

San Bernardino Valley College
Course Outline
Social Science Division

I. Course Identification

History 145: History of California

Three hours lecture: three units

Prerequisite: None

This course surveys the rich heritage of California from its earliest inhabitants and Spanish/Mexican settlements to the present. An emphasis will be placed on the impact of the ethnic and cultural diversity of California along with the importance of; geography, immigration, in addition to; political, economic and social development of the region since the early 19th century.

II. Course can be taken only once for credit.

III. Course Objectives

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the causes and consequences of economic boom and bust cycles on the development of the region.
- Describe the impact of immigration from Asia, Mexico, Europe and US on the region from the early 19th century to the present.
- Compare and contrast the impact of historical developments on different ethnic groups in the region.
- Describe the impact of European and American settlement on the environment and native peoples.
- Analyze the relationship between the state and global economic and political developments (wars, migration, trade).
- Describe major political developments in the state, including major trends in legislation, protest, activism and reaction throughout California history.

IV. Course Content.

1. **Introduction:** Geography and Natural Setting. Students must understand the topographic and climatic diversity of California. Particularly important is the scarcity of water in some parts of the region.
2. **Native Peoples:** Although California's indigenous people have been seen as a homogenous group, this is far from the reality. The natives of the region were as diverse culturally as the geography. Ecology and technology of groups are also covered.
3. **Spanish Empire and Spanish Settlement:** New Spain and the Spanish Empire. Motives for exploration and settling California. The Serra-Portola Expedition. Governing and settling California: missions, presidios, pueblos and New Spain. The impact of Spanish settlement on the environment and native peoples. Agriculture and foreign trade.
4. **Early European Incursion.** Spanish conquistadores were the first Europeans to "explore" California. Spain was the most important

influence until the late 18th Century when Great Britain and Russia were influential in Spain's missionary efforts along the California coast.

5. **The Mexican Period:** The transition from New Spain to Mexico. Rise of the Californios, political instability, cattle ranching, tallow and ranchos. Privatization of the Mission lands. Anglo, Russian and foreign settlement and relations. US invasion and war.
6. **Gold Rush:** Immigration and statehood. Plight of the miner and creating the image of the Californian. Technology and mining economy. Impact of the Gold Rush on settlement, government, economy and ethnic relations.
7. **Early Statehood:** Early military government and the Constitution of 1849. The vigilantes, Native Americans, African-Americans and Mexicans in early statehood. Californios and land grants.
8. **The Railroad and Early Economic Development:** Transportation problems and solutions since the gold rush. The Transcontinental Railroad and the Southern Pacific Railroad. Early settlement and agriculture (Wheat and cattle.) National marketing and the fruit industry. Working class radicalism, anti-Railroad politics, racism, and the Constitution of 1879. Chinese and the Chinese exclusion. The real-estate boom of the 1880s and the modernization of Southern California. San Francisco.
9. **Progressive Reform:** Abraham Ruef and the power of Southern Pacific. Hiram Johnson and the crusade for state-wide progressive reform. The legislature of 1911.
10. **The 1920s and the Great Boom:** California in California War I. The boom industries: oil, autos, and movies. Prohibition and conservative culture. The Republican party.
11. **The Great Depression:** Poverty and relief. The Central Valley Project. Upton Sinclair and EPIC. Repatriation of Mexican Americans. Protest and radicalism. Okies and Arkies, Dust Bowl migrations- John Steinbeck.
12. **California War II:** The war in the Pacific and California. The military presence and war industries (aircraft, ship-building and high technology). Population growth and migration. Housing, rationing, and the burdens of sudden growth. Racial and ethnic tensions (zoot suit riots, African-American migration, Japanese relocation).
13. **Post War California:** The Republican governors (Warren and Knight). The great migration. Housing and suburbia. Defense and aerospace industries. Anti-communism.
14. **1960s and 1970s:** Brown-Reagan-Brown. California Water Plan, Civil rights and housing. Master Plan for Education. Protest and confrontation. Free Speech Movement. Reagan administration and conservative reaction. Proposition 13 and the Tax Revolt. The energy crisis and beyond. Environmentalism and limits on growth.
15. **The 1980s and Beyond:** Ethnic minorities and the new migration. The stagnation of the early 1990s and the demise of aerospace. Proposition 187 and 209.

