

**HIST 3398**  
**Texas and the Southwest**  
**College of Humanities and Social Sciences**

**Contact:**

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Office Hours: TuTh, 11:00 am – 12:15 pm, 2:00-3:00 pm.

Class Time: ABIV #302 MWF 12:30-1:50 pm.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The unique history of the American Southwest lays embedded in its geography and global history. It started as the seedbed of Neolithic American Cultures, and became an important crossroads of Indigenous American and European colonial ambitions in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The region has also been shaped by its origins in the hinterlands of Northern Mexico and absorption into the United States by the annexation of Texas and Mexican-American War. Even after its absorption into the United States the Southwest remained a frontier region full of danger and encounter. Railroads, the open range, and mineral speculation lay at the core of the region's development. The Southwest, however, largely remained a hinterland until the disasters of the Great Depression and Dust Bowl encouraged a rapid modernization of the American Southwest.

**SKILL OBJECTIVES:**

**Critical Thinking:** Students will be taught to think critically and analytically, and to ask appropriate questions about different historical societies and cultures, integrating and synthesizing knowledge they gain in the course, forming conclusions, and building an informed belief system from the complex of information presented in the course content.

**Communication:** To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication. Communication skills will be addressed in this class through class participation, the reading and discussion of historical texts, attending lectures, and watching films. Students will learn through the use of historical materials to critically evaluate the time periods in which these materials originated.

**Personal Responsibility:** To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making. Personal responsibility will be addressed in this course as students articulate how to make sound ethical judgments based on the development of their personal value system. By studying how individuals in the past drew upon their cultural belief systems to make ethical choices students will learn how their personal choices based upon ideas, values, and beliefs influence their larger society and culture today.

**Social Responsibility:** To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities. Social Responsibility will be addressed in this course as students learn about the ways in which individuals and groups in the past made decisions aimed at promoting civil discourse, civic participation, and other social values so as to improve society for all. Students will thus learn about their own social responsibilities in improving current American society.

## **CLASS DIRECTIVES**

Classes will follow a standard format:

A) lecture: Lectures and note taking will be integral, they will provide the necessary context to help guide reading the books. Lectures will be used to explain historical background, and further flesh-out specific events, people, and perspectives on history

B) Discussion: Classes will have a discussion component where we will work to sort out current readings, and also contextualize the readings against cultural artifacts: including art and video evidence.

Since a full understanding of the course material will not be possible without class meetings, attendance is mandatory. Absences in excess of the university limit (2, or 3 hours class time) will negatively impact your grade. Excused absences must be properly documented, and multiple tardy arrivals (i.e., more than one) will be treated as unexcused absences.

Participation must strictly adhere to principles of civil discourse, respect, and courteousness. Civil disagreement is welcomed, and even encouraged. However, belligerence, threats, and insults will not be tolerated, and will result in your removal from the course, with prejudice.

Your attendance counts as only a component of your participation grade. Participation will be graded for each class, and will be based on engagement, note-taking, and active, vocal, contribution to class discussion.

Deadlines are finite and non-negotiable. Late assignments will be penalized. Assignments that are over 48 hours late will not be accepted.

Any accommodation for any variety of special needs will most certainly be made. It is, however, the students' responsibility to inform the professor and make sure that any individual accommodation necessary has been certified with the university through the proper channels.

Laptops are allowed for the purpose of notetaking. Any abuse of this privilege will result in its revocation. All other data devices are strictly forbidden.

Food and drink are welcome in the course, so long as they are consumed in a courteous fashion. Obnoxiousness will result in revocation of this privilege.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials. A copy of the University policy is available on the Sam Houston State University website. If you need clarification about what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to ask or see me during office hours.

#### **STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY:**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911 (a) (2) defines a religious holy day as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20...." A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

#### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

#### **VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:**

Only registered students may attend class. Exceptions can be made on a case-by-case basis by the professor. In all cases, visitors must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. Students wishing to audit a class must apply to do so through the Registrar's Office.

