-PRATNA) was ordinal and the variances were unequal, Mann-Whitney U test were performed to compare scores of males and females on the post-course PRATNA. Male and female students did not differ in a statistically significant way on the PRATNA. Mean ranks were 17.33 and 16.31 respectively, $U=73$, $p=.809$, $r=.043$.

RQ6. Racial Self-identification and the PRATNA

The sixth research question asked if there was a difference in scores of undergraduate college students depending on their racial identification in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?" The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean PRATNA scores of students based on their racial identification. Students were given the option to select from seven different racial categories and select multiple racial categories to include multiracial. These categories were then recoded into a dichotomous variable (White and non-White). To answer the overarching research question is broken down into two sub questions focusing on pre course scores and post course scores on the PRATNA. To answer the first question an independent samples t-test was used and the second was answered using the Mann-Whitney U statistical test.

Sub Q6a. Is there a difference in pre course scores of White and non-White students in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of White and non-White students on the pre course PRATNA. The independent sample statistic that resulted was .383 with statistical significance $p=.704$ on the pre-course PRATNA, indicating that there was no statistical significance between the groups.

Sub Q6b. Is there a difference in post course scores of White and non-White students in regard to their attitudes toward Native people as evidenced by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale?

Because the dependent variable (post-PRATNA) was ordinal and the variances were unequal, Mann-Whitney U test were performed to compare scores of White and non-White students on the post-course PRATNA. White and non-White students do not differ in a statistically significant way on the PRATNA. Mean ranks were 17.32 and 14.70 respectively, $U=92, p=.463, r=.13$.

RQ7: Association Between College Classification and the PRATNA

This research questions asked if there is an association between students' classification in college and their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores? Each sub-question is a correlation question involving approximately normally distributed variables, therefore bivariate correlation with Pearson's r was used.

Sub Q7a: Is there an association between student's classification in college and their pre-course Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

To investigate if there was a significant association between a student's current college classification (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) and PRATNA scores, a correlation was computed. There is no systematic association between students' college classification on pre PRATNA $r(41) = .16, p = .562$, however the number of first year and second year students taking the selected classes was small.

Sub Q7b: Is there an association between student's classification in college and their post-course Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

To investigate if there was a significant association between a student's college classification and the PRATNA, a correlation was computed. The post PRATNA was skewed (-2.043) which violated the assumption of normality. The Spearman rho statistic was calculated which indicated that there is no systematic association between student's college classification on post PRATNA $r(32) = -.039, p = .833$

RQ8: Interaction Between Gender and Native Studies Enrollment on the PRATNA

The eighth research question asked if there an interaction between gender and Native studies course enrollment in regards to the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores? A factorial ANOVA¹ was used to examine the interaction of gender and enrollment in a past Native studies course on PRATNA scores. Table 4.5 shows the means and standard deviations for the PRATNA separately for gender and past enrollment in a Native studies course.

Table 4.6 shows that there was not a significant interaction between gender and past enrollment in a Native studies course on the PRATNA ($p = .239$). There was a significant main effect of past enrollment in a Native studies course on the PRATNA, $F(1, 34) = 6.23, p = .018$. Eta for past enrollment in Native studies course was .40, which according to Cohen (1988) is a large effect.

¹ The primary purpose of this Factorial ANOVA was to test for interactions. Findings for main effects were reported earlier.

Table 4.5

Means, Standard Deviations, and n for the PRATNA as a Function of Native Course Enrollment and Gender

| | Males | | | Females | | | Total | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Taken Past NA Studies Course | | | | | | | | |
| Yes | 1 | 94 | 0 | 7 | 89.57 | 6.55 | 90.13 | 6.23 |
| No | 7 | 82.14 | 9.68 | 26 | 84.04 | 7.79 | 83.64 | 8.10 |
| Total | 8 | 83.63 | 9.89 | 33 | 85.21 | 7.79 | 84.90 | 8.14 |

Table 4.6

Analysis of Variance for the PRATNA as a Function of Gender and Enrollment in Past Native Studies Courses

| Variable and source | <i>df</i> | <i>MS</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>n</i> ² | <i>p</i> |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
| PRATNA | | | | | |
| Gender | 1 | 55.56 | .893 | .026 | .351 |
| Past Native studies enrollment | 1 | 387.213 | 6.23** | .155 | .018 |
| Gender* Past Native studies enrollment | 1 | 89.46 | 1.438 | .041 | .239 |
| Error | 34 | | | | |

** *p* < .005

RQ9: Native American History Course and Federal Indian Law on the PRATNA

The ninth research question asked if there is a difference in the scores of students in Native American History in comparison to Federal Indian Law in regards to their PRATNA scores?

Sub Q9a: Is there a difference in the pre-course scores of students in Native American History in comparison to Federal Indian Law in regards to their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

The independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scores of those students enrolled in Native American History or Federal Indian Law on the pre course PRATNA. Figure

4.3 shows that students in Federal Indian Law differ significantly on both the pre-course and post course PRATNA. The average pre course PRATNA scores for students in Federal Indian Law this semester (88.35) were significantly higher than the scores for students enrolled in Native American History (82.47). The difference between mean scores is 5.88. The p-value was .020, and effect size d is approximately 1.56 which indicates a larger than typical effect size according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines, shown in Table 4.7.

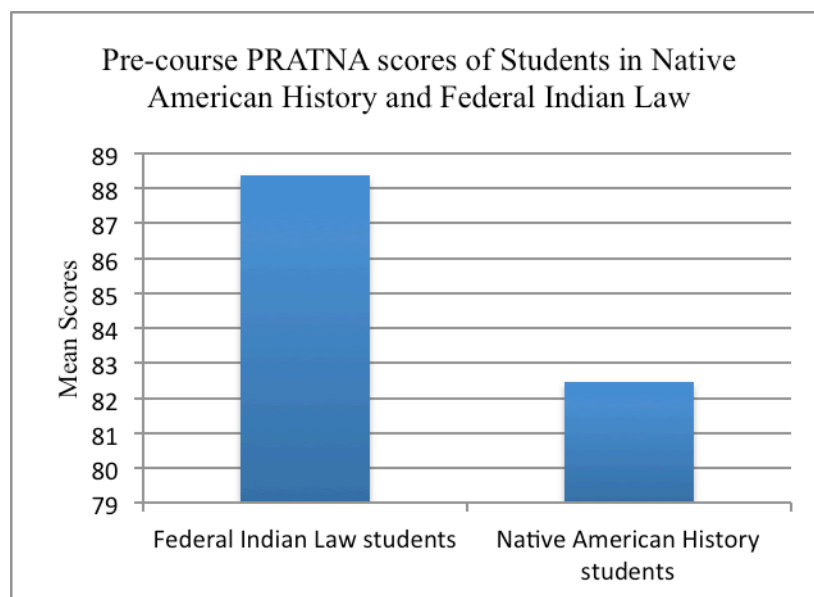


Figure 4.4: Pre-course PRATNA scores of Students in Native American History and Federal Indian Law

Table 4.7

Comparison of Students Enrolled in Federal Indian Law and Native American History on the pre course PRATNA (n=14 Federal Indian Law and 19 Native American History)

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|----------|
| Pre-course PRATNA Score | | | 2.456 ^a | 29.3 ^a | .020 |
| Federal Indian Law | 88.36 | 4.92 | | | |
| Native American History | 82.47 | 8.73 | | | |

^aThe *t* and *df* were adjusted because variances were not equal.

Sub 9b: Is there a difference in the post-course scores of Native American History in comparison to Federal Indian Law in regards to their Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale scores?

Because the dependent variable (post-PRATNA) was ordinal and the variances were unequal, Mann-Whitney U test were performed compare the mean scores of those students enrolled in Native American History or Federal Indian Law on the post-course PRATNA. Students enrolled in Native American History and Federal Indian Law differed statistically on the post-PRATNA. Mean ranks were 13.82 and 20.42 respectively, $U=72.5$, $p=.049$, $r=.35$, which is considered a medium effect size according to Cohen’s (1988) guidelines.

RQ10: Which PRATNA item statements elicit more unfavorable student responses?

Utilizing PRATNA response frequencies, individual item responses were explored to understand which scale items elicited more negative and more favorable responses on the pre and post course PRATNA. In the present study the following statements elicited more negative student responses as measured by the PRATNA:

- Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos.
- Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better.

- Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive.
- Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left.
- Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty.

In the Ancis, Choney and Sedlecek (1996) study, despite generally favorable attitudes toward Native Americans, as mentioned above, one of the questions garnered a negative response from students when they were asked about their attitudes toward Native student's receiving free health care. The statements or questions that elicit more negative responses seem to center on the issue of "unearned advantage" or the misconception that Native people have access to advantages that they have not earned (McIntosh, 1988). In the pre-PRATNA, similar negative responses around unearned advantage were seen in the individual item responses. The following statement garnered more negative responses.

- Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos.
- Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive.
- Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty.

The statements that elicited negative responses require deeper analysis, but seem to be indicative of the modern face of prejudice. The questions that elicit negative responses in the pre-test also seem to point to large gaps in the knowledge base of college students about Native nations as sovereign nations and point to continued stereotypes that Native people are a culture from the past and support the belief that Native people need to assimilate. The following individual responses garnered negative responses in both the pre and post PRATNA

- Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better.
- Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left.

As mentioned above, most mainstream Americans do not have the historical context that these perceived ‘advantages’ were bought and paid for in millions of acres of land and in many cases taken by force for free. Most Americans also have little understanding of Native American sovereignty and Native nation status, but only see Native people as racialized beings. The individual response items will be discussed again in Chapter 5.

In sum, statically significant changes in student’s PRATNA scores from the pre and post course test were seen. Students who have taken past Native studies and diversity courses had statistically significant scores from students who had not taken those courses. Law students differed from History students. Law students came into the course with higher baseline PRATNA scores on the pre-test and showed more growth after taking the course. Through the analysis of individual response scores on the PRATNA, the data seems to indicate that students’ content knowledge regarding Native Americans became more accepting while their responses to questions regarding Native stereotypes remained the same. The following significance table 4.8 provides an overview of the quantitative results.

Table 4.8

Summary of Significance for all Quantitative Research Questions

| Questions | P-value and Effect size | Significance |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| RQ1: Difference Between Pre and Post Course PRATNA Scores | $p=.001$ $d=-1.17$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| RQ2a: Difference Between Course as an AUCC General Diversity Requirement on the pre-PRATNA | $p=.677$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ2b: Difference Between Course as an AUCC General Diversity Requirement on the post-PRATNA | $p=.27$ $r=.04$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| RQ3a: Difference in the Pre-Course Scores of Students Who Have Taken Native Studies Courses and Those Who Have Not | $p=.028$ $d=.94$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| RQ3b: Difference in the Post-Course Scores of Students Who Have Taken Native Studies Courses and Those Who Have Not | $p=.681$ $r=.073$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ4: Cultural Diversity Courses and pre-PRATNA Scores | $p=.047$ $d=.07$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| RQ5a: Gender Differences and the pre-course PRATNA | $p=.627$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ5b: Gender Differences and the post-course PRATNA | $p=.809$ $r=.043$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ6a. Racial Self-identification and the pre-course PRATNA | $p=.704$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ6b. Racial Self-identification and the pre-course PRATNA | $p=.463$ $r=.13$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ7a: Association Between College Classification and the pre-course PRATNA | $p=.562$ $r=.16$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ7b: Association Between College Classification and the post-course PRATNA | $p=.833$ $r=-.039$ | No statistically significant differences between groups |
| RQ8: Interaction Between Gender and Native Studies Enrollment on the PRATNA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>PRATNA as a Function of Gender</i> • <i>PRATNA as a Function of Native Course Enrollment</i> | $p=.239$ $p=.018$ $eta=.40$ | No statistically significant differences Statistically significant difference found |
| RQ9a: Native American History Course and Federal Indian Law on the pre-PRATNA | $p=.020$ $d=1.56$ | Statistically significant difference found |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| RQ9b: Native American History Course and Federal Indian Law on the post-PRATNA | $p=.049$ $r=.35$ | Statistically significant difference found |
| RQ10a: Which pre-course PRATNA item statements elicit more unfavorable student responses? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos. • Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better. • Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive. • Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left. • Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty. | |
| RQ10a: Which post-course PRATNA item statements elicit more unfavorable student responses? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos. • Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better. • Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left. | |

Qualitative Results

As previously explained in the methodology chapter, the qualitative results reflect the themes found in open-ended responses from student's 1) online surveys and 2) distance focus groups. The overarching research question asked is, *How does taking a Native studies course influence undergraduate college student's attitudes toward Native Americans, their history, and contemporary experiences?* The first phase of the qualitative component involved opened-ended responses as part of the online pre course PRATNA administration to better understand Native studies students' expectations. Post course PRATNA administration asked an open-ended

question regarding students' most impactful learning experiences. The second phase involved focus groups conducted with students in both the Native American History and Federal Indian Law courses, and the third phase involved one-on-one instructor interviews. The instructor interviews were used in this study to help frame the context of the course and the themes from those interviews were not analyzed in this study. Native American History and Federal Indian Law are course taught by different professors, with different but complementary perspectives, and the foci of the courses are different. Below is a bit of context to set the stage for the data that are presented in this chapter.

