

HIST 449/549

Race and Ethnicity in the American West

Fall 2019

T, Th, noon - 1:20
104 Condon Hall

Professor: Ocean Howell
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Office Hours:
Monday noon to 2pm,
and by appointment

Course Description

Race has been central to the American experience. The politics surrounding race and ethnicity have shaped American laws, institutions, economic systems, cultural formations, and the land itself. However, the manner in which race has functioned differed dramatically in different parts of the country. This course provides a survey of the literature dealing with race and ethnicity in the American West.

General Information

This course is intensive in both reading and writing. Class participation is essential. You are expected to prepare well, to attend every session, to arrive promptly, and to participate thoughtfully in discussion.

If you need special assistance in order to facilitate your participation, please see me immediately so that proper arrangements can be made.

Readings

Course readings are selected from a variety of scholarly works. Readings will average 100 - 150 pages of reading a week. All readings will be made available electronically through Canvas. While there are no texts to purchase, students will have to print out PDFs to bring to class. Coming to class without a copy of the texts will count against your participation grade.

Assignments/Grading

There are no exams or quizzes for this course. Your grade is based on participation and writing. The breakdown is as follows:

In-class participation:	20% of total grade
Exam 1 (10/31):	25%
Exam 2 (11/26):	25%
Historiographical essay (due 12/11):	30%

NOTE: Failure to complete any component of the course will result in a failing grade

Participation and short assignments:

This course is a combination of lecture and seminar format, which means that the quality of your learning experience is dependent upon the full participation of each member of the group. Students must arrive, *on time*, ready to engage in informed discussion. Students will also be given a variety of short, in-class exercises.

Exams:

There will be two in-class exams that will assess students' grasp on all course material (readings, lectures, and in-class exercises). Exams will include a mix of short identification questions and longer essay questions. Students are required to arrive with blue books. There will be a review session before each exam.

Historiographical Paper:

You will be asked to write a 4 to 5-page historiographical essay.

Historiography is the study of historical literature, rather than of the history itself. Students will perform a historiographical analysis of two related scholarly books that treat the subject of race and ethnicity in the American West. The essay must consider two scholarly books, neither of which were assigned in the course. Detailed assignment prompt to come.

Grading Policies

Students are expected to attend every session, but will be permitted one unexcused absence. Each subsequent absence will result in a 1/3 drop in the student's participation grade (an A- will become a B+, a B+ becomes a B, and so on).

Promptness is crucial to the success of a seminar course. For every three instances when a student arrives late, his or her participation grade will drop by 1/3 (A- to B+).

Because grades are due shortly after finals week, final papers cannot be accepted late.

A note on academic honesty: you are responsible for understanding what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it. Any instances of plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, will result in a failing grade for the course, and will be reported to the university. If you have any questions at all, please come talk to me. Also please consult the library's Plagiarism Guide:

<https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

Learning Outcomes (students will be able to . . .)

- Identify the central argument or purpose in a scholarly source
- Identify the research question, source base, and methodology for a secondary source

- Understand the central themes of scholarly historical literature on race and ethnicity in the American West
- Write a historiographical essay

Technology Policies

No screens. Students are not permitted to open a laptop in class. The only exception to this rule is when a student discussion leader wishes to project images. Cell phones and all other electronic devices are prohibited; no exceptions.

Contacting me

Email is best for short questions. If you have a substantive question, please come to my office hours.

Schedule (tentative):

Week 1:

10/1:

Introductions. No reading.

10/3:

Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," address delivered to the annual meeting of the American Historical Association, 1893.

Week 2:

10/8:

Ned Blackhawk, *Violence Over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*, (Harvard University Press, 2006).

10/10:

Blackhawk.

Week 3:

10/15:

Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846 - 1906*, (University Press of Kansas, 2007).

10/17:

Tomás Almaguer, *Racial Fault Lines: The Historical Origins of White Supremacy in California*, (University of California Press, 1994).

Week 4:

10/22:
Almaguer

10/24:
Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528-1990*, (Norton; 1998).

Week 5:

10/29:
Taylor

Exam review

10/31:
Exam 1

Week 6:

11/5:
Albert Broussard, *Black San Francisco: The Struggle for Racial Equality in the West, 1900-1954*, (University Press of Kansas, 1993).

11/7:
Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943*, (University of North Carolina Press, 2003).

Week 7:

11/12:
Connie Chiang, *Nature Behind Barbed Wire: An Environmental History of the Japanese American Incarceration* (Oxford University Press, 2018).

11/14:
Eric Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Week 8:

11/19:
Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

11/21:
Brilliant

Exam review

Week 9:

11/26:
Exam 2

11/28:
No class. Thanksgiving Holiday.

Week 10:

12/3:
Paper presentations

12/5:
Paper presentations

Final paper due Wednesday 12/11 at noon.