

## HERITAGE UNIVERSITY

### TRIBAL COURT ADVOCATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

*Sovereignty, Tradition, Community*

Although Yakama specific, this program may yield insights and promising practices to other tribal communities and enhance the authority and outreach of Heritage as a Native American Serving non-tribal institution.

**Program Structure:** The Certificate consists of 18 total credits. If desired, any or all courses can be applied to the Native American and Indigenous Studies A.A. or B.A. degree programs.

**Entry Requirements:** High school graduation or GED. (Enrolled Tribal Members in need of a GED can enroll at no cost in the “HEP Program” at Heritage University).

**Special Requirements:** (1) Must demonstrate a commitment to ongoing training and education and cooperate with all requests and mandates put forward by the Tribal Court, and applicable tribal laws, including confidentiality, background checks, health screenings, requisite trainings, written tests, educational videos, and other relevant instruction. (2) Express and demonstrate a desire and capacity to acquire and develop skills in communicating with, and instructing others, using both technical and non-technical language as appropriate to provide legal information and explanations to those for whom the subject matter is unfamiliar and/or difficult to understand. (3) Must maintain openness for learning new information and/or new approaches to already familiar information.

**Vision:** To strengthen tribal sovereignty over criminal justice matters within tribal court systems, supporting a collaborative, multi-disciplinary, culturally responsive process, toward the end of promoting community wellness and healing through an ethic of care.

**Mission:** To promote justice through increasing the number of professionally trained, culturally centered, tribal court advocates committed to the honoring of tribal law and governance, and in maintaining the traditional process of respect, and representational duty and ethics, in all areas of court practice and advocacy.

**Description:** The Tribal Court Advocacy Certificate is the result of a collaborative effort by the Yakama Nation and Heritage University. Through an indigenous lens, this program examines key concepts from diverse academic fields such as political science, law, history, communication studies, social work, education, ethics, and philosophy, all of which are essentially sub-fields of the inherently interdisciplinary field of Native American and Indigenous Studies through which this certification is offered.

#### **Course List:**

##### **NAIS 1XX The 14 Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation (3 credits)**

This course will provide an introduction to the history of the Yakama Nation as a tribal government, community and people. Students will be instructed in a culturally appropriate manner of the Yakama Nation’s governmental structure, legal institutions, role of law and dispute resolution. Historical

perceptions and realities---contrast of worldviews; contemporary issues and the hope of renewal.  
*Prerequisite NAIS 2XX Yakama Oral Traditions and Culture*

**NAIS 1XX Yakama Oral Traditions and Culture (2 credits)**

A dialogue centered course covering origin stories, ceremony, traditional practices, resistance, renewal, revitalization, ecological preservation, indigenous ways of knowing, storytelling, and family relationships, and the culturally appropriate manner in dealing with disputes, adversaries, and the Yakama Nation.

**NAIS 2XX Historical Trauma (2 credits)**

An overview of the history of unresolved grief as well as identifiable elements of internalized oppression across generations. The impact of assimilationist policies, i.e., The Boarding School Era, and other disruptions of family and culture will be discussed and analyzed.

**Phil 210 Logic and Critical Reasoning (3 credits) Writing Intensive Course**

Principles of reasoning, criteria for validity, interrelation and sequence of facts/events: judicious evaluation of methods, policies and intentions. Case studies in government, health, education, business. Principles of argumentation in discourse as seen through analysis of texts; critique of sample arguments.  
*Pre-requisites English 101 and English 102*

**NAIS 3XX Tribal Governance and Sovereignty (3 credits) Writing Intensive Course**

This course will provide an overview of Federal Indian law and applicable tribal law related to tribal governance and sovereignty. Explores the historical framework, current development and practice of the underlying legal doctrines prominent today that impact federal, state and tribal governmental relationships, tribal governments and their institutions, and communities. This course will also examine the source and scope of seminal federal, state and tribal authority in Indian Country, including but not limited to, U.S. Supreme Court case law decisions, the Indian Civil Rights Act, and Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act. *Prerequisite NAIS 2XX Yakama Oral Traditions and Culture*

**NAIS 3XX Tribal Court Communication (3 credits)**

Introduction to theory and practice of speaking in formal settings, with specific emphasis on Tribal Court: audience analysis, preparation for several types of audiences, multicultural factors, public discussion methods. This class will focus on training the Tribal Court Advocate to speak formally, coherently and with the appropriate form of legal decorum. Offered fall, spring and summer semesters.

**NAIS 4XX Tribal Court/Tribal Community Internship (2 credits)**

The student in conversation with a Native American and Indigenous Studies Advisor, will work through placement possibilities for this requirement. The student will write an internship proposal. Course requirements will include an oral interview with a practitioner, a written reflection regarding the experience, and a presentation of key aspects and "lessons learned" from the internship. The student must learn and adhere to all policies, protocols and rules of conduct dictated by the location supervisor

Certificate Outcomes:

Upon completing the certificate program the student will

- increase their knowledge of the history, culture, laws, customs and traditions of the Yakama Nation as well as an understanding of Federal Indian law and policy
- gain a deeper understanding of Yakama Nation Tribal Court rules, policies and procedures (per internship training)
- have a basic understanding of legal research and writing techniques and practice (per internship training)
- possess critical reasoning skills to analyze private and public disputes in legally and factually complex cases
- be competent in the oral and written skills necessary for quality advocacy

Relevant Web Resources:

<http://narf.org/icwa/>

<http://www.tribal-institute.org/download/Passports%20for%20Native%20Children12-13-06.pdf>

<http://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1304&context=alr>

<http://www.tribal-institute.org/lists/reviews.htm>