Native American History

The course Native American History is an introductory Native studies course taught by a male, veteran Native/Indigenous studies professor who has been teaching since the late 1970's. The course is taught on one day a week, for two and a half hours. Though the course is entitled Native American History, the professor puts Native American History within a larger context of global Indigenous history and contemporary issues. Given the controversial nature of Native American history, the professor clearly outlines the history presented in the course as a perspective, and a perspective that comes for the instructor's experiences as an Indigenous person and scholar. During a one-on-one interview the professor stated the following about their approach to teaching Native American History,

It's really necessary to teach history as a process not just as a listing. It isn't a laundry list of important personalities, dates, and events. History as a process is absolutely critical. Why do I say that, I start out in the semester talking about the convergence of two hemispheres...with very different peoples, with very different lifestyles, with very different views of what private property was about, very

different views about spirituality and religion, very different views of what warfare is about. There are just so many contrasts of the people of two converging worlds, the people that came together on the shores of the Caribbean, the southwest, and the eastern seaboard. I typically start out going west to east, which is contrary to the way American history is taught. Coming from east to west... as if the British were the first folks to set foot on Turtle Island.... right? So, I've learned to teach history as process. I turn things upside down. I encourage reading of Natives' perspectives of their own histories. Creation stories are important, but I also include archeological accounts of the peopling of the western hemisphere, how did that happen? There are contrasting viewpoints not only between Native people who have their own creation stories, but also between archeologist and scientist. So, history is a process. It's also a point of view. It's a matter of perspective. (Interview, April 25, 2012)

This course is taught from a critical perspective that allows students to learn about historical events, discuss contemporary political issues taking place in Indigenous communities, critique the role of capitalism in Indigenous lives, sacred spaces and land usage, and examine Native resistance to colonizing policy and structures.

Federal Indian Law

The course Federal Indian Law is an upper division course taught similarly to a third year law class. This course often attracts students who hope to attend law school and are exploring human rights and Indian law as a profession. It is taught twice a week for an hour and fifteen minutes each meeting. The Federal Indian Law course is taught by a female, Native legal practitioner and scholar who has been teaching for approximately 15 years at the college level.

This professor also brings in an Indigenous perspective and relevant case law from other white settler countries such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Because this course is taught as a third year law class, students focus on individual case laws that have affected and in many cases still affect the lives of Native American and Indigenous people. During a one-on-one interview with the professor, she stated her approach to teaching Native studies courses,

Teaching for me is a form of activism as well as a form survival. It is critical that students, Native students and non-Native students in particular, understand how critical it is to call name to the colonization that continues today.... especially for Native women and Native children. Native studies is so critical within the discipline of Ethnic Studies. It makes me feel that my job is critical. It's linked to survival issues and it's integral that future generations are informed around Indian issues and that students will potentially support those issues. I'd also say that for students of color and especially female students of color, that the classroom itself is a site of liberation. (Interview, April 26, 2012)

Students leave this course learning how to read, understand, and analyze legal cases, and have the opportunity to present oral argument in a formal courtroom-like setting. From the students' perspective, the course has a reputation for being extremely rigorous, yet valuable.

The Student Sample

At the beginning of the chapter, I presented an overview of the student population that participated in the online portion of this study. As a reminder, the sample of the online portion of this study were largely female (80%), White (78%), traditionally aged college students (63%), and students who are upper classman (76%). This context is helpful because the focus group sample differs somewhat from the online student sample.

The students who self-selected into the focus group were not representative of the general student population at the large Western University where this study was conducted and differed somewhat from the larger sample of students that participated in the survey. The focus group opportunity seemed to attract students who are often on the margins in higher education settings and are from cultural groups that are often silent. This study attracted students that self-identified as being Native American themselves or are exploring their genealogical connection to Native communities; women; students who identify as people of color; commuters/non-traditional, and students who identify as being gay or lesbian. Generally, the students that chose to participate in the study already considered themselves social justice advocates and generally “more aware” than the average college student. Many of the students suggested they were majoring in subjects like ethnic studies, sociology, history, liberal arts, and women’s studies. Though the purpose of this study was to hear the voices of mainstream college students, it appears likely that students who are often silenced were attracted to the study and for the opportunity to extend their learning outside the classroom. Because these students were attracted to the study and may often have less voice than their mainstream counterparts, extra care was taken to include their voices using their words. Table 4.9 provides a demographic breakdown of focus group participants based on information they volunteered.

Table 4.9

Focus Group Demographics

| Pseudonym | Course Enrolled In | Major/ Minor | College Classification | Race | Gender | Self-identified sexual orientation |
|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---|
| Jennifer | Native American History | Equine Science/Sociology | Junior | White | Female | |
| Maria | Native American History | History/Spanish | Senior | Native descent | Female | |
| Rachel | Native American History | Ethnic Studies | | White | Female | Lesbian |
| Joy | Federal Indian Law | Ethnic Studies/Women's studies | Junior | White | Female | |
| Halle | Federal Indian Law | Ethnic Studies | Junior | Native | Female | |
| Cheryl | Federal Indian Law | Liberal Arts | Junior | White | Female | |
| Laura | Federal Indian Law | Ethnic Studies/Political Science | Junior | White | Female | |
| Craig | Federal Indian Law | Liberal Arts | Senior | White | Male | Gay |
| Eli | Federal Indian Law | Ethnic Studies | Sophomore | Chicano /Native | Male | |
| Giselle | Federal Indian Law | Ethnic Studies | Senior | Black | Female | |
| Yesmina | Federal Indian Law | Liberal Arts | Senior | White | Female | |

As mentioned above, three focus groups were scheduled at the students' convenience using the online *Doodle* scheduling tool. One focus group was conducted with three students from the Native American History course out of forty possible students. Two focus groups were conducted with students in Federal Indian Law, for a total of eight students out of a possible 20.

Four additional students indicated they wished to participate, but we were unable to find a mutual time to get all the students together. Those students that stated they wanted to participate but were unable, were given the opportunity to provide their feedback via phone or email, but none of the students responded to the additional opportunities. The focus group meetings were conducted using a combination of conference call software in which all participants called into a single conference line and PowerPoint slides. During the distance focus group a broadcasted PowerPoint presentation was also used to help set the stage for using the distance technology, to create a visual of virtual seating arrangements, and the overarching focus group questions were provided to help guide the conversation. The PowerPoint presentation used for the focus group can be found in Appendix D.

To provide additional context for the focus groups and differences between the courses, attracting and retaining students for the Native American History focus group was quite difficult. Six students in the Native American History course signed up for the focus groups, but only three participated. Three students is quite a small number and surely not representative of the voices of the 40 students enrolled in the course. On the other hand, eight Federal Indian Law students participated out of a possible twenty in the focus group. The focus group dynamics were very different between classes. Native American History and Law have different but complementary content, the courses are designed for students at different levels (the History class is introductory and the other is in many cases law school preparation), and the students have different levels of interaction as part of the course. As I learned from the focus group, the Federal Indian Law students knew each other well because they have a smaller class size and they were also engaged in out-of-class study groups, while the students who participated in the history group did not know each other well. The difference in the dynamic with the Federal

Indian Law focus group is that their familiarity with each other seems to have allowed them to have a more engaged conversation both with me as the facilitator and with each other. The students generally felt very comfortable with the focus group experience. One white, female Indian Law student stated, “Thank you for giving me the opportunity to extend my learning outside of the classroom.” An African American female student in the other Indian Law class said at the conclusion of the focus group, “Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate. I didn’t know what to expect, but I really enjoyed your questions.” My general sense as the facilitator was that the students in the Federal Indian Law groups were very engaged and excited to talk about their new knowledge and course experiences. In the Native American History course the students directed their questions and comments to me as the facilitator only. My sense as the facilitator of this focus group was the students were less engaged and maybe this was due to feeling uncomfortable with each other and discussing sensitive content in a distance environment. The focus group was held in the last two weeks of the semester so that students would have maximum time in the course, but conducting the focus group at this time in the semester also meant that students were turning their attention and focus to final exams, papers, and projects. The dynamics described above should be taken into consideration when planning future focus groups.

Open-ended Survey Responses

Data analysis first involved becoming immersed in the data. The text data from the online open-ended responses were reviewed and then put into a matrix where similar statements were grouped. The collection of open-ended responses provided an opportunity to collect a larger amount of qualitative data as part of the PRATNA administration. The open-ended responses are divided into students’ learning expectations and key learning experiences.

Learning Expectations: Contemporary Native Stereotypes v. the Law

Table 4.10 represents a sample of students’ pre-course PRATNA responses regarding their course expectations with the frequency of similar responses. The most frequently described expectations included better understanding of experiences of Native Americans with respect to the legal system and better understanding of Native American culture in general. Additional topics included, more specifically, history of Native Americans leading up to present-day traditions, beyond “the basics” taught in general education courses regarding Native American culture, and history of the lifeways, spiritual practices, relationship to the earth, and battles. Finally, 3 students expressed interest in learning more about Native Americans’ struggles with an interest in taking action to address inequities and oppression.

Table 4.10

Summary Table of Student’s Course Expectations

| Summary Response | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| I hope to have a better understanding of the experiences of Native Americans in the legal system and to know more about the legal precedents that have been established around Native rights. | 13 |
| I hope to get a better understanding of their culture. | 10 |
| I hope to have more of an understanding about the history of Native Americans and how they got to where they are today. Also, what present day looks like-what traditions are still around, what tribes look like etc. | 4 |
| The things that are generally skipped over when talking about Native Americans since most places only tell us the basics. | 4 |
| I hope to further my basic knowledge of the history and lifeways of Native Americans. I am interested in how these people live and how they maintain their relationship to the earth. I also wish to learn as much as I can about the religious aspects of Natives. | 4 |
| I am interested in the history of Native American people. Much of their past is a mystery to me and I would like to learn as much | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| as I can about their battles, their customs, and ultimately, who they really were. | |
| I hope to learn of more about their struggle. I am aware that they have not always been treated well but to get a better understanding about it and also see if there is anyway I can help later. | 3 |

In addition to summarizing the responses, I also examined the discursive choices of the students in their written words to more fully explore their attitudes. First, there are interesting observations around students’ stated expectations that also point to some of the stereotypes with which students may enter a Native studies class. As Morris (2011) states, “the knowledge that people typically possess (regarding Native Americans) comes from television, movies, families, fiction novels, the education system, and society as a whole. In these sources the American Indian is seen as primitive, exotic, savage, spiritual, romantic, and noble” (p.1). In the student responses represented in the pre-test, words and phrases such as, “they”, “their”, “these people” and “how they got to where they are today” are used. These terms and phrases position Native Americans as the exotic other in relationship to mainstream white Americans.

Additionally, when discussing “their history” i.e Native American history, this experience is expressed by many students’ responses as different from ‘American’ history though Native Americans are the first Americans. It is also interesting to note the topics students expressed interest in, and expected to learn as part of a Native studies course. Students enrolled in Native American History expected to learn: “how they (Native people) maintain their relationship to the earth”; “religious aspects of Natives”; “their battles”; and “their customs”. As Native scholars have noted, many mainstream Americans often draw on stereotypes of Native Americans as spiritual, religious, and romanticized as warriors.

Lastly, the stereotype that Native Americans no longer exist and are a people of the past is seen in this student's statement regarding their learning expectations, "what traditions are still around, what tribes look like, etc." This statement seems to assume that Native people and their traditions are static and not adaptive to a changing and contemporary world. Given popular films that depict Native Americans, namely *The Last of the Mohicans* and *Dances with Wolves*, it is not surprising that the student views Native culture as a dying one. Both films focus on a white hero and "suggest the tragic ending of Indians as a race" (Liu and Zhang, 2011, p.109). On the other hand, the Federal Indian Law students' learning expectations were not as focused on learning about cultural aspects, but focused on understanding Native American law. The Federal Indian Law students have more experience with diversity issues than their Native American History counterparts. Survey results demonstrated that 74% of Federal Indian Law students had taken an ethnic studies class, 26% had taken a Native studies class, and 47% had taken a course with a diversity focus. In the History course, 11 percent of students had taken an ethnic studies class, 17% had taken a Native studies class, and 43% had taken a course with a diversity focus. What is helpful about these initial open-ended responses is they provide the largest sample of open-ended student responses at the beginning of the semester. Table 4.10 represents a sample of students' pre-course PRATNA responses regarding their course expectations with the frequency of similar responses. This pre-course data set is important because, as I discuss later in this chapter, the sample size gets smaller in other qualitative components of this research.

Impactful Learning Experiences

At the end of the semester students answered open-ended questions regarding their key learning experiences that resulted from taking either Native American History or Federal Indian law. The taxonomy represented in Figure 4.4 provides a visual representation of students'

responses grouped around five main themes regarding key learning experiences and growth in students understanding in the areas of: 1) Better understandings of the contentious U.S Government-Native American relationship, 2) recognition of gaps in their K-12 Education, 3) the need to become more critical consumers of information, 4) dealing with their personal emotional reaction to the new content, and 5) an appreciation for the law as an empowerment and advocacy tool. These themes were also mirrored in the focus groups held with a smaller group of students and will be discussed in greater detail within the context of the focus groups.

