San Jose State University
California in Historic and Social Scientific Perspective
Socs/Geog/Hist/Anthro/PoliSci/Econ 137 Fall 2014

Instructor: Professor Millner
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Office hours: 11:00-Noon Monday/Wednesday or by appointment.

Course Description

This is an interdisciplinary course that analyzes the development of California by using scholarly perspectives common to historians, sociologists, those who practice geography, economists, and political scientists. Students will have an opportunity to explore a variety of key events and patterns from multiple perspectives as we review the chronology of California from the times of the Spanish Exploration period through the modern Era.

Student Learning Objectives

This class is closely aligned with standards outlined for those who plan to teach history and/or the social sciences in California’s public schools. As such the objectives include:

1. Acquiring an understanding of how California’s development is assessed by scholars who use theories and methods practiced by anthropologists, historians, economists, sociologists, and political scientists.

2. Students will develop the ability to identify and be able to explain key events and periods in California’s history as well as the social forces that influenced those events.

3. Students will acquire an understanding of how patterns of immigration and internal migration have influenced California over time.

4. Students will acquire awareness of similarities and key differences between the 58 Counties that make up the State of California. By using map exercises students will learn about and acquire an ability to explain variations in California counties and cities.

5. Students will come to understand the functions of the various levels of government as they operate in California and how various interest groups impact those agencies via lobbying, voting and other means of exerting influence.

6. Students will develop skills to assist them in explaining California’s dynamics to various members of the public including public school pupils.
Required Texts/Materials


Also purchase or acquire a current map of the State of California that includes the 58 counties and the major cities, roads etc. [Those distributed by AAA would be fine]

Classroom Protocol

The acceptable way to address classroom instructors is by either “Professor” or “Dr.” [when appropriate]. I will respond to either Professor Millner or Dr. Millner but not to students addressing me as “Mr.”, “teacher”, “Steven Michael”, etc.

To fully benefit from any of your courses active participation and regular attendance are imperative. While attendance is not required and will not earn points for grading purposes you are responsible for all materials covered during class. There are certain classroom rules you are expected to adhere to including: No use of cell phones or texting devices during class, no use of laptops, IPads, etc. while class is in session, and no excessive talking to classmates during lecture. [If you are registered with the DRC and provide verification of this status you may use a mechanical device during class]. It is ill-mannered to leave class before lecture is over unless you have provided prior notice.

Contacting the Professor

The best way to contact me is to arrive at my office hours. You do not need an appointment during those hours. You may also send me an email [do not expect an instant response]. You may also catch me after class but avoid walking up just before class starts. If you miss class do not expect to receive a personal lecture. If my office hours do not fit your schedule let me know and I may be able to find another time to see you.

Grades and Assignments

Reading assignments should be completed before coming to class so that you can participate when called upon. Your written assignments should reflect upper division writing skills and all materials turned in should be “spell-checked and grammar checked” as those dimensions always count when others judge your work. Assignments are due at the start of class makeup work is done only if exceptional [and documented] circumstances emerge. The following will be used to calculate your final grade:

Scheduled Examinations: 40% of grade, Research paper: 20% of grade, Comprehensive Final: 20% of grade, Field trip to an approved California geographic location 10% [list of approved sites will be distributed], pop quizzes”, etc. 10% of grade. Exams and “pop quizzes” will use objective questions, fill-ins, short answers, etc. while the research paper will also have a protocol distributed in class that will call for use of book resources from
the Martin L. King Jr. Library. Each research paper will require at least eight pages of textural analysis [excluding title page, table of contents etc.]

Course Schedule

August 25-August 27
Introduction to content: California as a “distinctive entity from the start”; Patterns of Early Spanish exploration and “settlement/invasion”: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 1, 2, 3.

Sept. 2-Sept 17
Mexico’s “missionary” approach to California; The emergence of a national economy based on slavery and expansion: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

First Exam will take place September 22, 2014. [scantron te 200 needed]

September 24-October 8
California during an era of war and economic development: the USA during a time of [un]Civil War; Reconstruction in the South and the West: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

October 13-October 29
California emerges as a world destination; America during its age of massive immigration; California and the world at war: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27.

Field Trip Report will be due in class on October 22, 2014.

Second Exam will take place Wednesday, October 29, 2014.

November 3-November 19
California becomes the Nation’s cultural and economic engine: California’s cities under siege; The politics of modern California: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36.

November 24- December 10
California again as a major world destination: Institutional Crisis during the Age of the New Technologies; California faces an uncertain future: Reading assignment: Rolle book, chapters 37, 38, 39, 40.

California County Research Paper will be due in class on December 3, 2014.

Final Exam will take place Thursday, December 18, 2014 12:15-2:30 p.m.