

The Pursuit of Civil Discourse



Giving Thanks for the Indigenous

Free Event: November 7, 2026 | 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM CDT

Participants are welcome to speak in English or Spanish (with subtitles)

To request giving a 5-minute presentation, write to: president@naeif.org

To register: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MJb3W-r-RWmcZvvvimRC7g

Round 1: Cultural Sovereignty and Transmission

“Indigenous cultural heritage is holistic, meaning it includes physical, emotional, mental, kinship and spiritual components. It includes both tangible (physical) objects and places, as well as intangible aspects. Each of these concepts is inextricably linked, holding intrinsic value to the well-being of Indigenous peoples and affecting all generations. All are the *belongings* of Indigenous Peoples,” First Peoples’ Cultural Council, B.C., Canada (2026)

1. To what extent does the Canadian government and society treasure and promote the cultural values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

2. To what extent does the Mexican government and society treasure and promote the cultural values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

3. To what extent does the government and society of the United States treasure and promote the cultural values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

Round 2: Environmental Stewardship

Indigenous defenders are increasingly becoming the last line of defense for the environment in Mexico, playing an essential role in the monumental task of preserving the national biodiversity. (...) Mexico possesses the largest percentage of land collectively owned by Indigenous and local communities. This is possible in large part because of Mexico's specific so-called *tierras ejidales* and *tierras comunales* systems, both of which allow for collective property ownership in Mexico, often by Indigenous communities who exercise their political right to self-determination, guaranteed by the constitution.

But these progressive political reforms have not changed the aggression against Mexico's Indigenous communities. Indigenous people, who represent more than 19% of the Mexican population, according to a government census — about 24 million people — have been under threat for centuries. First by Spanish colonial occupiers, then by the modern Mexican state, which massacred them repeatedly, forced intermixing and erased their culture,” by Rafael E. Lozano and Anjan Sundaram, *The Los Angeles Times* (February 26, 2023)

1. To what extent does the Canadian government and society put into practice the environmental values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

2. To what extent does the Mexican government and society put into practice the environmental values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

3. To what extent does the government and society of the United States put into practice the environmental values of its indigenous peoples?

University Student:

High School Student:

Round 3: Fundamentals of a Functioning and Formidable Government and Society

“Our wise forefathers established a union and amity between the [original] Five Nations. This has made us formidable. This has given us great weight and authority with our neighboring Nations. We are a powerful Confederacy and by your observing the same methods our wise forefathers have taken you will acquire much strength and power; therefore, whatever befalls you, do not fall out with one another,” Iroquois leader Canassatego advised several colonial envoys in Pennsylvania (1774).

4. How well do you believe that the Canadian government and society have learned the lessons of the Iroquois?

University Student:

High School Student:

5. How well do you believe that the Mexican government and society have learned the lessons of the Iroquois?

University Student:

High School Student:

6. How well do you believe that the government and society of the United States have learned the lessons of the Iroquois?

University Student:

High School Student:

SUGGESTED READINGS

“Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto” by Taiaiake Alfred

“Seeing Red: A History of Natives in Canadian Newspapers” by Mark Cronlund Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson

“Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee” by Dee Brown

“The True History of the Conquest of New Spain” by Bernal Diaz del Castillo

“An Indigenous People’s History of the United States” by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

“Truth Matters: A Dialogue on Fruitful Disagreement in an Age of Division” by Robert P. George and Cornel West (We highly recommend reference to this manual.)

“The 1619 Project Book” by Nikole Hannah-Jones

“Learning to Disagree” by John Inazu (We highly recommend reference to this manual.)

“Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico” by Miguel Leon-Portilla

“Mexico: From Ancient Civilizations to a Modern Cultural Power” by Anshuman Mishra

“House Made of Dawn: A Novel” by N. Scott Momaday

“The Grass Dancer” by Susan Power

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