The theme ‘understandings of the contentious U.S Government-Native American relationships’ was a key impactful experience for 18 of the 41 students. The larger theme is further bifurcated into historical understandings of this relationship and contemporary understandings. Students also seemed to have a new appreciation for their connectedness and overlap. Under this larger heading, students discussed key learning experiences around Native American land rights, racism embedded within the law, broken treaties, and protection of Native lands. Racism embedded in the law was related to the higher than average rates of sexual violence against Native American women and case law which still contains racist language. The contemporary struggle to protect Native lands was discussed in regards to the chaining of Native lands and destruction evident from mining.

Four students were most impacted by the personal recognition of the gaps in their K-12 educations. The students in their open-ended responses discussed the lack of Native voice in the telling of history in their K-12 educations. Students were surprised to learn about government intervention in Native American lives in historical and in contemporary settings, but also the manipulation that occurred historically that impacts Native people today. One student expressed surprise to learn the history of local Native American communities. Learning there were local

massacres and current struggles taking place in Colorado around protection of Native lands was a key learning experience.

The theme ‘becoming more critical consumers’ was a key learning experience that, for three of the students stated would always stick with them beyond the course. The learning of history from a Native perspective brought a new awareness about the importance of perspective and how information is presented, to include what is left out. These three students also said that taking the course highlighted the ways that Native American’s contemporary struggles are missing from mainstream news media. Understanding that Native American struggles are missing made them want to seek out information for themselves to gain a more complete picture.

Five students were most impacted by their personal emotional reaction to learning about Native history from a Native perspective. These students reported at times feeling “heartbroken and angry.” Feelings of sadness seemed to spur a desire to help and inspiration that people have the power to help create change. Inspiration to create change largely came from law students who in many cases wanted to transform anger into action.

The last theme, ‘appreciation for the law as an empowerment and advocacy tool’ was the most impactful learning experience for 11 of the 19 law students who responded to the open-ended portion of the survey. The students who took Federal Indian Law seemed to have a new appreciation for the power of the law in Native lives and felt empowered to help create change by their course experience. One student mentioned her most impactful learning experience was finding her voice, while others found the tangible skills they will take away from the course as valuable beyond the course. The taxonomy in Figure 4.4 provides a visual of the data. The taxonomy is organized by the way themes were found in the data.

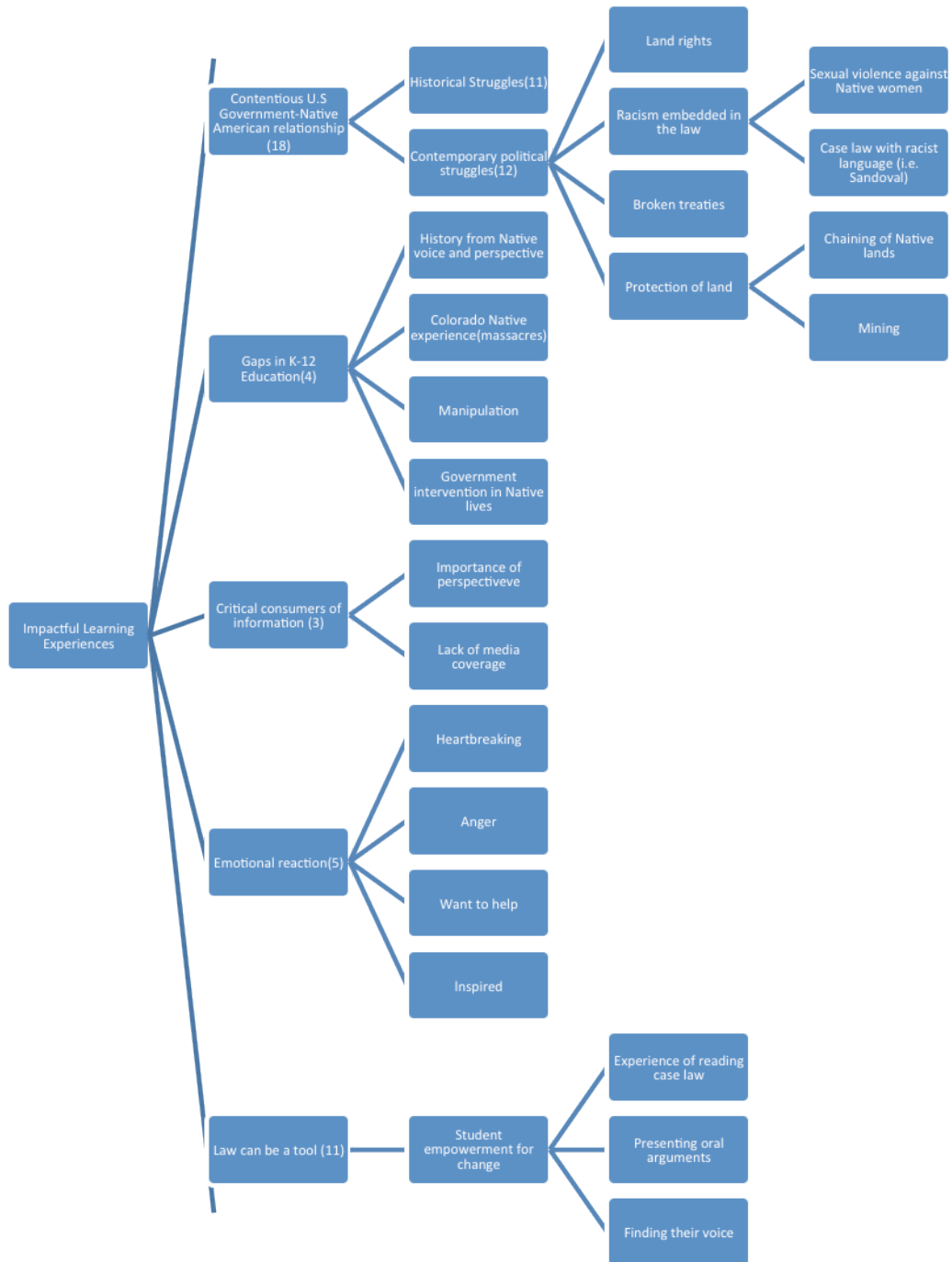


Figure 4.5: Taxonomy of Impactful Learning Experiences

In sum, analysis of the pre- and post-test open-ended responses more clearly indicate the types of shifts in participating students’ attitudes that may correspond with the shift in PRATNA scores.

While the pre-test responses revealed limited knowledge and stereotypical assumptions about the nature of Native American history and culture, the post-course responses indicate, at least among a number of students, a somewhat more complex and critical understanding regarding Native Americans' institutional oppression, unique government-to-government relationship with the U.S. Government, and the historical events leading to present day circumstances. The focus group analysis further examines students' perspectives on the knowledge and perspectives gained through the two courses.

Focus Group Findings

In the focus group and interview data analysis process, before transcribing I listened to the recordings multiple times, which helped in the transcription process. Next the recordings were transcribed to include ums, aahs, and pauses. The transcripts were then checked for accuracy and read multiple times to increase my familiarity before coding. In instances where I had unclear quotes, I went back to participants to check my understanding of their statements. The first round of codes were open and stuck close to the data. The second round of coding involved validation of the open codes by an additional researcher and then rounds of deductive codes were developed in conjunction with taxonomies and matrices to further analyze the data. Memoing was done without an outside researcher and this technique was used as an analytic tool (Glaser, 1998). This process helped the researcher see connections between codes and reflect on learning from the data.

The focus groups provided an opportunity to gain additional, nuanced data about student's experiences as participants in a Native American studies course. To gain deeper understandings, four primary questions were asked of focus group participants:

1. Upon entering a Native studies course, what are student's primary expectations regarding the content and topics they will learn?
2. As a result of participation in a Native studies class, what have students learned and/or unlearned regarding Native people that has been particularly significant?
3. How have student views of history remained the same or changed after participating in a Native studies course?
4. How does taking a Native studies course influence the way students discuss key historic events (for example Columbus Day or Thanksgiving) with the people close to them?

During the first focus group, students naturally started discussing their distance focus group experience and the fifth question was added to the second and third focus groups to gain insight into distance focus groups as a method.

5. To conduct this focus group we are using distance technology. What are some of the benefits and drawbacks for you of doing the focus group this way?

Three focus groups were conducted with students in two Native studies courses using distance focus group methods. To explore the overarching qualitative research question, *How does taking a Native studies course influence undergraduate college student's attitudes toward Native Americans, their history, and contemporary experiences?* thirteen students taking either Native American History or Federal Indian Law self-selected into the focus group opportunity. The following overarching themes were constructed from the data: 1) Learning and Unlearning: Past, Present, and Future; 2) Awareness, Emotion, and Moving Toward Action; 3) Locus of Change; 4) Participating in Distance Focus Groups

Theme 1: Learning and Unlearning: Past, Present, and Future

“I feel that education for the general population.... has really failed us in that way. It’s frustrating for me because I’ve just grown up with this idealistic picture of the U.S and Native relationship.” -Female focus group participant.

For the students in this study, one of the overarching themes was the process of learning, unlearning, and reconciling the limited information they have about Native people from their K-12 education, family discussions, and media images with their new knowledge. Four subthemes were also constructed under this overarching theme: a) Inadequacy of K-12 Education, b) Historical Myths and Stories We Tell Ourselves, c) Heroes and Villains, and d) Contemporary Circumstances Have Historical Roots.

Sub-theme 1a: Inadequacy of K-12 Education

During the focus group the students overall were very reflective as they tried to explain what they were taught about Native Americans growing up and in their schooling context, where that information came from, and how it differs or has been expanded as a result of taking a Native studies course. Some students expressed anger and feelings that they have been “lied to”; while others seemed generally annoyed that people thought they would not ‘figure it out’ (History from a Native American perspective). Three students expressed a sense of comfort that they finally had access to a more complete story.

One of the subthemes constructed from the focus group is recognition by participants that the education they had received prior to taking a Native American studies course had been lacking. Students seemed to have a very cursory understanding of the major events in Native American history such as the Trail of Tears, but taking a Native American studies course seems to highlight all that students have not heard about. One student stated, “I heard there was a Trail

of Tears, but I didn't know what exactly that meant or that there was more than one. Like I thought there was just one, but didn't know about all the people that died or the extent, or the stuff that happened afterward". In typical Native American studies courses students often learn about more than the Trail of Tears, they also learn about the Long Walk of the Navajo, and the other forced relocation efforts faced by Native Americans. Students also learn about the details of those relocations and the historical facts, such as Native people were walked hundreds of miles in the middle of winter and that that many people died along the way, especially older community members and children. The historical facts that detail the atrocities seem to be left out of student's Native American education up to the point of taking a Native American studies class.

Taking a Native studies course seems to help students fill in many gaps in their historical knowledge, giving them a more complete picture. In the story of Native-U.S. Government relationships as we learn it in K-12 schooling contexts, Native people simply lost the war and were overwhelmed by the might and intelligence of the White settlers. In actuality Native people were not always in a powerless relationship. One student reflected, "It's interesting to know the true history because I think it's taught in education systems that, um you know Europeans were more like a powerful power in terms of military might, but in reality they needed they Native people and they helped them survive. The tribes were in a much different position than they are now. Europeans actually made treaties to survive." Nearly all students were also surprised to hear of the persistence and multiple methods used to reduce the Native population. The failure of K-12 education to provide multiple voices in American history has lead to myths and misunderstandings of the Native American experience and history, from the perspective of focus group participants.

Sub-theme 1b: Historical Myths and Stories We Tell Ourselves

A key aspect of learning and unlearning Native American history seems to be a critical examination of the stereotypical Native American holidays, as they are one of the few times a year the general population thinks about Native Americans and children are taught about Native Americans across the country. When participating students were asked the question, has your view of holidays such as Thanksgiving and Columbus day changed or remained the same after taking this class a student reflected, “I never really thought about it from the historical viewpoint, but at the same time when I was in elementary school I always wondered why Native Americans are only talked about at one time of the year, that was the only time they were discussed.” This question stimulated quite a bit of conversation and two students’ new knowledge, perspectives, and passion were evident in the Federal Indian Law focus group. The power of a focus group really seemed to come through because these two students were able to relate, broaden, and add to one another’s perspectives, as seen in the transcript below. The focus group also seems to create cohesiveness where students do not feel alone in their more critical ideas.

Transcript Excerpt

| |
|---|
| <p>N: So... if everyone feels comfortable and doesn't have anything to add, I'd like to move on. So my next question, as a part of this course I'm sure you may have touched on key historic events. I'm just wondering if this course impacts the way you discuss key historic events? I was thinking about maybe Columbus Day or Thanksgiving as an example? Do you think you will talk about or view those events differently after taking this course?</p> |
| <p>Long pause....</p> |
| <p>N: Any thoughts?</p> |
| <p>Two begin at the same time (garbled) Hmmm.... Laughing....go ahead....sorry.</p> |

C: This is Craig. I guess um... growing up and in school we grew up learning the holidays-like Columbus is a great person and the Native people were nice and just our (White settlers) friends [Mocking tone of voice]. We know so little... Like Columbus thought he had the right to conquer the Americas and the people on it because he was Christian and the Native people weren't. Like the Pilgrims, they totally took advantage of the Native people.... at Thanksgiving we think everybody was just cool and down with each other...It's so off base! There are just all these cover-ups. ... We don't look at the history too closely because then we realize that Columbus didn't discover America and he enslaved and killed millions of people. The holidays were designed to make you spend money so you don't really focus on what the holiday are about and are really historically rooted in patriarchy and land ownership... I think I look at them (the holidays) differently....

