Master Syllabus

Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: HIST 362

Course Title: History of the American West

Number of Credit Hours: 3 Lecture Hours: 3 Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Analysis of Western America from colonization to the present. This course traces the imperial, commercial, intellectual, and social relationships constituting the trans-Mississippi region. In particular, it appraises the interactions of natives and strangers in a frontier borderland over the course of several generations. Furthermore, significant attention will be given to territorial acquisition, population mobility, economic development, and popular cultures. Junior standing or instructor’s permission. Offered odd spring.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): Junior standing or instructor’s permission.

Text(s): The required text must be assigned and supplemented with a minimum of two recommended texts. Additional primary and secondary sources may be assigned as well. Most current editions of the following:

**Required:**


**Recommended:**


White, Richard. *It's Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A History of the American West.*


Other appropriate scholarly monographs may be assigned.
Course Objectives:

• To recognize the main currents of U.S. history in regard to the trans-Mississipi West.
• To explore the interrelationships between westward expansion and the continental hegemony of the U.S.
• To compare and contrast various historiographical perspectives on the American West.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

• Describe the significant people, places, and events of Western American history.
• Analyze the historical processes and institutions that distinguished the Spanish borderlands frontier.
• Explain the influence of Manifest Destiny on antebellum politics and the westering population.
• Study the observations of women and men on the overland trails into the Far West during the nineteenth century.
• Differentiate the major objectives, campaigns, and outcomes of the Mexican and Indian Wars.
• Describe the growth of transportation systems, mining corporations, commercial agriculture, military fortifications, and cattle drives.
• Analyze the contributions of the western territories to the emergence of vigilantism, populism, and progressivism.
• Describe the influence of sunbelt cities upon the westward tilt of national politics and economic growth during the twentieth century.
• Evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and trends in the historiography of the American West.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

Because the course represents an upper level history elective, it bears a distinctive responsibility for teaching advanced knowledge within the discipline. It must be distinguished as an advanced course by three structural components: extensive reading, intensive writing, and historiographical thinking. It must require advanced students to complete both in class and out of class projects (i.e., midterms, finals, team reports, quizzes, research papers). It must demand a minimum of 1000 pages of required text reading, 1000 words of type-written work, and a consideration of the range and variance of historical scholarship. Finally, it must develop student skills and abilities for researching diverse sources of knowledge and organizing findings through synthesis.

• Defining the West and its History
• Native Homelands
• Spanish Borderlands
• New France and the Fur Trade
• Federal Support of Explorers and Emigrants
• Legacy of Acquisition
• Cowboys, Outlaws, and Violence
• Children, Marriage, and Families
• Reforming the west
Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

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Date: May 10, 2005

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.