V. Methods of Instruction (100%):

- Lecture/In-class Discussion, including discussions of assigned
- Collaborative learning and small group exercises
- In-class student essays on broad questions raised by the subject matter
- Films and other multimedia presentations covering subjects in California History
- Student presentations on student research projects
- Student trips to museums and other sites pertaining to more contemporary California issues.

VI. Example of Assignments (Sample assignments which demonstrate the level of difficulty expected)

1. Essay question (in-class). How did the Gold Rush transform accelerate the transformation of California from a Mexican province to a US state. How where different regions of California influenced?

Educational goals of assignment. In essay examinations students will demonstrate an ability to synthesize information from the lecture-discussions and readings, organize evidence and specific information into a coherent response to a major question in history, and produce clear and logically argued analyses in a conclusion. Essay questions will require students to demonstrate analytical thinking rather than rote memory alone, answering “why” and “compare and contrast” questions.

2. Book review. *The Zoot Suit Riots*, by Mauricio Mazán, describes the changing view of Mexican Americans in California during World War II. How does the violence toward Mexicans characterize the attitudes of mainstream Californians toward minorities in the 1940s. How does the self image of Mexicans change after the war?

Educational goals of assignment. Book reviews should enable students to explore how prominent scholars tackle major problems. The assignment should also ask student to consider the following: what evidence was used to reach conclusions? What are the biases of the author? How does the author’s treatment of environmental history tell us more about traditional subjects?

3. Collaborative learning and small group discussions. Use reading notes and discussions among yourselves identify major causes Mexican/US war. How did elite Californios view the war. Report to the class on your discussion. Be sure to describe subjects on which members of your group agreed and subjects on which there was disagreement.

Educational goals of assignment. Collaborative learning encourages students to take responsibility for teaching and learning and asks them to work creatively and productively with peers. By asking for a group report, the instructor can make students aware of dissenting opinions and differing interpretations.

4. On-line internet electronic discussions. Similar to collaborative work in class, for this exercise, students will respond to a major historical issue on the California-wide-web.

Educational Goals of assignment. This majority of this exercise is done outside of the classroom and serves two major functions. It gets students to formally post a position paper on a question or document that is on the internet. Their peers will then be able to evaluate and respond to directly to the work. Secondly, it introduces students to computer skills needed in today's high tech workplace.

5. Research Project. Students will chose their own topics in California history and will use on-line internet resources an published materials to do research. The final product will be the result of individual effort.

Educational Goals of assignment. This project encourages students to pursue topics of interest on their own. Use of internet resources and published materials will be one skill gained in this project. Using these resources, students will be asked to develop skills of evaluation, syntheses, and analysis as they produce a coherent and analytical narrative that calls upon skills of critical thinking.

VII. **Methods of Evaluation.**

- In-class essays in response to key questions in California History
- Discussion participation, including leading of classroom discussion on assigned readings and topics
- On-line electronic discussions involving responses to problems and questions in California history
- Book reviews on major works on California history
- Research projects on problems and subjects in California history (at least 7-10 pages and at least 2 sources)

VIII. **Required Course Materials: (All suggested works are primarily college level)**

Bullough, William A, Orsi, Richard J. The Elusive Eden: A New History of California, McGraw Hill, New York, 1997

Camarillo, Albert. Chicanos in California: Texas, Austin, 1984

Deverell, William, Railroad Crossing: Californians and the Railroad 1850-1910, (1994)

Chan, Sucheng, Spencer Olin. Major Problems in California History. (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1997.

Kling, Rob, Spencer Olin, and Mark Poster. Post-suburban California: Univ of California, Berkeley, 1991.

Rawls, James J. New Directions in California History: McGraw Hill, New York, 1995.

Sanchez, George J. Becoming Mexican American: Oxford, New York, 1993.

Starr, Kevin. Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California, 1996.

**Or other college level equivalent (text, Historical monographs, source readers, autobiographies, novels, or plays) that specifically deal with the topics related to California History.

IX. Other Supplies Required of Students:

Floppy disk may be required.