J: This is Joy. I think Craig hit it on the head! I agree that I've never been a huge fan of the holidays. It's like he was reading my mind. It's really nationalist propaganda to keep us happy and proud about ourselves despite the terrible things we've done... an unacknowledgement...it's super sad.... We've done such horrible things we can't even be honest about it...I completely agree with everything he just said.

Students critiqued the practice of talking about Native people at one time of the year and the hidden status it creates. This hidden identity in student's minds also leads to a reframing of history from the colonizers perspective and a lack of acknowledgement of Native American stories and contributions. One female Native student stated, "People think that Native Americans are dead-that we don't exist anymore...." One example a Native student in the group gave in terms of the lack of acknowledgement of Native American contributions was the idea of democracy that our country was built upon when she stated,

People think that Native Americans are dead, that we don't exist anymore... There's such a glazing over of history... we think, oh how great like George Washington was, when at one point he was considered a terrorist in England; we count Ben Franklin one of the most amazing geniuses of our time but he stole the idea of democracy from the Iroquois Nation... things like this people don't know.

As part of learning and unlearning Native American history all students reflected and critiqued Native American myths and the ways certain American icons and monuments do not have the same positive association for Native communities. One female student who is exploring her Native ancestry commented on a recent family trip to South Dakota and realization about the positive association or myth around a site that has caused much controversy in Native communities,

Last year my family went on to a trip to Mount Rushmore. It totally caught me from a different perspective. That Native Americans were grieving that there are American faces on their sacred mountain. We've got this huge monument in the U.S that's celebrated. One side celebrates and the other side is grieving...

Critiquing and reflecting on the role of Native American myths beyond the holidays to include sacred sites and positive association with sports mascots could provide additional insight into student's attitudes and the process of learning and unlearning.

Sub-theme 1c: Heroes and Villains

The idea of how we frame historical figures as heroes or villains was revisited multiple times throughout the focus groups and several students noted that even people we see as American heroes were not sympathetic to Native people. One white female student in Native American History stated,

I was shocked by the ways some of our Presidents thought about Native American people. Abraham Lincoln for instance gave an order to hunt down and kill a bunch of Native Americans and especially their leaders. I was shocked to learn that.

Students in both classes were also attuned to the realization that certain groups (in this case Native Americans) are more vulnerable to government interference. Students in Native American history were particularly attuned to the experience of vulnerability of Native Americans in the United States, but also the U.S government's interaction with Indigenous the developing nations across the globe and throughout history. A female student in Native American history stated,

It's really upsetting to see kind of how business is done, about our government's treatment of Indigenous groups. I guess I am more cynical about our government and the way it interacts with Indigenous groups.... It's been kind of hard to come to terms with...

Learning about history from multiple vantage points and hearing the voices of those that are often silent seemed to call into question what students have learned about other great historical figures and their contribution to the world. A white male student in Federal Indian Law stated,

We create these myths of American history and we make people more than they are. They (some of our countries forefathers) were racist slave owners and in

many cases they took advantage. George Washington owned slaves. Thomas Jefferson owned slaves and we make them out to be these people with great morals who were just out to create the greatest country in the world. They didn't create the greatest country in the world because in reality they created problems that we are still dealing with today.

On the other side, a student exploring her connection to her Native ancestry seemed to be trying to process and understand her new knowledge without calling everything she had learned prior into question and really felt that we cannot judge historical figures by today's standards. As a female focus group participant stated, "He was an abolitionist and ended slavery. I guess then he was man of his times and it wasn't uncommon to own slaves, be violent, or kill people who were on your land. I think their actions aren't just about the person, but a commentary on the times that they lived. So it's not just on their actions but was what was okay at the times." This student felt that in many cases historical figures were just products of the time in which they lived. Unfortunately, delving into this idea and using the focus group to gain other student perspectives on this 'products of their time' argument was missed due to time constraints.

Sub-theme 1d: Contemporary Circumstances have Historical Roots

One of the overarching themes constructed that students seem to pinpoint as a key learning, is the idea that history truly lays the groundwork for circumstances today. In different ways taking Native American history seemed to put contemporary Native American circumstances on a historical continuum so students see the progression of history rather than seeing historical events as static. One male focus group participant in Federal Indian Law stated, "Circumstances today are rooted in all this law.... I would have never thought about it that way, and used to just think, "Oh that happened a long time ago", so it

doesn't really challenge you. Everything is built upon the history. I think it is a good realization that you just can't undo this. You're trying to undo a law that goes back to the history of the United States. It's not only historical, but has contemporary implications.

Students who were enrolled in Federal Indian Law reflected on this idea in depth because the legal decisions that are deemed historical still have weight in contemporary Native American lives. A white female participant stated,

What blew my mind though...was the racism embedded in the law... Like when we learned about the doctrine of discovery, learning that some of this stuff is still considered okay and constitutional. Like in the statues they use terms like heathen and savage. It's just clearly absolutely racist and not right. Some of this stuff still has legal standing in 2012... It just makes me think that maybe we haven't come that far.... It just reaffirms for me that even though its 2012 we still think Native people are beneath the White "superior" race. I find it disturbing even though I am White.

A Native American female student in the Native American History course echoed a similar sentiment,

I was able to take a Native American course when I was in high school so I knew some of this stuff, but it reaffirmed for me the ways racism is embedded in the law. It kind of reaffirms for me that even though we made big strides we haven't come as far as we think. We're pro human rights, color blind...but racism still exist. We have to actually do something to change it.

Reflecting on history and legal doctrine as having a large impact on contemporary circumstances led to students to reflect on their role and contributions to making changes. As one female student stated, “The history books kind of just present like ‘Oh this thing happened’, but it doesn’t talk about the implications today. Why people live on reservations... The problems Native people have today...were essentially chosen for them.” Learning and unlearning for these students seemed to put historical events on a timeline that takes events out of the past. Viewing events as being ‘just in the past’ seems to remove responsibility, while viewing historical events as a progression seemed to move students to a place of trying to figure out their role in changing the future. One white male student stated, “I’m realizing there are still implications today its not just historical facts. This stuff is still affecting people. I’m still trying to figure out how to make a change.”

The learning from taking a Native studies course for many students also seemed to take students from a place of dismissing historical events as “just something that happened in the past” into the present because students were able to deeply reflect on history as a progression that leads us into present day realities, contemporary implications, and possibilities for change.

Theme 2: Emotion, Awareness, and Moving Toward Action

“We don’t want to think about the actual history because then you have to do something. I just feel like being informed is hard...ignorance is bliss. You want to erase this [Atrocities in Native history]. When you know, then you have to think about what am I doing today to fix this and you have to look and see the people that are still most impacted today.” –White male focus group participant

Gaining a more complete picture of American history is not a painless process for the students who participated in the focus groups. Students expressed deep emotions, such as anger,

confusion, frustration, outrage, and sadness as they tried to reconcile what they have been taught with what they have learned and exploring what they should do going forward. Three subthemes were constructed under this overarching theme: a) Moving Toward a More Critical Orientation, b) Responsibility to Educate Oneself, and c) Empowerment Through the Law

Sub-theme 2a: Moving Toward a More Critical Orientation

Moving toward a more critical orientation for the students in the focus group seemed to be spurred by their emotional reaction to the knowledge they acquired. One African American female student stated, “I struggled with this class.... trying not to be so angry with the way things are and have been.” In many ways the emotion felt during the course seem to fuel student’s desire to learn more, think more critically, and stay engaged. A white female student echoed a similar response about her emotional response to the course when she stated, “I feel it (anger) was good for me because it makes me want to take action and stay educated.” For four of the students, the emotions triggered by learning new knowledge about Native history was a powerful motivator to learn more and seriously look toward action.

Students seemed to gain a more critical perspective in a multitude of ways around a multitude of topics. One of the topics focus group participants addressed was the ‘angle’ or perspective we all bring to the classroom as both students and instructors. One female student in Native American History addressed this when she said, “I think everything.... all the classes that we’re in have an angle, so that goes back to being a critical consumer of *all* the information.” Coming to the realization that everyone brings their experience, perspectives, and history into the classroom is an important realization for students because then they may take more responsibility for their own learning. Gaining a more critical perspective of all the information gained is an

important life skill that helps students filter and analyze past learning as well. One female student in Native American History stated,

It's interesting because your perspective determines so much. It really determines which side you're on and how you see historical, factual events.... It's just really surprising because you can see someone from a U.S perspective that's viewed as patriot or a hero.... and then on the other side they're seen as a horrible enemy.... I feel my view of history has been expanded to understand both sides-and just to be more objective in my understanding of history.

One of the key aspects of gaining a more critical perspective is analyzing power and privilege. Students did this for an array of topics. One white, male Federal Indian Law student reflected, "As you learn more about the law and history...the class reaffirmed how the government privileges those who are male and White."

One critique of power and privilege also included reflection on the U.S. economic structure and came back to the realization regarding vulnerability. One white female student stated, "Capitalism is not beneficial for the majority of the Indigenous population.... how the government can take advantage of those populations because they're in poverty and they're in a vulnerable position." Native studies students also reflected on in and out of classroom discussions regarding the role of the government and government officials in their historical and contemporary dealings with Native people. Native studies students were able to make connections between U.S interactions with Native people historically and its interactions internationally and domestically with vulnerable groups. Critical perspectives means integrating multiple perspectives and the ways a capitalistic system can oppress some while privileging others. Critical perspectives in this case also points to a greater awareness and skepticism about

governmental interactions with Indigenous people. For example, one female Native American History student stated,

Like in a lot of the cases the government is what is causing a lot of the pain and hurt in a lot of cases of what has gone on in the past. I don't think the government is perfect or can save the world. I certainly think the government has a role and its limitations. People get into those positions of power and abuse, and then they make their wealth of the backs of people who are in poverty... That's just something I've kind of taken away from taking these classes...through self-reflection...

Gaining a more critical perspective seems to push students beyond a cursory understanding, and into becoming more responsible for gaining new information.

Sub-theme 2b: Responsibility to Educate Oneself

Three students discussed in-depth the need to take responsibility to educate oneself given misinformation or missing information about Native people in mainstream media. As one female participant aptly stated, “The media doesn't make a point of communicating all the information. I think I need to investigate more. Instead of waiting for information to be fed to me, I need to investigate more...” Two primary ideas came of this theme around responsibility to educate oneself. First, students reflected on the Native struggles they've seen in the media and came to the realization that they've seen very few. Because Native struggles are largely hidden or unacknowledged in the media, we must all be individually responsible to seek out information. Students were generally surprised to learn of the contemporary Native struggles taking place in federal courts and in international forums such as the United Nations. One female focus group

participant stated, “One example is the Dann Sisters² teaching the U.N. There’s so much political that is going on that we never hear about. It encouraged me to be more educated politically.” Awareness of contemporary political battles seemed to be empowering for students because it provides an action. Students in Federal Indian law specifically seemed to see the law as a tool and their way to make change. As one male student stated, “I’m realizing there are still implications today; it’s not just historical facts. This stuff is still affecting people. I’m still trying to figure out how to make a change. The law is one way to make a change. I can fine-tune my knowledge”. Student’s recognition and new awareness of Native American political struggles that are largely hidden seemed to fuel many participating student’s desire to be advocates. For Federal Indian law students in particular, their positive course experience seemed to validate the career path many students hoped to take, seeing the law as a tool of empowerment.

Sub-theme 2c: Empowerment Through the Law

For the majority of focus group participants, with new awareness of Native American issues and the knowledge that Native people are engaged in contemporary battles for sovereignty, self-determination, protection of Native people, language, and lands, students often want to know what can they do. For Federal Indian law students one of the largest realizations seemed to be the complexities of the U.S Government-Tribal relationship and the role the law plays in Native American lives. One male Chicano/Native male student stated,

² The student’s reference to the Dann Sisters is in regard to two Western Shoshone sisters who are elders and activist. On behalf of the Western Shoshone they have advocated in federal court and to the United Nations that the U.S. government must honor the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley Treaty which states the tribe would never have to give up its land. The Shoshone have lost much of this land due to ‘settler encroachment’ and the Bureau of Land Management has used some of this land for nuclear testing.

I don't think any other group of people or ethnicity...like the condition of their lives are as determined legally as it has been for tribes of Native peoples. Access to water, or access to education, whether you're federally enrolled...just how much the law affects the day-to-day lives of Native Americans.

Because the law has such a huge role in Native community's affairs, understanding the law is a key place for advocacy. Where the law determines Native American lives also became personal for students. One African American female student stated,

Another thing that stuck out for me was the sexual violence against Native American women, you know, I just kind of wonder why it isn't a hot topic issue? It's an epidemic. And I don't understand, why it isn't a wide spread concern, why there aren't people reacting to it?

