“Including Native Americans in Our Dialogue on Diversity”

Richard S. Conley
Associate Professor of Political Science
and
Director, American Indian and Indigenous Studies (AIIS) Program
rconley@ufl.edu
Context: Nationally and in Florida

• 100+ Million Indigenous Peoples in North America ca. 1800
• Today: 2.75 million (U.S. Census, 2019)
• 574 federally-recognized Tribes
• 245 non-recognized Tribes

• Florida today (<5,000):
  • Seminole Tribe & Miccosukee (recognized)
  • Creek (non-recognized)
Florida Reservations (Seminole)

New Reservation, Polk County
The Seminole in Florida History

- Seminole Wars (1816-19, 1835-42, 1855-58)
- Indian Removal Act (1830) and the Trail of Tears
  - Cherokee, Creek, Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Seminole forced to relocate to Oklahoma
- Intermarriage with escaped slaves
- Those who resisted and stayed behind: The Seminole Tribe of Florida
- Masters of environmental management
- Today: The Hard Rock Empire, balancing economic success with traditional ways
- Big Cypress: The Ah-Tha-Tiki Museum

Green Corn Dance, Aztec connection
Native Connections to UF

- Land grant university on Timicua / Poblano land
  - Timicua “disappeared” or were absorbed into other Indigenous cultures
- Burial ground and marker near the Law School
  - Spearheaded by Native students at UF
- Lake Alice
- Newnan’s Lake
  - Pre-contact Archaic Period canoes
Native Representations at UF

• No identifiable faculty
• Need for a 19th Century Historian

• Student representation:
  • Only a few Seminole students in UF history
  • Declining enrollment by self-identified Alaska Natives/Native Americans
  • Many Indigenous students from Central/South America
# Native Representations at UF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>Percent of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Steps Forward

• The Symbolic
  • Land Acknowledgment

• The Substantive
  • Faculty hiring
  • Support of student groups (IASA, SACNAS, Native Law Student Association)
  • Outreach to Seminole Tribe: Consultation, expertise
  • Recruiting Native students: From Florida through the Americas and Oceania
    • Liaise with Tribal Colleges
    • Understand the unique situation of Indigenous students and intergenerational trauma
  • Focus on universality of values to integrate Native perspectives across disciplines
  • Encourage students, faculty to attend events on Native culture, history, traditions
Resources

• American Indian and Indigenous Studies (AIIS) [https://aiis.clas.ufl.edu/](https://aiis.clas.ufl.edu/)
• Interdisciplinary faculty: Anthropology, Art History, Environmental Sciences, Latin American Studies, Political Science, Religion
• Samuel Proctor Oral History Program: Paul Ortiz
• Smathers Library resources: Ginessa Mahar
Mitakuye Oyasin