The U.S. Southwest: “The Middle Place,” “El Norte,” or “The Southwest”?*

This is a reading-intensive and discussion-oriented course designed to familiarize you with scholarship published in the last twenty-five years on the history of the region now called the U.S. Southwest. It is also research- and writing-intensive course that will to introduce you to research methods in the field and to the art of historical writing. Always at issue in this class will be the very definition of the region under study; indeed, a major focus will be on how different groups of people have imagined this region, which Navajos have called “the middle place,” Mexicanos have called “el Norte,” and Anglos have called “the Southwest.” In all of this, we will pay special attention to the concept of revisionism. Is there a particular kind of historical scholarship that is revisionist, or is revisionism a central aspect of the historian’s project? In addition to reading book-length scholarship, we will also learn about primary sources and research methods. Five class periods will be devoted entirely to individual research projects, and part of many other class meetings will emphasize research. We will also be meeting with university and state historical society librarians to discuss how to find primary sources on the Southwest here at UW-Madison. Written work will include seven short, informal “discussion-point” papers; a formal review essay in the first part of the semester; and a formal research paper in the latter part of the semester that uses both primary and secondary sources.

Course requirements

1. **General:** Class is a place for collective learning. Because this course is reading-intensive and discussion-oriented, it will only work if we all contribute the following: Faithful attendance; prompt completion of weekly readings; interactive and respectful participation in discussion. Please note that unexcused absences will be reflected in your course participation grade.

2. **In class:** In order to facilitate collective learning, the following is required of all students:

   **Discussion-point papers:** For seven of the eight weeks in which we read a book-length work of historical scholarship, you will turn in a short (one-page), informal paper in which you describe two or three issues raised by the reading that particularly interest you and that you would like the class to discuss. These informal papers should be submitted by email (NO ATTACHMENTS PLEASE; JUST TYPE YOUR REMARKS INTO THE BODY OF YOUR EMAIL MESSAGE). You must submit your paper by email no later than 5 p.m. the DAY BEFORE class meets to discuss that book (thus by 5 p.m. on Monday, before Tuesday morning’s class). Prof. Johnson will read these papers before Tuesday’s class to see what kinds of issues you would like to discuss that week. Note that there are seven of these papers required of you, even though there are eight books assigned (actually, there are nine books assigned, but one is a collection of scholarly articles that has a different written assignment associated with it; see Feb. 22 class below). This means that you can choose one week not to write a discussion-point paper and still receive full credit for this aspect of the course. The papers will not be graded, but will be marked with a +, ✔, - system, and will be considered in determining your course participation grade.

   **Primary source punditry:** For some of the weeks in which we read a book-length work of historical scholarship, one or more of you will serve as primary source pundits for the class. In other words, you will be responsible for paying particular attention to the book author’s research strategies. Where possible, you should identify and locate at least one primary source the author used to make his or her arguments, and report to the class.

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*I borrow this formulation from an exhibition entitled “Contested Terrain: ‘The Middle Place,’ ‘El Norte’ or ‘The Southwest’? Five Centuries of Communities Staking Their Claims on the Land,” Beinecke Library, Yale University, Autumn 1998.*
about the use the author has made of this source (your report should last about 5 minutes). If possible, bring the
source or a copy of relevant parts of the source to class for the other students to see. You will also be responsible
for helping to facilitate discussion that week by reminding your classmates, whenever appropriate, of the author’s
research strategies.

3. Formal papers: In addition to the discussion-point papers, you will write two formal papers for this class:

   Review essay: In the first part of the semester, you will write a 3-4 page (750-1000 word) review essay on
   the first four books we read together as a class. We will discuss the content of this paper in class, but your basic
   assignment is to elaborate on how these books revise and expand your ideas about the region we now call the
   Southwest. The paper must be turned in by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. Feb. 17 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox on the 5th floor of
   the Humanities Bldg. Late papers will be marked down by at least 1/2 of a letter grade unless you have made prior
   arrangements at least 48 hours in advance (prior arrangements involve a conversation with the professor).

   Research paper: During the latter part of the semester, you will work on a second assignment, a 10-12
   page (2500 to 3000 word) research paper in which you use both primary and secondary sources to make a historical
   argument. A topic statement and bibliography for this paper are due by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. Feb. 24 in Prof. Johnson’s
   mailbox on the 5th floor of the Humanities Bldg. A rough draft of your research paper is due by 3:30 p.m. on Thurs.
   March 31 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox on the 5th floor of the Humanities Bldg. Late rough drafts will not be
   accepted. If you do not turn in a rough draft at this time, your course participation grade will automatically drop to
   “F.” You will get your rough draft back with Prof. Johnson’s comments in class on Tues. April 12. The final
   research paper is due by 3:30 p.m. on Thurs. May 5 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox on the 5th floor of the Humanities
   Bldg. Late papers will be marked down by at least 1/2 of a letter grade unless you have made prior arrangements at
   least 48 hours in advance (prior arrangements involve a conversation with the professor).

Grades

Your final grade for the course will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course participation (includes in-class discussion and discussion-point papers)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary source punditry</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Readings

These books can be purchased at the University Bookstore, and are on reserve at the State Historical Society
Library:

James F. Brooks, Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands (Chapel

John R. Chávez, The Lost Land: The Chicano Image of the Southwest (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico

Neil Foley, The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and Poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture (Berkeley: University

Camille Guerin-Gonzales, Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California


**Calendar and Assignments**

**January 18: Introduction**

**January 25: An Overview to 1880**

Hall, *Social Change in the Southwest*

*Library workshop*

**February 1: An Indigenous View**

Iverson, *Diné*

*Library workshop*

**February 8: A View from Mexico**

Weber, *The Mexican Frontier*

**February 15: A Chicana/o View**

Chávez, *The Lost Land*

*NOTE: Review essays due by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. Feb. 17 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox.*

**February 22: Anatomy of a History Article**

Matsumoto and Allmendinger, eds., *Over the Edge* (selected articles TBA)

*NOTE: No discussion point paper due. Instead, please fill out “Anatomy of a History Article” sheets and bring them with you to class.*

*NOTE: Topic statement & bibliography for final paper due by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. Feb. 24 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox.*
March 1:  Regimes of Rule
Brooks, Captives and Cousins

March 8:  Research & Writing Week
no class meeting

March 15:  Racial Regimes
Foley, The White Scourge

Spring Break!!!

March 29:  Research & Writing Week
no class meeting

NOTE:  Rough drafts of final papers due by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. March 31 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox.  No late rough drafts accepted.

April 5:  Labor Regimes
Guerin-Gonzales, Mexican Workers and American Dreams

April 12:  Property Regimes
Montoya, Translating Property

NOTE: Rough drafts of final papers will be returned to you in class.

April 19:  Revision Week
no class meeting

April 26:  Harvest Time
research presentations

May 3:  Harvest Time
research presentations
NOTE: Final papers due by 3:30 p.m. Thurs. May 5 in Prof. Johnson’s mailbox.