This student's statement seemed to draw on a deep personal connection and angered her possibly due to a shared identity with Native women, as both a woman and person of color, and as someone who could also be without legal protection. Many of the Native studies students expressed feeling disheartened when they learned about the details of Native American history, but coming to understand the law as a tool to create social change seemed to take them from sitting with deep emotions only to advocacy. The need for advocacy came out very clearly in the focus groups with Federal Indian Law students. The clear trend toward advocacy could be the result of solution focused, practice-based legal experiences. One female student stated, "You can use policy as a positive tool... it's not only the awful things that have happened in history. Federal Indian law tells us what we can do." This sentiment was also seen in another female

student's comment, where she states a feeling of empowerment that there is a role for young people to help solve social problems,

It's optimistic that the large struggle isn't over. It's happening still...it's an ongoing process that we can be a part of if we want to be.... that there are people struggling and working hard to solve the problems. The movement for social justice isn't over and we have the opportunity to influence things.

Five out of the eight Federal Indian Law students described the process of looking at social issues through a legal lens, learning to read case law, and knowing there is an action they can take to be part of the solution as empowering for them personally. Their locus of change is in some ways quite limited as they navigate safe and unsafe spaces for advocacy.

Theme 3: Locus of Change: Safe and Unsafe Spaces

“You know we tell people who challenge our ideals of American greatness that they are wrong, lying....or not telling the truth....”-Male focus group participant

The students who participated in this study seemed to continually struggle with the question of ‘now what?’ They described struggling to apply and spread their new knowledge, but generally have to pick and choose to whom and where they will share. They talked about looking for safe, open people and places to share what they have learned and due to family dynamics and beliefs, generational differences, and their perception of safe and unsafe spaces choose what advocacy might look like for them. Three subthemes were constructed under this overarching theme: a) Familial Context, b) Friends and Colleagues, and c) Looking Toward the Future, as

depicted in Figure 4.5. As students get farther away from the place that is most familiar, the more comfortable they seem to be with advocacy.

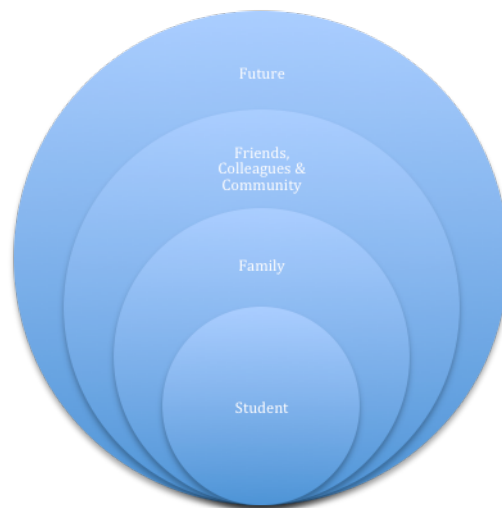


Figure 4.6: Locus of Control Visual

Sub-theme 3a: Familial Context

For the majority of students, the family they grew up in and will return to is deemed an unsafe, unproductive space to teach and share their new information. For half of the students that participated in the focus group, their own culture's norms give them less voice in their family due to educational differences, age, the perspective that universities instill a leftist education, and political differences. Despite different familial contexts, all participants except for two Native American women (one with a strong Native identity and the other exploring her Native identity) felt comfortable discussing their new knowledge within their family environments. One of the times the student's knowledge is introduced to the family is around the holidays when students

return to their family environments. One male Chicano/Native student's statement reflected similar experiences for participants,

It's really hard in my family to bring that (true reason for Thanksgiving) up during Thanksgiving, because when I do, I'm the one who's being difficult.... I'm the one who can't get over it necessarily, and like people just say it (the conversation) is a buzzkill.... But they didn't have access to the education that I have, and so that's their response.

In the quote above, the student highlighted the challenge of returning to a familial context from the university environment with new knowledge, yet being unable to share it. Challenging familial norms and traditions can often be a challenge for first generation college students like this one, but he also feels less comfortable disrupting family norms.

This same student stated,

I'm really asking, how do I change my own family's traditions around this day? And looking more towards the future, and I think it's really hard to do something drastic right now, I'm the youngest sitting at the table, and so it's kind of like ugh...

This student is also interacting with cultural norms where elders are respected and listened to and people who are young 'know their place' within a traditionally hierarchal family structure. When students return home from the university setting with new knowledge, they also may come in contact with parents and family members whose political beliefs and ideology may be different from their own. As one white, male student stated, "My step-dad and my Mom are pretty conservative...I guess they just don't want to hear about it." Similar quotes indicating that the family system has been

either unreceptive to the student's new knowledge or the student is afraid to try to introduce the topic included:

- It's hard to discuss this stuff with my family like at Thanksgiving. My family has no idea about the implications of Thanksgiving, so I just have to focus on being grateful for my family.
- The people closest to me, like my friends and my partner's family members, um...like partner's family members for instance are not open to new perspectives. I generally don't try to talk about things like that because they get really upset...when I try to talk about it.
- They don't want to hear it. They turn a blind ear or people just think I'm being radical

For the majority of students in the focus group, though they may want to explore their personal identities as advocates and take a more radical position, the familial context is largely an unsafe space to do this. They personally encounter the challenge of expressing a marginal view and recognize the opposition they will face when challenging mainstream American ideals and mythology.

On the other hand, two women (one with a strong Native identity and the other exploring her family's Native genealogical roots) engage their new knowledge within their familial context freely. The female student exploring her genealogical connection stated, "My family is really open (to new course knowledge). My grandmother was actually forcibly removed from Florida or Oklahoma. We have a different perspective because it's not just history-it's my family's history." The other Native student also discussed her knowledge with family members and Native history within the context of the stereotypical Native holidays celebrated. She stated,

It actually comes up a lot in my family, but I am Native. It comes up during the holidays, but we make jokes about it. 'Columbus discovered

America...yeah right (laughing). How can you discover something that was already here?' (laughing). We joke about it, but can't change it... can't change it.

Both of these comments regarding discussions within the familial context are interesting because those students with a Native connection or who identify as being Native are the students engaging with these topics and seem to have the only safe, open space to do so. As the normative participating students move farther away from the home environments, their comfort with taking on a more radical, critical perspective seemed to grow.

Sub-theme 3b: Friends and Colleagues

When students are outside of their familial environment, the majority of students seemed to feel comfortable assuming a more radical, critical identity and position. When discussing Native issues and advocacy in the university environment and with friends in a higher education setting, students were much more willing to challenge mainstream ideals. One female student who identified as being lesbian was actively engaged in campus advocacy activities. She stated,

I'm part of a group called Fair Advocates for Cultural Truths. We hosted the *Canary Effect* on Columbus Day. So, I have experienced some cool things on campus, but I've also seen a heard a lot of ignorant, stereotypical things when you try to discuss the real meaning of these holidays-which is hurtful.

This student was actively participating in campus awareness campaigns and acknowledged that her peers were not always the most receptive yet; she still focused her energy outside the home environment. In the focus group, when discussing conversations with peers, a female student stated, "People turn a blind ear because they think, 'this is America, we're pro democracy, we're

pro human rights, this is post-racial America'. With friends and colleagues this student challenged some of the core "legitimizing myths" (Johnson 2006) that perpetuate White dominance in America. In the same strain, a male student challenged his peers' awareness of Native political struggles and society as complicit if people do not act to make change. He stated, "Another example is like if you say the 'G word' (genocide)-you have to do something. If you know what is going on with Native Americans then you have to do something." With friends and colleagues he pointed to their ignorance as a protective factor to actually having to engage in finding a solution. Many students in the focus group discussed their role in being advocates and making changes that can impact future generations. They seemed to direct their energy away from the families as a site for change and expressed feeling more comfortable taking on the challenge of education of their friends, colleagues, and looking toward the future.

Sub-theme 3c: Looking Toward the Future

The larger locus of control theme constructed is really about students struggling to identify spaces to make changes. For some students, past experiences discussing sensitive topics leads them away from discussing particular topics with families while other students simply anticipate their message will not be well received. The future on the other hand seems to be the ideal place to make change in many of these student's eyes. One male Chicano student sees his future family as a place to make change. He states,

But like towards the future, but if I decide to have children of my own... really asking myself why does the United states deem it as a holiday and what am I going to do on this day to make sure that they understand, like all this isn't a holiday. You know? Like we're not celebrating the genocide

of Native people, even though like no one thinks about that. That is what they're doing on Thanksgiving.

One Native American female student saw herself educating others in the future as a part of her responsibility. She stated, "I almost feel as if I have this responsibility to start spreading what I know, and hopefully more people can become educated and conscientious with their words and actions." An African American female student stated, "I find myself a little more aware, I pay attention to the Native American struggle a little bit more now, I talk to people and mention it more than I ever have." For these students creating change is very future-oriented and in many cases the site of this change is uncertain, except for the student who wants to make changes in his future family's understanding of American history and Native American holidays.

Convergent Findings

The final overarching research question asks, *To what extent and in what ways do focus groups with students, the examination of open-ended survey responses, and instructor interviews contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of student's PRATNA scores and course experiences?* The purpose of mixed method research is to gain a more complete understanding of a research question by combining methodological approaches. In this case methodological approaches were combined engaging a critical lens.

To recap, general findings regarding pre test scores indicate statically significant changes in student's PRATNA scores from the pre and post course test were seen. Student's who have taken past Native studies and diversity courses had statistically significant scores from students who had not taken those courses. Law students differed from History students. Law students came in to the course with higher baseline PRATNA scores on the pre-test and showed more growth after taking the course. Through the analysis of individual response scores on the

PRATNA, the data seem to indicate that student's content knowledge regarding Native Americans became more accepting while their responses to questions regarding Native stereotypes remained the same.

The qualitative data can help provide some context for these findings. The students who answered the open-ended survey response questions and participated in the focus group had seemingly parallel responses about their Native studies course experiences in terms of key learning experiences. Student's responses seemed to indicate large jumps in Native American historical and contemporary knowledge. Students seem to gain a greater appreciation for Native American history as a continuum of events leading to present day circumstances-which better situates the past, present and future. Participants who received their first taste of Native American content may or may not move to the locus of change theme and into figuring out how they can create change. Federal Indian Law students seemed to be more critically examining their role to make change through legal advocacy and through educating their friends, colleagues and into the future. None of the students in the study reflected on their own complicit or explicit contributions to maintaining the status quo. Though both courses engage critical Native American content with students, the syllabi do not reflect activities that allow for critical self-reflection. The lack of critical, self-reflective activities may contribute to lack the change in the individual response item scores around stereotypes. The convergence of mixed methods allows us to see that while, yes, student's PRATNA scores changed in statistically significant ways without the qualitative data we would not have context for the variations in the PRATNA scores and gaps in Native studies content that might lead to greater attitudinal growth and advocacy.

Emergent Findings: Participating in Distance Focus Groups

“I don’t know if this method (distance focus group method) is either good or bad, it’s just different.” -Male focus group participant.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the purpose of the qualitative portion of this study is to understand students’ experiences and process of taking Native American studies courses. The design of this study also allowed for the collection of students responses using distance technology. The experience of collecting sensitive data using distance technology lends itself to methodological exploration regarding the benefits and drawbacks of the approach. This exploration is important to the field because distance technology will be used increasingly to collect information and this study offered an opportunity to discuss benefits and drawbacks with participants.

Benefits

Toward the conclusion of the focus groups, each group was asked the question, what were the benefits and drawbacks of participating in a focus group from a distance? The students overall, were very balanced in their assessment of the experience and looked at the distance focus group from their experiences as participants and some assessed the experience from the perspective of a researcher. The benefits include: 1) Ability to multitask, 2) More willingness to participate 3) Anonymity 4) Sensitive topics discussed safely and, 5) Geographic flexibility for the researcher.

Multitasking

The students who participated in the focus group as whole found that one of the primary benefits of distance focus groups as a method was it allowed them to multitask. At one point during a focus group, I heard background noise and a bit of static. When I asked the participants

one female student said, “I have to head to class now”, indicating she was able to participate in the focus group because she squeezed it in between other obligations. One female focus group participant said, “One of the benefits that I can think of, I guess it depends on how you structure it, but I can do multiple things. I just sewed up a hole in the backseat of my car. [All laughing]. I can do other things while this is going on. I feel like this conversation doesn’t take away from my or your time.” The students said in multiple and varied ways that they are very busy and in order to contribute, it is ideal that they be able to do multiple things at one. Another female student said, “On the phone you’re still getting everyone’s ideas and thoughts, which is a plus, and I can still be at home making spaghetti.” The student seemed to be pointing out that multitasking is mutually beneficial for researchers and for participants leading to a win-win situation. Though the ability to multitask is a benefit for participants, the researcher has to work hard to engage all participants fully.

More willing to participate

For two students in particular, the distance method of collecting data made them more willing to participate. One male student stated,

For me, I live in Denver and I only come on campus a couple of days a week. For me it’s just easier on the phone. I thought the coordinating online was really cool too (referring to Doodle). I’ve done a focus group on campus and people didn’t show up. Here I can do other stuff if I need to and I’m super busy.