#### **EWCAT**

This course has been designed around the "EWCAT" (Ethics, Western Civilization and American Traditions) approach, an initiative at SHSU to introduce students to the study of the humanities in a discussion-based format and improve critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. EWCAT courses do not require any extra work from students, and may have overall less textbook reading and less memorization required than a "traditional" introductory-level course. Instead, these courses focus on fostering student thinking about larger questions, grounded in a handful of original, primary-source texts, which students have the opportunity to read, interrogate, and discuss together in small group "breakout" sessions during the semester.

Breakout sessions require students to do readings, and arrive prepared with questions to engage with their classmates and think about new ideas and topics. The professor is not present at these sessions, but a graduate student monitor is. Students will be held accountable for their thoughtful participation in these sessions.

For more information on the EWCAT initiative and its success, see here:

<http://www.shsu.edu/pin/www/T@S/sliders/2015/ewcat.html>

## **EXAMS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### Break Out Sessions (Labs)

These will meet periodically, on days where there are break-out sessions, lecture is cancelled. They will be centered on the interpretation of a set of primary sources. Clearly defined objectives will be provided for each individual session.

Out of the break-out sessions students will be required to submit 4 (students will write a response to 4 out of 6 sessions) short response essays of about 1000 to 1500 words. The essays should work to interpret important historical and ethical questions raised by the documents provided by each lab, and should not be just reporting on the discussion.

### Take Home Exams

There will be two (2) take home, essay format exams. Students will have a week to complete their exams and may use any course material in the process. These exams, however, are strictly individual assessments, no collaboration will be allowed.

## **GRADES**

All grades will be calculated according to the standard scale used by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	<60

Final grades will be figured according to the following weights:

Midterm Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Lab Papers	25%
Participation	15%

## **ASSIGNED BOOKS**

Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S. Mexican War*  
ISBN-10: 0300158378  
ISBN-13: 978-0300158373

Donald Worster, *Dustbowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s*  
ISBN-10: 0195174887  
ISBN-13: 978-0195174885

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that the course schedule is subject to change, if necessary. Any amendments to the schedule of courses will be announced and distributed with ample notice.

### Week 1

1/18: Introduction and Geography  
**Begin Reading DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts***

### Week 2

1/23: Seeds of the Southwest

1/25: The Early Spanish Empire

### Week 3

1/30: The French Empire, and Early Comancheria and Apacheria

2/1: Breakout Session Lab 1

### Week 4

2/6: The Bourbon Reforms

2/8: The Later Spanish Empire and War of Independence

### Week 5

2/13: Growing American Influence: Texas, Expeditions, the Impresarios, and the Santa Fe Trade

2/15: Centralism, Federalism, and Crisis in Mexico

### Week 6

2/20: Book Discussion: DeLay - Mexico's Indian Problem

2/22: Breakout Session Lab 2

### Week 7

2/27: Independent Texas

3/1: The Mexican-American War

### Week 8

3/6: Comancheria in Retreat

3/8: Break Session Lab 3

**Take Home Exam 1 Due 3/9**

3/12-3/16 SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS

Week 9

3/20: The Grand Army of the West in the Southwest and the Railroads

**Begin Reading, Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl***

3/22: Breakout Session Lab 4

Week 10

3/27: The Open Range and Cattle

3/29: The Farmer's Alliances, Mining Unions, and Revolt

Week 11

4/3: The Mexican Revolution

4/5: Breakout Session Lab 5

Week 12

4/10: Precious Metals and Oil

4/12: The Farming Frontier

Week 13

4/17: Ecological Destruction and the Dustbowl

4/19: The Great Depression

Week 14

4/24: The Great Depression, Part II

4/26: Breakout Session Lab 6

Week 15

5/1: The New Deal in the Southwest

5/3: World War II and Modernity in the Southwest

**Take Home Exam 2 Due During Finals Week.**