

HIST 140: HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WEST

Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2025
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	54
Lecture Hours :	54
Lab Hours:	0
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	108
Total Student Learning Hours:	162
Strongly Recommended:	ENGL C1000 or ENGL C1000H.
District General Education:	D1. History and Political Science
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	Yes - Approved
Grading Method:	Standard Letter, Pass/No Pass

Catalog Course Description

A survey class of the region west of the Mississippi River designed to acquaint the students with the historical significance, events and personalities which made up this period. Primary emphasis will be on the 19th century. 54 lecture hours.

Course Objectives

- Explain the motivations for European settlement of the American West, examine the rivalries between imperial powers, and analyze Native responses to European encroachment
- Evaluate the federal government's role in promoting settlement and investment in the American West during the nineteenth century.
- Demonstrate a familiarity with the social histories of different ethnicities, races, classes, and genders during the nineteenth century American West.
- Analyze how popular portrayals of the American West have contributed to the development of a mythology linked to American national identity.
- Explain and evaluate the economic, social, and cultural costs of expansion for American Indian societies.
- Assess the economic and environmental changes brought to the American West during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Major Course Content

1. Defining the West
 - a. Where is the West?
 - b. Representations of the West
 - c. Frederick Jackson Turner and the Frontier Thesis
 - d. Challenges to the Frontier Thesis
 - e. American Indian Societies of the Pre-Contact American West
2. The Colonial West
 - a. Early Contact
 - b. New Spain's northern frontier
 - c. New Mexico
 - d. Texas
 - e. Imperial Rivalries
 - f. New France and the fur trade
 - g. Native Resistance
 - h. The Comanche Empire
 - i. Colonization of California
3. American Penetration of the West
 - a. The Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition
 - b. The Fur Trade and Consequences
 - c. The Mexican Frontier
 - d. Santa Fe Trade
 - e. Texas Independence
 - f. Indian Removal and Indian Country
 - g. Oregon Settlement and the Overland Trail
 - h. Manifest Destiny
 - i. War with Mexico
4. Consolidating American Control
 - a. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo
 - b. The Gold Rush
 - c. California Indians and the Gold Rush
 - d. The Compromise of 1850 and the West
 - e. The Gadsden Purchase
 - f. The Civil War and the West
 - g. Reconstruction in the West
5. Farmers, Ranchers, and Land
 - a. The Great American Desert
 - b. The Homestead Act
 - c. Sodbusters
 - d. Bonanza farmers
 - e. Women and the Homestead Act
 - f. Cattle ranching and the "open" range
 - g. Cowboys
 - h. The Johnson County War
 - i. Aridity and water
 - j. National Parks and "wilderness"
6. Industrialization, Reform, and Protest
 - a. Mineral rushes and mining
 - b. Railroads
 - c. Coal
 - d. Lumber
 - e. Organized labor
 - f. Strikes and state-sanctioned violence
 - g. Agrarian Protest and Populism
 - h. Suffrage and the West
7. Law and Society in the West
 - a. Vigilantes and outlaws
 - b. Law enforcement
 - c. Legal institutions in the West
 - d. Women in the west
 - e. Family life
 - f. Boomtowns
 - g. The Army and the West
 - h. "Buffalo soldiers"

8. Ethnicity, religion, and the Borderlands
 - a. Chinese immigration
 - b. The West and Chinese exclusion
 - c. Latter Day Saints
 - d. Polygamy and the federal government
 - e. Exodusters
 - f. Hispanos and Californios on the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands
9. American Indians and the West
 - a. The reservation system
 - b. The Indian Wars
 - c. Destruction of the bison
 - d. Boarding schools
 - e. Allotment
 - f. Suppression of Native cultures
 - g. The Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee
10. The American West at the Turn of the Twentieth Century
 - a. Urbanization
 - b. Environmental Consequences of Development
 - c. The American West and the U.S. empire in the Pacific
 - d. Wild West shows and popular memory
 - e. The Western

Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

Students will analyze primary documents as part of in-class discussions. They will also be introduced to scholarly articles.

Examples of Required Writing Assignments

Students will write an analytical essay, 5-7 pages in length, in which they will utilize primary and secondary source readings to examine a topic or historical event.

Students will read the course material and come to class with prepared topics for discussion, either in the form of written responses or questions to share with the class.

Examples of Outside Assignments

Students will be required to complete the following types of assignments outside of the regular class time:

Study Answer questions related to the course readings
Read required materials Write essays, research papers, or journals

DEGREE APPLICABLE COURSE: 2 hours of independent work done out of class per each hour of lecture or class work, or 3 hours lab, practicum, or the equivalent, per unit.

Instruction Type(s)

Lecture, Online Education Lecture

IGETC Area 3: Arts and Humanities

3B. Humanities