For the student above, living away from campus makes him less likely to participate in face-to-face focus groups depending on the time and day of the week the group will take place. The distance method allowed him to have more flexibility and participate from home without make

an hour drive to campus. For one female student who commented, she felt that distance focus groups increased her willingness to participate because this method decreased her social, public speaking concerns. She commented, “The phone is good because I know that I get really nervous talking in front of people...on the phone there is no one watching me talk.” These students illustrate are two examples where distance methods might be a good way to collect information from hard to reach students such as non-traditional and/or commuter students and students that may feel uncomfortable speaking in face-to-face groups.

Anonymity

Participant anonymity was mentioned as both a benefit and a drawback of the distance method. I will discuss the drawback in more detail below and focus on the benefits here. When discussing benefits one female student stated, “I think that it can be a benefit to talk about sensitive subjects (using distance methods) because I could have used a pseudonym and you wouldn’t know it was me-I can say exactly how I feel and be really honest.” At the beginning of each focus group, I gave students the option to choose a pseudonym for the purposes of the focus group. None of the participants made the choice to use a pseudonym, so the pseudonyms you see in the transcript excerpts were chosen by the researcher. Though students opted not to use a fake name, the possibility seemed to make students feel more comfortable. Some students thought that anonymity could increase honesty among researcher participants. One female student stated, “If I said something that offended you I would never have to look at you in the face [laughing] people might be more blunt, direct, and honest with the responses because its not personal.” Another female student stated, “I took a marketing research class last semester and that’s one thing (lack of anonymity) that makes people uncomfortable giving their opinions.” The student’s

responses around anonymity validate one of the key challenges when assessing racial attitudes and discussing sensitive topics-participant's potential for socially desirable responses.

Sensitive topics discussed safely

On the other side of participants who respond in social desirable ways, are participants who may use a focus group as a forum for being insensitive and for challenging sensitive topics in a way that makes others uncomfortable. One female student commented, "I think that sometimes the distance can be beneficial. Especially if someone can get upset by the topic-not having them in the same room you don't have a threat of physical violent. Some people get really pissed about things that they shouldn't." This might be particularly helpful to keep in mind when a researcher wants to collect information using focus groups that is controversial in nature or may have the potential for violence or extreme discomfort among participants.

Geographic flexibility for the researcher

In addition to looking at the benefits of a distance focus group from the participant's perspective, two students also looked at the benefits from a researchers perspective. The students saw geographic flexibility as a key benefits, because the researcher does not have to travel, you can collect information from hard to reach geographic populations, and they though there may be more potential to include more people in a study. "I think the distance focus group is also cool because you don't have to travel to a bunch of different places. That's a cool way to get lots of information." For the students in this study who were all between the ages of 18-24, they are very comfortable as technology users and see its application across many environments. Another female student stated,

I think that one of the benefits is geographical. You can have participants from different areas from the country, which gives you a lot of freedom.

You could do focus groups with students in Native American classes all over the country and you don't neglect students who are geographically hard to get to. It seems that for your research you can get a more accurate pool. Maybe that makes things less biased...

The students' feedback was very helpful and during the course of this focus group the researcher did not challenge student's misunderstanding or re-educate them on 'bias' in regards to qualitative research. I also did not refute or offer the other side of the argument regarding distance methods to reach clients geographically hard to reach clients, who may also have limited access to distance infrastructure and technology. This debate leads into drawbacks of the method.

Drawbacks

When discussing the drawbacks of the distance focus group method, the students gave careful consideration to the elements that were challenging to them as participants. The challenges were largely in the areas of: 1) Lack of social cues to start speaking 2) Inability to see expressions and reactions could lead to misunderstandings, and 3) Anonymity could lead to more confrontation/insensitive remarks. Transcript excerpts are provided to illustrate some of the challenges outlined by students.

Lack of social cues to begin speaking

The largest, most frequency discussed drawback of distance focus group by all students was the lack of social cues to begin speaking. Students were challenged to participate in the conversation while being courteous to their fellow participants. The lack of social cues at times, led to awkward pauses and more than one participant starting at the same time. One female student commented, "I think it's hard to respond to each other too. I think over the phone it's so

much harder to have that. Yeah, just because those cues aren't there, as to when someone is going to talk or when someone is silent." The transcript excerpt below provides an example of this challenge within the context of a focus group.

Transcript Excerpt: Awkward Pauses

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Changed view of historical event</p> | <p>M: I was actually thinking about some of the videos we watched... like about Wounded Knee. Hmm....We saw all these old images of American soldiers and massacred Indians....Usually when we see...those old images are framed and in a really positive light versus this guy just gave the go-ahead to kill hundreds of people...</p> |
| | <p>N: I heard you start to speak...did you want to add something?</p> |
| <p>Limited k-12 education Unawareness of extent Need for specific NA class</p> | <p>R: Yeah.... Sorry I'm just walking in the direction of my next class right now so just one second...Ok....Actually, I wanted to say, the way that I always learned it when I was a kid...I heard there was a Trail of Tears, but I didn't know what exactly that meant or that there was more than one. Like I thought there was just one, but didn't know about all the people that died or the extent, or the stuff that happened afterwards. Even in ET classes we don't focus on Native people as much. You really have to take a special class...and even then you focus on a broad spectrum, but not a particular group's certain issues.</p> |
| | <p>Long pause...(25 seconds)</p> |
| <p>Awkwardness of distance</p> | <p>R: Hmm, that's awkward [laughing]. This pause is kind of weird. I've never talked on the phone with this many people at once that I</p> |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| focus group | don't know. I don't want to start when someone else is going to speak. |
| | N: I know, I know....(chuckling) I appreciate your willingness to be brave and try out a focus group from a distance. Typically, I would be there in Colorado with you and we'd be sitting around the table talking and eating with snacks! I apologize about the snacks.... |

In this excerpt the participant joking, but directly called out the awkwardness taking place in the focus group. The transcript started with a long pause because participants were waiting patiently for someone else to begin speaking and did not want to interrupt or jump in front of another speaker. In the transcript excerpt below the participants navigate crosstalk and interrupting because of the lack of social cues found in face-to-face settings.

Transcript Excerpt: Crosstalk and Interrupting

| | |
|-------------|---|
| | N: Does anyone else want to add something about why they took this course? |
| | Pause... |
| | N: Ok well let's keep moving forward. So when you entered this class did you have any...I know Craig mentioned thinking it would be historical, did you have any primary expectations about what you thought you would learn? |
| | Cross talk (garbled) |
| Open minded | J: I had no clue... |
| | N: So it sounds like you went in pretty open minded? |

| | |
|--|--|
| Awkward distance focus group moment | Cross talk (interrupting, laughing). (Two participants start speaking at the same time). |
| | L: I was just going to say, I didn't know much about law or Native Americans...So I just had no idea what I was going into.... Then she told us she would be teaching it like a third year law class (laughing). |

As one student stated,

One drawback is because we're in a group; we don't have some of the social cues that facilitate group discussion. It can get kind of awkward when you don't know the other people and you're trying to be polite. You can really interrupt without physical cues of when someone is able to talk.

Otherwise it's a little awkward because you don't want to be rude.

The lack of physical cues challenges goes beyond interruptions and awkward pauses, but also to how message are interpreted and understood within a distance setting.

Inability to see expressions and reactions could lead to misunderstandings

One of the drawbacks the focus group participants discussed was the possibility for misunderstanding of a participant's message without social cues to help interpret the comment.

One female student commented,

I think doing it over the phone, has potential for it to be much more controversial, or offensive in the sense that like, all you're really basing what they're saying off of is their voice. And you know some people, enunciate things differently or

emphasis certain words differently, whereas in person, you can also see the facial impressions that come across with it.

In a similar comment another female student noted,

I would say, um, being in each other's presence, being able to see each other's expression, you can tell the emotions and feelings behind it. And also the awkward pauses are not as prevalent. And kind of knowing who's talking...I think as far as the part that I like, when we're in each other's presence you get to see everyone's true reactions.

One of the drawbacks highlighted by the participants is that in a distance context we are only able to rely on what we hear for information. Without the ability to confirm the message with physical cues, messages can be misunderstood or misconstrued, which is particularly challenging when discussing sensitive topics.

Anonymity could lead to more confrontation/insensitive remarks

In Chapter I of this study, the reader is introduced to the need for greater understandings of student's attitudes toward Native Americans as evidenced by a university student's racist insensitive remark on the social networking site Facebook. A male focus group study participant cautioned that the anonymity people feel when using social networking sites and distance technology can invite people to be more confrontational than they might ordinarily. He stated,

I feel that there is almost a level of anonymity that is over the phone. I noticed like for example, when people correspond over email or Facebook, they're much more likely to be confrontational because of that anonymity.

This comment is consistent with past research that found that those who respond anonymously to internet content, as opposed to participating in traditional qualitative methods have less socially

desirably responding and may have greater candor (Clark, Spanierman, Reed, Soble, and Cabana, 2011; Hewson, Laurent, and Vogel, 1996). This candor can be both a benefit and a drawback depending on how the honesty is relayed and the impact on all participants. Table 4.11 provides a brief overview of the benefits and drawbacks of distance focus groups as identified by the focus group participants.

Table 4.11

Summary of Focus Group Benefits and Drawbacks

| Benefits | Drawbacks |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to multitask, • More willingness to participate -commuter students -those students with social anxieties • Anonymity -more open and honest • Sensitive topics discussed safely • Geographic flexibility for the researcher. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of social cues to start speaking • Inability to see expressions and reactions could lead to misunderstandings • Anonymity could lead to more confrontation/insensitive remarks |

Lastly, in reflection, my sense is that the use of distance focus groups as a method is neither good nor bad, but different. It seems that as our society grows increasing dependent on technology and our world becomes smaller through globalization, that distance focus groups will be used increasingly in the future. Distance focus groups can have the potential to connect people across the globe and allows researchers a unique opportunity by not being hampered by travel cost to collect data. Researchers can collect valuable data using conference call technology and Skype to talk and see study participants across multiple time zones and countries, which is exciting, and technology gives us that potential. On the other hand, distance focus groups may not be

appropriate for all populations of participants. Distance focus groups seem to work very well for the generation of traditionally aged college students (18-24 years old) that participated in this study because they have been socialize to use technology extensively in their everyday lives. In the case of older generations, elders, and highly relational cultures, and dependent on the sensitivity of the research questions distance focus groups may be less effective. In Native American communities as an example (communities that have been researched extensively by outsiders), there could be much more resistance to distance focus group methods. In a Native American/Indigenous context the opportunity to build a more personal relationship is a very important aspect of trust building. Trust building is a particularly important aspect in a research relationship that is also highly dependent on the nature or sensitivity of the questions. While distance focus groups have multiple benefits and drawbacks as identified by the participants in this study; future research should continue to explore settings, practices, and a community's technological infrastructure and openness which make this method a good fit for particular groups of participants.

Summary

In this chapter I provided the quantitative, qualitative, convergent and emergent results from this study. I presented quantitative results which demonstrated support that Native studies courses may have the potential to shift students attitudes as evidenced by statistically significant differences on students' pre and post course scores. Students that have taken past Native studies courses and diversity courses had more accepting attitudes according to their PRATNA scores. Through an examination of multiple sets of qualitative data, I also sought to understand students' learning experience and process of taking a Native American studies course. Three primary themes were constructed which seem to indicate a path students may be on as part of taking a

Native studies course. Students seemed to deconstruct and come to understand their prior learning of Native American topics and come to see history as a continuum. Next, some students become more aware of Native issues, assessed their emotional response to the new information, and contemplated what advocacy might look. In the final stage, the students in this study may or may not have moved to a phase of determining where impact can take place, and in which contexts they feel empowered to assume a more critical, radical identity. The strength of a mixed methods approach is shown in this study as it provides more context, and the method allows the researcher to explain nuances in the data that may not be otherwise explained by looking at the convergence. Lastly, emergent findings explore the methodological benefits and drawbacks of distance focus groups.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, and CONCLUSIONS

The overarching purpose of this study was to better understand White college students' attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the Political and Racial Attitudes Toward Native Americans (PRATNA) Scale and better understand their experiences in Native studies courses. I also sought to gain more nuanced data on students' experiences as learners in a Native studies course. Paradigmatically, this study is grounded in a fusion of Critical/Transformative paradigms fused with Indigenous approaches. Theoretically, the study is guided by Critical Race Theory and its offshoots Tribal Critical Race Theory and Whiteness Theory, in addition to the theory of Modern Prejudice. Methodologically, I developed the design of this dissertation study to bring together the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methodologies for a more complete understanding of undergraduate students' attitudes toward Native Americans and their experiences and new knowledge gained through Native Studies courses.

Quantitatively, I examined the attitudes of college students toward Native Americans as measured by the PRATNA, a newly developed measure that takes into account Native Americans liminal political and racial status. The findings from this work both support past research on student attitudes and reported different outcomes. To date, very few studies exist which seek to assess college student's attitudes toward Native Americans. This dissertation study is an initial attempt to add to the scarcity of studies on this topic given the liminal status of Native Americans is not only prevalent in mainstream understanding, but also in mainstream academic research. Giving voice through such research aligns directly with critical race theory and giving voice to a particularly marginalized population provides a counter-narrative to address and challenge the knowledge gap that exists in regards to Native American people, their history, and their struggle.

