

HIST 425-01: History of the American West

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:45pm; Wednesday 11:00am - noon; or by appointment

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You can come to office hours in person or connect via zoom

- <https://lsc.zoom.us/j/6510524452>. Zoom is set up with a waiting room. You may have to wait a few minutes if I am with another student.

Course Description: HIST 112 is an examination of the history of the Trans-Mississippi American West, including the social, cultural, political, and economic developments from the earliest times to the present.

The goal of this course is to gain a broader understanding of this region and its importance to national and global history, focusing specifically on the changing relationships between groups of people, changing relationships between people and their environments, and the formation of regional identities. In addition to surveying the region's past, I hope you come away from this course with a deeper understanding of history's continuing importance to contemporary issues.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:

- Analyze primary and secondary source material, placing them within the context of larger historical trends.
- Develop critical interpretations of the significance of primary and secondary source material
- Demonstrate historical research skills.
- Practice working collaboratively with classmates.

Required Textbooks:

- No textbooks required for this class. See Canvas for a list of course readings.

Course Requirements

Weekly Work – 40%

This course is discussion-based, so it is important that you come to class prepared to discuss the course readings and share your critical opinions. All course readings should be done in advance of the class period for which they are assigned. To help facilitate class discussions and improve critical reading and thinking, you will

- Respond to several short writing prompts throughout the semester.
- Take turns preparing discussion questions based on course readings.

More information about weekly assignments will be posted on Canvas.

Attendance and Participation – 15%

Attendance and participation are important for your success in this course. Participation includes:

- Participating in class discussions
- Completing in-class assignments and activities
- Coming to class prepared. This means completing course readings before class and actively taking notes during class

Because this work takes place in class, there will be no make-ups, except for sanctioned LCSC events or extenuating circumstances. I will drop the lowest two scores.

Podcast Research Project – 35%

This semester, we will work as a class to create a podcast series on the American West. More details are posted on Canvas.

Final Reflection Essay – 10%

Instead of a final exam, you will write a final essay that reflects on the themes of the course and what you learned during the semester. See Canvas for more information.

Course Policies**Assignment Submission:**

- Late assignments will be assessed a **10%** penalty for each day they are late unless you've made prior arrangements with me.
- Assignments can be submitted on Canvas or in hard copy.

Attendance:

- Attendance is important for your success in this course.
- Sometimes emergencies happen. If you are unable to attend class for any reason, please let me know as soon as possible. Attending class is like working a job. Please give me the same courtesy you would give an employer. There are no make-ups for in-class work, except for LCSC sanctioned events or extenuating circumstances. Missing more than 20% of class sessions may result in failing the class.

Collaborative Learning: This semester, some work will be completed in groups. Research shows that we learn more when we work with others. Collaboration is about creating new knowledge, sharing ideas, and connecting with other individuals. This can be a very rewarding and enjoyable process.

- **What about my grade?** You will be graded individually based on the work you contributed to the project. Some points are awarded for how well you work with the group.
- **What about other potential issues?** We've all experienced some of the challenges of group work. We are going to try our best to practice professionalism. Good communication is essential. That means communicating with me and your teammates (especially if you run into problems or delays) and listening respectfully to others. As a

class, we will develop ground rules for our team interactions to help make the process as smooth as possible.

Email:

- Check your LCMail regularly and turn on notifications for components in Canvas, including announcements, graded assignments, etc.
- You can contact me through Canvas or at alvanlanen@lcsc.edu.
- I only check email during regular working hours (M-F, 8:00-5:00pm).
- I will reply to your message within two working days. If I have not replied within two working days, assume that I have not received your email.

Academic Dishonesty: Students in this course will abide by Lewis-Clark State College's policy on [Academic Dishonesty](#). In this course, any assignment completed without total academic honesty will be grounds for **failing the course** and will be reported to the appropriate school officials.

Course Schedule - for additional information about weekly assignments, please see the Canvas course calendar and modules. Course schedule subject to change.

Week 1

- Tuesday, August 23 – Introductions
- Thursday, August 25 – What is the West?
 - Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," American Historical Association, 1893.
[https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history-\(1893\)](https://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/historical-archives/the-significance-of-the-frontier-in-american-history-(1893))
 - Excerpt from Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: History and Society in the Gilded Age* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982).

Week 2 – Explorations and Migrations I

- Tuesday, August 30
 - Excerpt Lewis and Clark Journals (on Canvas)
 - [Lewis and Clark Interactive Map](#)
- Thursday, September 1
 - Dan Flores, "Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The Southern Plains from 1800 to 1850," *Journal of American History* 78, no. 2 (Sept. 1991): 465-485.
 - Michael Lansing, "Plains Indian Women and Interracial Marriage in the Upper Missouri Trade, 1804-1868," *Western Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 413-433.

