



Community Education Spring 2025

Walking with our Ancestors

Instructor: Sam Robinson, Vice Chairman of the Chinook Indian Nation

Phone:

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Course Description: Learn from a tribal elder about the resilient Chinook Indian Nation. Discover the story and culture of the Chinook tilixam who were indigenous throughout the Lower Columbia regions, Rich in resources, these salmon and cedar people developed a vast trading system resplendent in functional and beautiful art!

Sam will share how the Chinook were and continue to be connected to the foods and medicines that Grandmother Earth provides.

Sam will offer songs and drumming as a glimpse into how these emblematic sounds connect with the Ancestors! He will tell stories of current canoe journeys that take the Chinook canoe Family days on end for a couple of hundred miles.

Sam will have updates on the 174 year battle to correct the Federal Status for the five tribes of the Chinook Indian Nation.

Learning Outcomes: *As a result of taking this course, students will:*

- 1. Learn about the Ancestor of the Chinook tilixam prior to non-Native contact. And how mother earth provided for them*
- 2. Understand how colonialism changed the ways of the Chinook tilixam and lessened their bond with Chinook taboos.*
- 3. Hear stories of Chinook tilixam today and their efforts to bond with their Ancestors.*
- 4. Learn how Chinook continue their efforts to reconnect with Grandmother Earth and the gifts of food and medicines she provides.*

5. *Learn how Chinook today continue the unfinished work that began with the signing of the 1851 treaties! How chinook has suffered over the years without the promises of those treaties!*
6. *Chinook Justice Now*

Course Guidelines: The subject of this course can be very complex and technical. The instructor may elect to slow or speed up the course depending on the knowledge level, questions and interest of the class. Questions are expected. However, the instructor may delay the answering a question to a later time. Also, effort will be needed to stay on the subject and to limit areas not pertaining to the subject at hand to email. Students are welcome to email the instructor with question, concerns and suggestions.

Course Schedule:

- Week 1: (5/21) (Introduction to the Chinook)
- Week 2: (5/28) (First contact with non-native people “The Boston’s”)
- Week 3: (6/4) Visit the Cathlapotle Plankhouse on the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge. (Treaties and how not having them ratified has affected Chinook Life over time)
- Week 4: (6/10) (Chinook resilience making our Ancestors proud!)
- Week 5: (6/18) (Chinook today!)

Week 1: Introduction of the Chinook people.

- A. Where did Chinook tilixam come from “Chinook Creation Story)
- B. Explain what ikanum stories are and when we are allowed to tell them.
- C. How Chinook tilixam lived and their social structure!

Week 2: First contact with non-native people.

- A. Who were these people!
- B. How relationships were made.
- C. Life would never be the same!

Week 3: Treaties and how not having them ratified has affected Chinook life over the years.

- A. What were the promises of the treaties.
- B. How even without ratified treaties Chinook have been treated as Indians all along.
- C. Life in Chinook Plankhouses.

Week 4: Chinook resilience

- A. How Chinook people are continuing to learn the ways of their ancestors!
- B. Foods and medicines provided by Grandmother Earth.

- C. Canoe life and bonding with their Ancestors.
- D. Bring back songs, language and other Lifeways.

Week 5: Chinook Justice Now

- A. How Chinook has rallied support from our neighboring communities in support of correcting their Federal Status.
- B. What Federal Status bring to Chinook Communities.
- C. How you can support the effort for Chinook Justice.

About Sam: Sam was born in South Bend Washington the home of his Ancestors. He is the Third Great Grandson of Thomas Huckswelt a treaty signer and a Lower Chinook Headsman. Huckswelt's wife was Catherine George a High Status Willapa women. Upon graduating from LaCenter High School Sam spent four years in the US Army! Sam has continuously served on the Chinook Indian Nation's tribal council since 2001. For the last 11 year he has held the position of Vice Chairman. Sam has also served on the Native American Advisory Board for the University of Washington, Washington State University Vancouver and Clark College. He sits on the board of The Friends of the Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge, Confluence and advice with many other organizations. Sam ha currently enrolled in a Chinuk Wawa class at Lane Community College. He hopes that over the next two years he will be fluent in Chunuk Wawa. He hopes to share some of this language with the class throughout the course.

Resources:

Chinook Resilience Jon D. Daenke UW Press
 Chinookan People of the Lower Columbia. Robert Boyd, Kenneth Ames and Tony Johnson UW Press
www.chinooknation.org
[www, ChinookStory.org](http://www.ChinookStory.org)
twitter.com/Chinook_Nation
facebook.com/ChinookIndianNation
 Instagram@ EverydayChinook

Class Evaluation: Class evaluations are sent by email. Sometimes the email will be delivered to your "junk mail," but we can assure you it's from Clark College only. Your responses are completely anonymous. If you do not see your evaluation immediately after class, look in your junk mail and send it to your email address. If you do not receive an evaluation, please email Continuingeducation@clark.edu or call 360.992.2939.

Inclement Weather:

If the College cancels due to icy conditions you can find this on the college website www.clark.edu ~ If Community Education concludes that the weather is too hazardous we may also decide to cancel this class. In that case you will receive both a phone call and email. Make certain that we have your correct contact information by viewing the class roster.

Looking for classes? Visit our Community Education webpage: www.clark.edu/cce/