

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for HIST 28
HISTORY OF AMERICAN WEST
Effective: Fall 2004

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

HIST 28 — HISTORY OF AMERICAN WEST — 3.00 units

A history of the trans-Mississippi West of the United States. Emphasis will be placed on Native American history and cultures, European and Anglo-American frontiers, expansion of the United States in the 19th century, and the interaction of Native American, European American, Asian American, African American and Hispanic American peoples, and the significance of the West in American history.

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter Grade

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. explain the impact of geography on the development of the West;
2. analyze the cultural diversity of the peoples of the West and the "clash of cultures" that unfolds;
3. explain the United States' expansionist impulse and the acquisition of Mexican land in the Southwest and the Oregon Country;
4. describe the national consequences of the Mexican-American War and the role of the West in the events leading up to the Civil War;
5. analyze the impact of the gold rush and the mining frontier on the West and the nation as a whole;
6. explain the forces behind the building of the transcontinental railroad and its effect on the West and the nation;
7. analyze federal Indian policy and its legacy;
8. describe the expanding cattle and farming frontiers;
9. analyze the political and economic issues behind the Agrarian Revolt and its significance in American political reform in the 20th century;
10. identify and explain the 20th century social and economic changes in the West;
11. interpret the significance of the West in American history.

V. CONTENT:

- A. The mythology of the West. The moving frontier.
- B. Geography and its importance in the development of the West
- C. Western Indian cultural groups
- D. The Spanish West
- E. American expansion, the Lewis and Clark expedition, the coming of the fur trade
- F. American settlement of Texas, the Texan Revolution, the annexation of Texas and its impact on U.S. relations with Mexico
- G. U.S. interest and acquisition of California
- H. History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and the occupation of the Great Basin
 - I. American conquest of California
 - J. Mexican-American War. Conquest and controversy over newly acquired land that leads to the American Civil War
- K. The Gold Rush in California and its consequences for the nation. Subsequent mining rushes
- L. Building and transcontinental railroad and its effect on the nation
- M. Federal Indian policy: removal, reservation, extermination and assimilation, the national legacy of these policies
- N. The Cattle Frontier
- O. Opening the Plains: national land legislation
- P. The Agrarian Revolt
- Q. The 20th Century: Progressivism, the Depression, World War II, the Cold War Years, Civil Rights
- R. Turner's Frontier Thesis and the significance of the West in American history

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** - on major themes, events, and personalities

- B. **Discussion** - of significant and controversial issues
- C. **Field Trips** -
- D. **Guest Lecturers** -
- E. **Audio-visual Activity** -

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Reading 1. "Anglo-American Stereotypes of Mexicans," pages 22-26 in the Reader. Be prepared to discuss the stereotypes described in the article and their sources. B. Writing, problem solving or performance 1. After viewing the film, "Lakota Woman," be prepared to discuss or write a short essay concerning the major issues and problems Indians faced.

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

- 1. Exams/Tests
- 2. Papers

B. **Frequency**

- 1. Frequency of Evaluation
 - a. Midterm exam and final exam
 - b. Short essay papers
 - c. Oral presentations

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Hine and Faragher *The American West*. ., Yale Press, 2000.
- 2. Clyde Milner II, *Major Problems in the History of the American West*. , D.C. Heath and Company, 2001.
- 3. Iris Engstrand *Document Sets for California & the West in United States History*. ., W.C. Heath Publishing Company, 2002.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Outline Notes, Study Guides, Internet Access, and/or Readers prepared by instructor.