Week 3 – Explorations and Migrations II

- Tuesday, September 6
 - Chelsea K. Vaughn, “Killing Narcissa: Race, Gender, Violence in Recreations of the Whitman Incident,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 115, no. 3 (Fall 2014): 380-413.
 - John W. Mann, “Slough-Keetcha: Spokane Garry in History and Memory,” *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 104, no. 1 (Winter 2012-2013): 3-20.
- Thursday – September 8
 - Diana Ahmad, “‘I Fear the Consequences for Our Animals’: Emigrants and their Livestock on the Overland Trails,” *Great Plains Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Summer 2012): 165-182.
 - Robert W. Carter, “‘Sometimes When I Hear the Winds Sigh’: Mortality on the Overland Trail,” *California History* 74, no. 2 (Summer 1995): 146-161.
 - Johnny Faragher and Christine Stansell, “Women and their Families on the Overland Trail to California and Oregon, 1842-1867,” 2, no. 2/3 (1975): 150-166.

Week 4 – Explorations and Migrations III

- Tuesday, September 13
 - Robert V. Hine and John Mack Farragher, “War and Destiny” in *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).
- Thursday, September 15 – Podcast Pitch Day

Week 5 – The West Industrializes I

- Tuesday, September 20
 - Kendra Field and Daniel Lynch, “Master of Ceremonies,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 379-405.
- Thursday, September 22
 - Adam M. Romero, “Beyond the Mother Lode,” *California History* 95, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 2-24.
 - Liping Zhu, “‘A Chinaman’s Chance’ on the Rocky Mountain Mining Frontier,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 45 no. 4 (Autumn/Winter 1995): 36-51.

Week 6 – The West Industrializes II

- Tuesday, September 27
 - Robert V. Hine and John Mack Farragher, “The Power of the Road” in *The American West: A New Interpretive History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).
- Thursday, September 29
 - Richard White, “Animals and Enterprise” in *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde Milner et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Week 7 – The West Industrializes III

- Tuesday, October 4
 - Excerpt from Donald Worster, *Rivers of Empire: Water, Aridity, and the Growth of the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
- Thursday, October 6 – Podcast Project Workday – no class meeting

Week 8 – The Progressive West I

- Tuesday, October 11
 - Part 1 of Michael P. Malone and F. Ross Peterson, “Politics and Protest” in *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde Milner et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- Thursday, October 13
 - James R. Swensen, “Bound for the Fair: Chief Joseph, Quannah Parker, and Geronimo and the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair,” *American Indian Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (October 2019): 439-470.

Week 9 – The Progressive West II - National Parks and Western Tourism

- Tuesday, October 18 – Podcast Project Workday – bring rough drafts of scripts to class for editing
- Thursday, October 20
 - Thomas A. Krainz, “Conflict and Fire: Community Tensions Surrounding the Big Blowup,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 103, no. 1 (Winter 2011/2012): 13-24.
 - Thomas C. Rust, “An ‘Undesirable Station’” U.S. Army Soldiers at Fort Yellowstone and the Creation of the National Park Service Ranger Program,” *Montana, The Magazine of Western History* 67, no. 4 (Winter 2017): 17-38.

Week 10 – The Progressive West III

- Tuesday, October 25
 - Mary Murphy, “Bootlegging Mothers and Drinking Daughters: Gender and Prohibition in Butte, Montana,” *American Quarterly* 46 no. 2 (June 1994): 174-194.
- Thursday, October 27 – Podcast Project Workday – bring FINAL scripts to class for one last round of editing

Week 11 – The West Goes to Hollywood

- Tuesday, November 1 – In-class movie TBA
- Thursday, November 3 – Movie and discussion

Week 12 – The West in Depression and War I

- Tuesday, November 8
 - Richard White, “The Depression” in *“It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”: A New History of the American West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).
- Thursday, November 10
 - Valerie Matsumoto, “Redefining Expectations: Nisei Women in the 1930s,” *California History* 73, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 44-53.

Week 13 – The West in Depression and War II

- Tuesday, November 15
 - Arthur C. Verge, “The Impact of the Second World War on Los Angeles,” *Pacific Historical Review* 63, no. 3 (August 1994): 289-314.
- Thursday, November 17
 - Podcast Project – Rough recordings finished
 - Ian Stacy, “Roads to Ruin on the Atomic Frontier: Environmental Decision Making at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, 1942-1952,” *Environmental History* 15, no. 3 (July 2010): 415-448.
 - Terry Tempest Williams, “The Clan of One-Breasted Women,” in *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (New York: Vintage, 1992).

Fall Break – November 21-25**Week 14 – The Post-War West I**

- Tuesday, November 29
 - Part 2 of Michael P. Malone and F. Ross Peterson, “Politics and Protest” in *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde Milner et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994).
- Thursday, December 1
 - Carl Abbott, “Revisiting Rajneeshpuram: Oregon’s Largest Utopian Community as Western History,” *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 116, no. 4 (Winter 2015): 414-447.
 - Bob H. Reinhardt, “Drowned Towns in the Cold War West: Small Communities and Federal Water Projects,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 42, no. 2 (Summer 2011): 149-172.

Week 15 – The Post-War West II

- Tuesday, December 6 – Find a recent news or magazine article that connects to one of the historic issues we’ve discussed with the West.
- Thursday, December 8 – Podcast Launch Day

Final Reflection/Self-Evaluation Due – Monday, December 12