

The Evolution of Native American Studies

Presenter

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Mentor

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Session

- [Poster Session 1](#)
- Commons East
- Easel #44
- 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Scholars have recently begun researching the rise of Ethnic Studies programs in colleges and universities during the civil rights era. Most studies have focused on African American, Asian American, and Chicano studies. Native American Studies, however, holds a distinct difference, given Native people's unique sovereignty and the relationship with the United States government. My research delves into the diverse agendas for which Native American Studies was founded, and explores whether the University of Washington's program was effective or ineffective in meeting the goals of those who founded it. My research examines several aspects in the evolution of Native American Studies: how different groups competing for Ethnic Studies programs influenced the structure of Native American Studies; how the Native American Studies program contrasted with programs devoted to other minority groups; conflicts between and within the opinions of the White authority and Natives, given polarized definitions of academic versus community focuses on both sides; and the target goals of legitimizing Native identity versus accruing diversity through cultural understanding.