Course overview

“Sovereignty” has been mobilized variously to suppress, to contain, to transform and to represent the autonomy of nations who self-identify as indigenous. This course explores the complex engagements between sovereignty and indigeneity. As such, we begin from the foundational assumption that understandings and practices of sovereignty and indigeneity across time and place. They are historically contingent political categories. Joanne Barker historicizes the indigenous sovereignty in this way:

“Following World War II, sovereignty emerged not as a new but as a particularly valued term within indigenous discourses to signify a multiplicity of legal and social rights to political, economic, and cultural self-determination. It was a term around which social movements formed and political agendas for decolonization and social justice were articulated. It has come to mark the complexities of global indigenous efforts to reverse ongoing experiences of colonialism as well as to signify local efforts at the reclamation of specific territories, resources, governments, and cultural knowledge practices.”

This course gives participants the opportunity to delve deeply into critical, indigenous examinations of sovereignty, particularly the concept’s ability to (re)initiate meaningful self-determination and healing from the legacies of colonial and imperial violences. The course materials draw upon the expanding field of indigenous political studies.

Student learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- Learn to historicize indigenous mobilizations of the concept and practice of sovereignty.
- Consider various critiques of state-centric modes of sovereignty.
- Develop mastery over existing literature in indigenous political studies that focus on the category of sovereignty.
- Push beyond sovereignty’s imaginary by exploring other ways of theorizing and practicing indigenous autonomy, nationhood and territoriality. visions, values and practices.
- Frame their own questions and lines of research in relation to the topic.
- Deepen the ability to produce quality scholarship by writing a substantial research paper that draws on a set of texts discussed during this seminar.
- Self-critically reflect on the ways their scholarship speaks to the communities and peoples about whom they write.

Required Texts: All books are available for purchase from the UH bookstore. There will be additional articles accessible through Laulima.


Supplemental books:


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**Course Requirements**

1. **Participation (Attendance and Weekly Blog):** 30%

The success of our course depends on participation by all members of the class. Please read the assigned material and come to class prepared to discuss them. During the process of discussion differences in opinion may arise so it is extremely important to be
courteous and respectful of each other in all of our discussions. If you miss four (4) or more class sessions, you will get a zero for your participation grade.

I will create a course blog that will allow for some discussion prior to and/or parallel with our face-to-face conversations. Each week you will post your thoughts and questions on the readings, and you will comment on others’ posts. You must do your initial post by the day before class meets, so that people have the opportunity to read and comment on each other’s postings. The postings and comments should substantively engage with the texts assigned for the week. You may also want to comment on how the readings are useful to your own areas of research.

2. Book review: 30%
Due: The week after the book you are writing about has been assigned on the syllabus.
A book review is a very particular kind of academic writing that summarizes and provides a critical analysis of a text. The purpose of a book review is to provide someone interested in the book with enough information to determine whether or not it is applicable to their research and/or teaching needs. It is prepared for a targeted audience and situates the book within an existing field. Book reviews are a great way to begin to establish a publishing record as a graduate student. Here is the process I’d like you to follow:

- Choose one book from our list of assigned readings. *I have marked eligible books with an asterisk in the course schedule.*
- Identify an academic journal that would likely find this book applicable to their readers.
- Research *their* guidelines for book reviews and use these guidelines to structure your review. Please attach the book review guidelines you used to organize and structure your paper.
- You may helpful guides on writing book reviews at the following hyperlinks: [Purdue OWL](http://owl.purdue.edu), [ANU academic skills](http://www.anu.edu.au), [H-net review guidelines](http://www.h-net.msu.edu)

After you submit our review to me, I will provide you feedback so that you may revise your review, if you wish, for actual submission to a journal or for your final portfolio.

3. Term Paper: Abstract + Draft 20% + Final Paper 20% = 40%
You will write a 20 – 25 page paper on a topic of your choosing that relates to any of the themes we have covered in class. This paper can be a chapter for your thesis, a paper you would like to present at a conference, an article you would like published in an academic journal, or the theoretical portion of a research proposal. You will be expected to write a 250-word abstract of the proposed paper, which will be grades on a plus/check/minus basis. Please state how you would like to use this paper so that we can direct our comments towards that goal.

Policies
**Late Work:** If students have special circumstances that prevent them from turning an assignment in on time PRIOR arrangements must be made. Otherwise, late work will not be accepted.

**Academic Dishonesty:** It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and in compliance with the university’s policies regarding academic dishonesty. (See the UH catalog, link: [http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm](http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm)). Furthermore, cheating and stealing are not acceptable within a Hawaiian cultural value system. Any academic dishonesty—such as plagiarism—will result in failure of the course. You will be referred to the department chair and will be dealt with according to university policy.

Plagiarism is taking another person’s words or ideas without crediting them. Anything cut and pasted from a website without quotation marks and proper citation is plagiarism. Copying anything from a book or journal without quotation marks and proper citation is plagiarism. Plagiarism is academic theft, and there is no excuse for it. Plagiarism usually occurs when students feel overwhelmed—by school, by finances, by illness, relationship problems, etc. If you are dealing with a situation like this, please let me know and we can work something out that will be much more positive than cheating. If you are unsure about how to properly use and credit sources, ask me for advice. You can also consult any of the numerous online sources that provide tips on academic writing. See me if you need suggestions.

**Reasonable Accommodation Policy:** If you feel you need reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please 1) contact the KOKUA Program (V/T) at 956-7511 or 956-7612 in room 013 of QLCSS; 2) speak with me privately to discuss your specific needs. I will be happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program to meet your access needs related to your documented disability.

**Schedule**

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<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Deloria, V. “Self-Determination and the Concept of Sovereignty.”</td>
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| Week 3 | State-centric international relations and beyond | Limits of Capitalism’s Imagination: A Brief Manifesto.”
Selections from: Shapiro, Michael J. *Methods and Nations: Cultural Governance and the Indigenous Subject.* |
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<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Trans-indigenous theory and method</td>
<td><em>Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies</em></td>
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| Week 6 | Nullifying “terra nullis” | The Mabo decision (*Mabo v. Queensland*, 1992)
Black, Christine. “Maturing Australia Through Australian Aboriginal Narrative Law.”
### Bibliography


Mabo and Others v Queensland (No. 2). High Court of Australia, decided 3 June 1992. 175 CLR 1.


