



HIST 2350

Division: Social and Behavioral Science

Department: Social Sciences

Course: HIST 2350

Title: History of the American West

Catalog Description:

This course deals with the development of the region west of the Mississippi River from prehistoric times to the present.

General Education Requirements: Individual Choice

Semesters Offered: Spring

Credit/Time Requirement: Credit: 3; Lecture: 3; Lab: 0

Clock/Hour Requirements: 0

Offered for Non-Credit: No

Prerequisites: None

Corequisites: None

Justification:

A study of the history of the American west is important in understanding many American institutions, values, and current culture. Historians have claimed that America's national character was forged from its frontier experience. The western frontier has helped to unify the nation and molded the democratic ideals that so characterize the people of the United States. This course is recommended for all history majors. It transfers to all other Utah colleges and universities as elective credit only.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will know and understand the historical development of the American west from pre-Columbian times to the present, specifically:

- the role of geography in determining the historical development of the west
- the pre-Columbian civilizations of the Americas
- the role of Spain and France in the west
- the important events that have shaped the historical development of the west
- the role of the Mormons in shaping the American West
- the clash of cultures in the west: Indian vs white.

Content:

The course is divided into four units:

- UNIT ONE
 - The geographical setting

- The pre-Columbian Native Americans
- The contest of cultures
- The struggle of empires
- UNIT TWO
 - The western explorers
 - The Spanish and Mexican eras, the settlement of California
- UNIT THREE
 - The mining frontier
 - Open range - the cowboy and the cattle kingdom
 - The power of the road - transportation in the west
 - The Indian wars
- UNIT FOUR
 - The safety valve - settling the Great Plains
 - Plunder and preservation
 - The myth of the west
 - The image of the west in art
 - The frontier and the west in our time.

General Education Outcomes:

- 1) Read effectively, constructively, and critically.

Students are expected to read the text as well as material needed to write a research paper. The students will be evaluated on their mastery of the reading materials by means of examinations and their research paper.

- 2) Write clearly, informatively, and persuasively.

Students are required to submit a research paper on a topic in western American history approved by the instructor. Family history is especially encouraged, because many of the students have ancestors who were an important part of the early history of the west, particularly Utah. In addition, family history focuses on the use of primary sources more than secondary. Emphasis is also placed on format and style. Footnotes or endnotes, along with a bibliography are required. All examinations require students to answer an essay question where an understanding of the information presented in class as well their reading must be demonstrated in a clear, concise manner.

- 4) Retrieve, evaluate, interpret, and deliver information through a variety of traditional and electronic media.

Much of the information presented in class is augmented by visual means, such as wall mounted maps, pictures, graphs, maps, etc., projected on a large screen television, video cassettes and digital video discs. Students are expected to evaluate and interpret information acquired from these sources and demonstrate their mastery of the information on exams. Students may also use the internet to obtain source material for their term paper. However, they may use the internet for a maximum of 1/3 of their sources.

- 5) Apply a cultural and historical awareness to a variety of phenomena.

The entire content of this course is aimed at stimulating a cultural and historical awareness of the American west, from its earliest antecedents among the native Americans, to modern times. Students must demonstrate

their knowledge of the peoples, events, individuals, conflicts, movements, ideals and ideas covered in the course. Their ability to do so will be evaluated by examinations and a research paper.

9) Respond with informed sensitivity to an artistic work or experience.

In this course students are exposed to the works of a number of western artists, such as George Catlin, Albert Bierstadt, Thomas Moran, Frederic Remington, and Charles M. Russell, as well as the photography of William Henry Jackson. On examinations the students will be expected to demonstrate their knowledge of the works of these artists and the impact that their art has had on visual impressions of the west.

Key Performance Indicators:

- Four unit examinations (80% multiple choice, 20% essay): 90% of final grade.
- Research paper (5-6 pages): 10% of final grade.

Percentages are approximate

Representative Text and/or Supplies:

- Hine, Robert V. and Faragher, John Mack, *The American West: A New Interpretive History*, current edition, Yale University press.

Optimum Class Size: 45

Maximum Class Size: 45

Signatures:

I hereby submit this course syllabus:

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I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Social Sciences Department:

Kerry Hansen, D.A., Professor, Chair

I hereby find this course consistent with the goals and resources of the Social and Behavioral Science Division:

Sue Dalley, M.S., Associate Professor, Dean

I have discussed the need for library resources related to this class with the person submitting the syllabus:

Lynn Anderson, MLIS, Technical Services Librarian (Main Campus)

Michelle Olsen, MLS, Campus Librarian (Richfield Campus)