Overall, the results indicated positive attitudes toward Native Americans as measured by the PRATNA. The PRANTA's scores can range from 17 to 102 with higher scores indicating more favorable attitudes. The mean PRATNA score for this sample was 84.9, the minimum score was 63 and the maximum score was 96. Ancis, Choney and Sedlecek's (1996) study had similar findings in terms of students having relatively positive attitudes toward Native people, in addition to insignificant gender differences similar to the current study. Past research has indicated that males are more resistant to diversity issues and often hold more stereotypic beliefs (Gonsavales, 2006), which was supported in a past pilot of this study but not in the current findings. Taking a Native studies course as a diversity requirement was also not significant in this study, in addition to insignificant difference between White and non-White students. Smaller, unequal sample sizes in the areas of: gender, taking the course as a general diversity requirement, and White students in comparison to their non-White classmates could contribute less reliable results. Future studies should include larger, more equal sample sizes in these population groups for more reliable analysis.

Future analysis indicated that students who took past Native American studies courses in the past ($M=90.11$) had higher scores on the PRATNA, suggesting that they have more favorable attitudes toward Native Americans than those students who had not ($M=83.43$) taken such courses ($p=.028$). Participating students who had taken general diversity courses also had significant results ($p=.005$), but students who took Native studies courses had even higher mean scores. This finding brings into question two possible issues. One issue may be the content of the courses students have taken under the banner of "diversity" courses. All diversity courses and all Native studies courses are not created equal. Brehm(1998) study, in which the researcher studied the effects of multiple types of diversity courses across the university and found that women's

studies and ethnic studies courses were most effective in shifting student's racial attitudes. Both departments historically assume a critical orientation and examine issues of power, privilege, oppression, the histories of marginalized groups, and involve student self-reflection. A second possible explanation and area for further study may be that even diversity courses that have a critical orientation may not fully address issues of sovereignty, Native-nationhood, and historical conquest. In other words, the experience of institutionalized oppression is unique for Native Americans and requires specific content that addresses these particular issues.

In the individual response item score results, certain questions garnered less favorable attitudes toward Native people. Similarly, in the Ancis, Choney and Sedlecek (1996) study, despite generally favorable attitudes toward Native Americans, as mentioned above, one of the questions garnered a negative response from students when they were asked about their attitudes toward Native student's receiving free health care. The statements or questions that elicit more negative responses seem to center on the issue of "unearned advantage" or the misconception that Native people have access to advantages that they have not earned (McIntosh, 1988). Unearned advantage challenges American values of hard work and meritocracy and does not take into account the legacy of privilege (Johnson 2006) bestowed on White Americans through economic, political, and legal systems (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1995). "Unearned advantages" ideology negates the realities of colonization, land theft, and historical trauma for Native Americans and reinforces the legacy of privilege for white Americans. In the pre-PRATNA, similar negative responses around unearned advantage were seen in the individual item responses. The following statement garnered more negative responses.

- Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos.
- Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive.

- Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty.

The statements that elicited negative responses require deeper analysis, but seem to be indicative of the modern face of prejudice. The questions that elicit negative responses in the pre-test also seem to point to large gaps in the knowledge base of college students about Native nations as sovereign nations and point to continued stereotypes that Native people are a culture from the past and support the belief that Native people need to assimilate. The following individual responses garnered negative responses in both the pre and post PRATNA

- Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better.
- Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left.

As mentioned above, most mainstream Americans do not have the historical context that these perceived ‘advantages’ were bought and paid for in millions of acres of land and in many cases taken by force for free. Most Americans also have little understanding of Native American sovereignty and Native nation status, but only see Native people as racialized beings. Clark, Spanierman, Reed, Soble and Cabana (2011) state that the racialization of Native people is purposeful, and a byproduct of settler colonialism. Settler colonialization is defined by Clark et. al, (2011) and Wolfe (2006) as a “sociohistorical structure, not an event that destroys Indigenous peoples in order to replace them with colonizer culture, governance, laws, and ideologies”(p.40). Settler colonialism relies on the “systemic racialization of American Indians to delegitimize Indian nations as sovereign governments and rationalize historical conquest, the acquisition of land and resources, and efforts to assimilate first inhabitants” (p.40). This context matters and has implications for the way Native history is taught or not taught in general diversity courses and Native studies courses. For example, if certain realities of land theft and violence against Native Americans is not conveyed to mainstream Americans, then their “assumption of rightness

(Johnson, 2006) is only reinforced as “rightful” owners of property and inheritors of land-owning related prosperity. In further analysis, a critique of free-market capitalism predicated on individual property ownership and the legal protection of property rights afforded by the legal system, could do much to understand the complexity of the intersections of race, capitalism, and white dominance (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 1996).

The qualitative data resulted in interesting and notable themes that were constructed from the data and analyzed through a critical lens. Undergraduate students enrolled in the Native American History course in particular, seemed to enter the course with stereotypical expectations for their learning experience. The language students used was also highly otherizing; students used terms and phrases such as “their history”, and “these people” for example. The students’ responses also seemed to indicate that they view Native American History as an experience apart from “American” History, and Native people as being the exotic other and outside of the dominant mainstream American culture. The experience of taking Native studies classes seemed to help reposition the Native experience within the context of the American experience. Students responses at the end of the two courses regarding their key learning experiences suggested that college students are more able to see historical events as an interdependent continuum that lead to present day realities. The participants seemed more prepared to make the connections that Native American history and American history are actually one the in the same and should not be separated out. Native experiences and historical events have been silent in our history books and in the media because the atrocities of the past have been purposely erased from the mainstream American psyche. In many cases, students recognized that myths have been created about the Native American experience that empower and lift up mainstream American society to the

detriment of Native individuals and communities. In these instances, mainstream collective memory hurts Native people and their contemporary struggles.

At the same time, though the data point to changes in knowledge and better understanding of contemporary and historical circumstances, there is room for improvement. None of the students in the study engaged in critical reflection regarding their role in the subjugation of Native people. The students in the study did not see the ways that they are privileged about when and where they engage in advocacy efforts. However, given that the familial context plays a huge role in our socialization and is a constant in our lives, it was unexpected that none of the students sought to engage in advocacy at the most personal levels—self reflection and engagement with family members. Native studies courses could be strengthened by allowing space and course assignments for students to reflect on their socialization as young people learning about Native Americans. Deeper analysis in this area could push students to reflect on the ways they implicitly and explicitly contribute to their own domination and the subordination of others. Deeper analysis and self-reflection is required because the data suggests that though student’s content knowledge grew exponentially, some of their stereotypical attitudes about Native people remained. There is a need for further investigation regarding students’ avoidance of critical engagement with their families and lack of self-reflection.

While the findings of this exploratory study hold promise in terms of the nature of the problem being explored, namely understanding college students’ attitudes toward Native Americans, it is one of a few of its kind and thus has notable limitations, one being that generalizations cannot yet be made from its findings. However, the present research does offer a starting place for future and more reliable and relevant investigation.

Significance

As mentioned above, this study regarding attitudes toward Native Americans and college students' experience and process of taking a Native studies course is one of the few of its kind. To date, many of the studies that examine people's attitudes toward Native Americans focus on Native-themed mascots, use instruments developed for other groups with marginalized identities, or are anecdotal and not empirical in nature. The newly developed PRATNA is a first attempt to systematically examine students' attitudes toward Native people without being limited to race alone. The unique status that Native people have in the United States, coupled with limited and misconstrued information, creates an opportunity for stereotypes to flourish. To combat stereotypes and media misconceptions around Native people, we have to better understand what students' attitudes are not only about Native Americans as a race, but as tribal nations with a unique governmental relationship. In doing so, we can build a more effective understanding to address prevalent knowledge gaps and perceptions of limited agency to change familial attitudes—an important step for broader social change.

There are few studies to date that examine the experience and process of taking Native American studies courses from the student's perspective. The student's perspective is integral if our purpose is to move students toward more understanding and accepting attitudes. The current research offers insight into the student's experience of Native studies courses, which can inform improvements in Native American studies, but also to offer insight for diversity and multicultural education.

Limitations

One of the limitations of this study is the small sample size. When this project was initially conceptualized the expected Native American course enrollment was approximately 140

students. A large lecture course (Native American history) went down to a standard class size of 40 and Federal Indian Law enrolled 20 students. Although class sizes were smaller than expected, the sample of 41 students on the pre-course survey garnered a 68% response rate. The pre-test responses (41) and post-tests responses (32) were not equal so any surveys that were not matched were thrown out in pre and post test analysis, further reducing the sample. Students that persisted with the pre test, post test, and focus group opportunity became a rather narrow group. Student's that were very interested in the study and were engaged both in and outside of the course generally persisted with the study, while students who were less interested may have only completed the first part of the study. The initial pre test is probably the most representative response from traditional, White, undergraduate college students that the study sought to better understand. Given the differences between students who completed the surveys versus the ones who completed the focus groups, I am less able to make strong inferences about the experiences of survey-only students based on focus group responses. I am also less able to discuss the experience of White male students because of their lower participation in Native studies courses and lower participation rates than their female counterparts.

Another limitation deals with the instrument's construct validity. Because the instrument used for this study is an adaptation of a widely used instrument, but is newly developed hybrid, the PRATNA has not been tested for construct validity against other similarly related instruments. Though its internal consistency is strong (.81-.84) construct validity should be conducted with a large sample size and against similar instruments.

Social desirability is always a factor when measuring racial attitudes and beliefs. Going forward a more purposeful social desirability scale could possibly be imbedded within the

instrument so that students who have strong social desirability leanings can be analyzed separately.

Lastly, the use of distance technology for focus groups offers both limitations and opportunities. Students mentioned that the use of distance technology could increase awkwardness such as long pauses and knowing when to begin speaking. Students also mentioned the lack of social cues used in common speech are missing in a distance focus group. Discomfort with focus group technology and the lack of time to build authentic rapport with participants could lead to less credible findings. Given that the use of distance technology is rising, we must explore ways to make the experience more comfortable for participants. We must also explore the benefits and drawbacks of using distance technology to collect sensitive information.

Methodological Reflections

The process and task of conducting a mixed method study is not an easy one. Often times I had a difficulty switching between the two methodologies. In my experience, I was unable to conduct both qualitative and quantitative analysis at the same time, which was a challenge I did not anticipate. The statistical and procedural knowledge of using SPSS for example, differs substantially from analyzing data using emergent grounded theory methods. I often felt like my head needed to ‘separate’ in order to switch back and forth methodologically. My solution for the dissonance I felt was to focus on quantitative analysis *only* for weeks at a time. Though I continued to collect qualitative interview and focus group data, I was not able to conduct qualitative analysis until weeks later. After I completed the quantitative analysis, I turned my full attention to the qualitative parts of my study, and last to the convergence of both methods.

I came to realize that the dissonance I felt was not only about switching research methods, but the dissonance was really about switching between post-positivist and

constructivists paradigm. The challenges of switching between paradigms become most apparent in my writing and I was challenged to know when and how to use my voice. In the quantitative sections of my dissertation, I speak from a more objective point of view. I seldom used 'I' to describe what I did in terms of my analysis choices. My quantitative analysis choices are driven by the wording of my research questions, and in a more post-positivist tradition, do not require the same level of explanation as qualitative analysis choices. In many ways the quantitative portion of my dissertation felt more 'cut and dry' and there was much less ambiguity.

On the other hand, the qualitative portions of my dissertation required me to embrace ambiguity. I had to embrace qualitative analysis as an iterative, multiphase process with gray areas. I used multiple analysis methods to construct the themes 'I thought' I was seeing in the data. I say 'I thought' because in comparison to the quantitative portions of my research, qualitatively I felt unsure. I engaged in qualitative analysis using widely accepted methods to help insure credibility and reliability. I used journaling to understand potential codes, had an outside researcher validate and expand my codes, employed memos with an outside researcher, reframed my understanding of participant's statements as part of the focus groups, and journaled about themes I constructed from the data as part of the analysis process. Despite all of this, I lacked the confidence I had quantitatively. I had difficulty being in the gray area as part of qualitative data analysis, and at times, yearned for analysis that was more cut and dry-like finding statistical significance or not.

