

Department of Humanities
Dr. Christopher B. Davis
Email: cdavis@sulross.edu
Phone: 830.703.4845
Office: Del Rio, F215
Hours of Availability:
Tuesday and Wednesday, 11:30a-2:30p
Thursday, 11:30p-2:30p and 3p-4p



History of Western America

Spring 2019
Online

Course Description

This course will explore the history of western America from the era of Native American control to present. Themes will include how borders are conceptualized and established, the impact of Spanish control, and systems put in place under U.S. control that shaped the West in the past century.

Course Style

Activities will focus on readings, writing, and short teaching topics.

Importance of Communication

It is vital that students stay in communication with me as the course progresses. Most struggles students have in college courses can be resolved with simple conversations between student and teacher. If there are difficulties with concepts or assignments, it is not a cause for embarrassment or panic but an opportunity to improve skills and expand knowledge. Just get in touch. We will work through the issue.

I try to make communication as easy as possible and keep regular hours when I am available to talk. We can meet in person, talk on the phone, or video chat. Check your email regularly.

If you cannot meet during my hours of availability you can request another time when you are available. Please just email me to set up a time.

Resources

For this course readings will be made available on Blackboard under the course resources tab. See the folder that corresponds with the class week listed on the syllabus.

The resources provided are for your use only for this class. That is why they are being provided via a password protected system like Blackboard. Do not illegally reproduce or distribute them.

Syllabus

Please keep your syllabus accessible for the entire semester. It will serve as a guide to not only class assignments but also to understand class expectations. If any major revisions have to be made to the class schedule during the semester, I will let you know when to obtain an updated syllabus from Blackboard.

Attendance

As an online course it is critical that you check your email regularly and work on class material at least weekly to not get behind.

Grading

Weekly Writeups	100 points (10 each)
Teach-a-Topics	100 points (50 each)
Semester Research	200 points
Exams	300 points (100 each)

Your semester grade will be the number of points you receive on the items listed above divided by the total number of points possible. For example, if you receive 630 points among the assignments that is 630 divided by 700 equals 0.9 or 90%. That is the minimum needed for an A in the class.

Note: There are no extra point opportunities in this course. It is best to keep up with your scores on assignments to know how you are doing.

Semester Research

This class will have a semester research project. More information will be provided as we begin that process.

Exams

The exams in this course will each cover approximately 1/3 of the material. Each test will be available on Blackboard one week before the due date/time. Short essay answers should focus on understanding rather than memorization. Please see the tests for instructions.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

- 1) Develop the ability to understand history rather than simply memorize.
- 2) Communicate causes and effects clearly.

- 3) Have the ability to explain the “why” of history instead of just the “who, what, when, and where.”
- 4) Improve short-form writing skills in content, organization, style, and grammar.
- 5) Develop skills in assessing non-textbook material for how it connects to the course content.

ADA Statement

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Kathy Biddick in Student Services, Room C-102, Uvalde campus. The mailing address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Rio Grande College-Sul Ross State University, Uvalde, Texas 78801. Telephone: 830-279-3003. E-mail: kbiddick@sulross.edu.

Class Meetings and Assignments

Week 1

- **The West – a Complex Concept**

Week 2

- **Indian Groups I**

Week 3

- **Indian Groups II**

Week 4

- **Spanish Presence**

Week 5

- **Louisiana Purchase – American Exploration – Lewis and Clark**
- Exam 1 available after class

Week 6

- **U.S. Expansion and Missouri Compromise**
- Exam 1 due before class

Week 7

- **U.S. Movement West I**

Week 8

- **U.S. Movement West II**

Week 9

- **Spring Break – No Class**

Week 10

- **Railroads and the West**
- Exam 2 available after class

Week 11

- **Cowboys and Our Image of the West**
- Exam 2 due before class

Week 12

- **State Developments**

Week 13

- **Federal Lands**

Week 14

- **The Role of the West in World War II**

Week 15

- **Recent Developments**
- Exam 3 available after class

Week 16

- **Research Project Workshop**
- Exam 3 due May 7th – noon
- May 13th at noon – Turn in final draft of your research project