English 255
Transformations of the West in the Twentieth Century
Blake Allmendinger

January 10
Introduction: The Post-Frontier

Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History,” in John Mack Faragher, ed., Rereading Frederick Jackson Turner
Forrest G. Robinson, “Clio Bereft of Caliope,” in Robinson, ed., The New Western History: The Territory Ahead

January 17
The Formula Western: Mythologizing the Past

Owen Wister, The Virginian
Lee Clark Mitchell, Westerns: Making the Man in Fiction and Film, chapter 4
Jane Tompkins, West of Everything, chapter 7
William R. Handley, Marriage, Violence, and the New Nation in the American Literary West, chapter 3

January 24
The Modern(ist) West: History, Memory, and Literary Impressionism

Willa Cather, My Ántonia
Handley, chapter 5
Karen A. Hoffman, “Identity Crossings and the Autobiographical Act”
Catherine D. Holmes, “Jim Burden’s Lost Worlds: Exile in My Ántonia”
Impressionist paintings, selected illustrations

January 31
The Social Protest Novel: The Search for Utopia in the Twentieth Century

John Steinbeck, The Grapes of Wrath
Pare Lorentz, The Plow That Broke the Plains
Dorothea Lange, American Exodus
Timothy Egan, The Worst Hard Way, excerpts
Woody Guthrie, selected songs

February 7
What Is Western Literature? Fiction, Biography, and Autobiography

Wallace Stegner, Angle of Repose
Stegner, “Born a Square” and “History, Myth, and the Western Writer,” in Stegner, *The Sound of Mountain Water*

Janet Floyd, “A Sympathetic Misunderstanding? Mary Hallock Foote’s Mining West”

Elizabeth Cook-Lynne, “Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner,” in *Why I Can’t Read Wallace Stegner*

February 14

**The Urban West, Part One: The Geography of Noir**

Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep*

Joan Didion, *Slouching Toward Bethlehem*, selected essays

Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*, chapter 1

Edward W. Soja, “The City: Los Angeles and Urban Theory at the End of the Twentieth Century”

February 21

**The Urban West, Part Two: The Problem of Race**

Chester Himes, *If He Hollers Let Him Go*

Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier*, excerpts

Sean McCann, *Gunshoe America*, excerpts

Richard Rodriguez, *Days of Obligation*, selected essays

February 28

**The Urban West, Part Three: Multiculturalism, Postmodernism, and Urban Apocalypse**

Budd Schulberg, *From the Ashes: Voices of Watts*

Quincy Troupe, *Watts Poets: A Book of New Poetry*

Anna Deavere Smith, *Twilight: Los Angeles*

Robert Gooding-Williams, ed., *Reading Rodney King, Reading Urban Uprising*, excerpts

March 7

**The Return to the Frontier, Part One: The Revisionist Western**

Cormac McCarthy, *Blood Meridian*

Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, excerpts

Other selected criticism to follow

March 14

**Return to the Frontier, Part Two: The Gay and Lesbian West**

Annie Proulx, “Brokeback Mountain”

Moisés Kaufman, *The Laramie Project*

Selected reviews