Toward the end of my dissertation journey and especially during the analysis phases, I found myself doubting my decision to complete a mixed method dissertation. At times it seemed that switching between methods, paradigms, trying to understand and explain the convergence was just too difficult. I reminded myself that I went into a methods specialization because I

wanted to understand and feel comfortable combining multiple research methods to gain a more complete understanding of a problem. I wanted to gain the knowledge and comfort to pick the research method and design that is the best fit for a research problem and community. Friends and other scholars who knew I was completing a mixed method dissertation asked, *Would you advise future students to conduct a mixed method dissertation?* There were some days while writing my dissertation my answer would have been ‘no’. Now in retrospect, I think the decision to conduct a mixed method dissertation should be driven by a person’s goals (i.e wants to learn both qualitative and quantitative methods and combine them), the inability to answer a research question using one method alone, and their ability to embrace ambiguity. As I mentioned above, conducting mixed method studies is not just about methods. Conducting a good mixed method study also seems to center on a researcher’s ability to rigorously engage in both methods without short changing one method or the other. The process of conducting a mixed method study also seems to hinge on a researcher’s ability to switch between a post-positivist and constructivist orientation to conducting research, one orientation that is quite cut and dry and the other that is not. It is my hope that this study is a step toward rigorously engaging qualitative and quantitative methods with a critical lens, but there is much work to be done and many limitations as is the case with most studies. At this phase in my journey, I am glad that I put in the extra time and work to complete a mixed method study and think that this experience will make me a more competent methodologist in the future.

Future Directions in Critical Mixed Method Research

Mixed methods as a methodological approach is still relatively new, so there is much room to explore mixed methods with a critical orientation’s place within the field. Measuring the attitudes of students in Native American studies course using mixed methods is a relatively

untouched terrain, so the possibilities for expanding the research in this area are great. As a methodology student, I was able to explore new methodologies and approaches to mixed method research. My future research agenda will involve validating the PRATNA using similar instruments that measure racism and prejudice along with social desirability scales. Conducting a larger scale project across university settings nationally will provide a stronger, more generalizeable data. Several Native studies professors in university settings have expressed interest in using this instrument. As mentioned above, with each component of the research my sample became less like the one I initially conceptualized understanding. Future research must include incentives that keep all students engaged from start to finish, not just students who are already engaged and come to the class with a critical, open orientation.

Native and Indigenous studies as a field was created for Native scholars to conduct research in service to, and for the benefit of Native communities and tribal nations. This study is outside of the original conception of Indigenous scholarship in many ways because the research questions are not community driven; yet the study is still conducted in service to Native communities. Indigenous researchers must study White dominance to deconstruct it. If we want to create more accepting attitudes and erode ignorance as it relates Native and Indigenous people, Indigenous scholars must study the attitudes and beliefs of non-Indigenous people. The study of Whiteness as it relates to teaching and learning Native American/Indigenous studies provides knowledge needed by university instructors and even K-12 teachers insight to close knowledge gaps and create learning experiences that create critical consumers of information. The study of Whiteness in relationship to Indigenous studies provides insight about familial socialization and the power to change attitudes in that context, but also the places where students balk around particular Native studies content. Further study of Whiteness and the relationship of

Native studies to deconstruct master narratives is an area of study that gives instructors and teachers of Native/Indigenous studies and diversity a “way in”. By a “way in”, I mean ways to anticipate resistance, find content and subject areas that help facilitate students connection to the content, and create deep learning opportunities that hopefully impact long term change.

Future critical mixed method studies should examine long-term impacts of Native studies using longitudinal studies. One area of concern in the findings of this study is the inability or avoidance of the majority of students to engage in critical conversations about their learning with family members. Given that in most cases families are permanent fixtures in student’s lives and the site of primary socialization, there is concern that the learning in Native studies courses may not be long-term. Further research should examine the long-term impacts of Native studies courses and how the experience and process of taking the course influence them after the course. Students in the current study framed much of the advocacy they hoped to be engaged in in the future. Longitudinal studies would provide insight into the reality of their advocacy and the experiences that facilitated actual action.

Critical mixed method research can also examine methodologies and technologies that can help effectively collect data around sensitive topics. The current study examined the use of distance focus groups to collect data. Though the method has its benefits and drawbacks, our global community will continue to look for ways to collect information from a distance. We should begin developing and honing best practices to collect the best information we can while creating a safe, comfortable space for research participants. Future focus group data collection could include simulated focus group spaces using avatars and the use of video conferencing software to reduce some of the awkwardness due to a lack of social cues while participating in a focus group. Given the cost effectiveness of distance focus groups to collect qualitative data;

distance technology's ability to allow researchers to connect to potential participants all over the world, and the increased use of technology in our society as a whole, this is an area for further research.

Conclusion and Practical Implications

The current research is a helpful first step to measure attitudes toward Native people that takes into account the liminal space Native people occupy. Through this study, I sought to examine the influences of Native studies courses on White students' attitudes and their relationship to general diversity courses. Understanding college students' attitudes toward Native people has practical implications for university campus climates and for the teaching and learning of both Native studies courses and general diversity courses. Being able to better frame particular content makes students' learning experiences more impactful and meaningful. Understanding the influence of Native American studies courses and the influences on attitudes is important because students go out into the world after college as professionals where they will have decision-making power. The university experience and learning obtained there prepares students to assume positions of power in our government and communities, to deliver health and human services, to become business leaders, and to educate young people. They have the power to impact social change. Understanding attitudes is an integral part of the social change process. Working for social change, social justice, reconciliation, and moving students towards social justice is the foundational purpose of this study.

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APPENDIX A: Student Informed Consent

Welcome to this survey. I truly appreciate your willingness to contribute your time to this study. The purpose of this questionnaire is to gain an understanding regarding your experiences and progression as a learner of Native American topics. To participate in this study, I am asking you to fill out a questionnaire that measures how you might think and feel in a number of educational, social, and personal situations. You will also be asked to report some demographic information about yourself such as your age, gender, and college class level. Your responses will be anonymous. Approximately 15-20 minutes will be needed to complete the questionnaire. If you have any questions about the research process or the results, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you in advance for your help,

Noorie Kelsey Brantmeier

APPENDIX B: PRATNA

In the next section you will be asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding Native Americans.

In the last decade Native Americans have gotten more than they deserve economically.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Most Native Americans are rich because they own and operate casinos.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Over the past few years, the government has shown increased attention to Native American issues-more than they deserve.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

It is easy to understand the anger of Native American people.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Too much money is spent on programs and services that only benefit Native Americans.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Discrimination against Native Americans is no longer a present problem in the United States.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Generations of historical injustices have created conditions that make it difficult for Native Americans and their communities to thrive.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Native Americans need to adapt to American culture to do better.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Many of the requests made by Native Americans to the U.S government are excessive.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Native Americans should forget about the past, stop talking about it and move on.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Native Americans are a vanishing culture and there are few "real" Indians left.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Native American tribes still encounter major threats to their tribal sovereignty.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Native Americans still need to protest and advocate for stronger legal protections.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

It is now unnecessary for the U.S. government to honor their treaty obligations to Native tribes.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

It is important for public schools to teach about Native American history and the contribution of racial and ethnic minorities.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Racial problems in the U.S are rare, isolated situations.

- Agree Strongly (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Disagree Strongly (6)

Racism against Native Americans may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree Moderately (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Moderately (5)
- Strongly Disagree (6)

Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Moderately Agree (2)
- Agree Slightly (3)
- Disagree Slightly (4)
- Disagree Strongly (5)

Do you have any concerns or comments not addressed in this survey?

To conclude in the next section, you will be asked to provide some basic demographic information about yourself.

Please check the appropriate box to indicate your gender.

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Transgender (3)

How old are you?

- under 18 (1)
- 18-21 (2)
- 22-25 (3)
- 26-30 (4)
- 31-35 (5)
- 36-40 (6)
- over 40 (7)

What is your current classification in college?

- Freshman (1)
- Sophomore (2)
- Junior (3)
- Senior (4)
- Graduate student (5)

Please check any and all of the boxes below that best represents your race/ethnicity?

- African American or Black (1)
- Mexican or Mexican American (2)
- European American or White (non-Hispanic) (3)
- Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander (4)
- American Indian, Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian (insert tribal affiliation below) (5)
- _____
- Puerto Rican (6)
- Other Hispanic or Latino/a (7)
- Multiracial (8)
- International (insert country of origin below) (9) _____
- Other (10)

If you are of Native or American Indian decent, how often do you participate in Native American cultural or religious activities? Please check the appropriate box based on your experiences.

- Not of Native American descent (1)
- Never (2)
- Rarely (3)
- Occasionally (4)
- Often (5)
- Almost always (6) _____

What is the highest level of schooling your father completed?

- Did not complete high school (1)
- Completed high school (2)
- Completed some college (3)
- Completed an associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.) (4)
- College graduate (B.A., B.S., etc.) (5)
- Graduate degree (M.A., J.D, Ph.D., etc.) (6)
- Don't know (7)

What is the highest level of schooling your mother completed?

- Did not complete high school (1)
- Completed high school (2)
- Completed some college (3)
- Completed an associate's degree (A.A., A.S.,etc.) (4)
- College graduate (B.A., B.S., etc.) (5)
- Graduate degree (M.A., J.D, Ph.D., etc.) (6)
- Don't know (7)

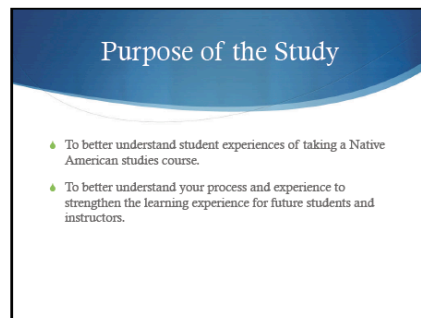
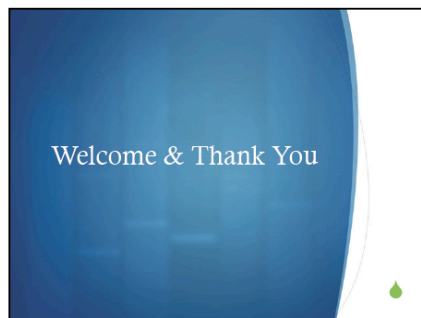
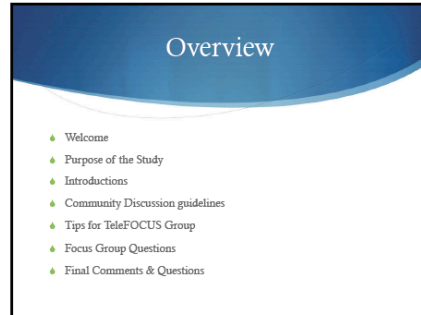
Thank you. I appreciate the time you took to fill out this important questionnaire. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at noorie.brantmeier@colostate.edu .

APPENDIX C: Student Focus Group Questions

1. When you entered this Native studies course, what were your primary expectations regarding the content and topics you would learn?
2. As a result of participation in a Native studies class, what have you learned and/or unlearned regarding Native people that have been particularly significant?
3. How have your views of history remained the same or changed after participating in a Native studies course? If so, how?
4. Does taking a Native studies course influence the way you discuss key historic events (for example Columbus Day or Thanksgiving) with the people close to them?

Appendix D: Distance Focus Group Powerpoint Presentation

9/13/12



Introductions

- ◆ Please state your name or pseudonym
- ◆ Your year in college (Freshman, sophomore, etc)?
- ◆ What drew you to take a Native American studies course?

Community Discussion Guidelines

- ◆ Listen actively – respect others when they are talking.
- ◆ Speak from your own experience instead of generalizing (“I” instead of “they,” “we,” and “you”).
- ◆ Do not be afraid to respectfully challenge one another by asking questions, but refrain from personal attacks – focus on ideas.
- ◆ Participate to the fullest of your ability – community growth depends on the inclusion of every individual voice.
- ◆ The goal is not to agree – it is to gain a deeper understanding.

Tips for our TeleFOCUS Group

- ◆ Please announce yourself before you begin speaking (Ex. This is Noorie speaking, I want to add...)
- ◆ Let's all try to reduce background noise so everyone can hear the speakers.

Making our TeleFOCUS Group Space

- ◆ Where would you like to sit?



◆ Upon entering a Native studies course, what were your primary expectations regarding the content and topics you would learn?

◆ How have your views of history remained the same or changed after participating in a Native studies course?

◆ How does taking a Native studies course influence the way you might discuss key historic events (for example Columbus Day or Thanksgiving) with the people close to you?


◆ As a result of participation in a Native studies class, what have you learned and/or unlearned regarding Native people that has been particularly significant?

◆ To conduct this focus group we are using distance technology. What are some of the benefits and drawbacks for you of doing the focus groups this way?

◆ Is there anything we should have talked about, but didn't?

Thank You!

CONTACT INFORMATION:
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APPENDIX E: Instructor Interview Questions

1. How long have you been a Native studies instructor?
2. What drew you to teach about Native Americans?
3. What does your typical student body look like in your courses?
4. Why do you think students enroll in your courses?
5. What are your highlights of teaching Native studies courses?
6. Do you experience challenges teaching Native studies courses?
7. How do students respond to course material regarding Native Americans?
8. Have you often experienced student resistance to Native topics in the classroom?
 - a. Which topics or conversations have students been particularly resistant to?
9. In your experience, do students have preconceived notions about Native Americans when they enter the classroom?
 - a. If so, what types of preconceived notions have you encountered in the classroom?
10. In your experience does your personal identity, influence students learning experiences?
11. Have you found certain teaching techniques or approaches to be particularly helpful when teaching Native studies courses?
 - a. Are there certain topics that students are very receptive to and help increase empathy and/or understanding?
12. In your ideal world, what would you like students to gain from taking a Native studies course?