**WLA Syllabus Sharing Note:** The readings and films I select for this course shift semester to semester. I have included the basic course plan, syllabus and reading list for Spring 2011. At the end of the document, I have also included a complete list of reading and film selections I’ve used to date for this course. Some of these reading selections have been required as book purchases, and some have been included in course readers.

**Course Description:**
This interdisciplinary course introduces the American West as a unique region and explores the region's literature and history in order to provide a context for understanding key issues that people living in the West (that's you!) face today, including land use and public lands policy, energy development, water allocation, native peoples' rights, and immigration. So, don't let the title "The American West" fool you into thinking this is a class about the "Old West." Through our readings and class discussions, we will consider popular and less well-known stories about the West, trace the historical roots of current western issues, and consider how today's debates over those issues might shape the West's (and the nation's) future.

This class serves as the foundation course for the Western American Studies Certificate program offered by CU's nationally recognized Center of the American West. The course aims to introduce students to the Center and to contribute to the Center's mission of helping "citizens of the West become agents of sustainability - citizens who recognize that their actions determine the region's future and who find satisfaction and purpose in that recognition" (www.centerwest.org).

**Required Materials:**
The following texts are listed in the order we will read them:
1. White, Richard. *It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West*
2. McPhee, John. *Encounters with the Archdruid*
3. Thorpe, Helen. *Just Like Us: The True Story of Four Mexican Girls Coming of Age in America*
4. Class Reader. Many of our readings are selections from books or periodicals. These have been collected into a reader available at the CU bookstore.

**Grading Distribution and Description of Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Response Postings</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>80 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Quizzes (4 quizzes at 30 pts each)</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>120 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>160 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Issue Paper and in-class Report</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>160 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>200 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100% = 800 pts
Syllabus

CAMW 2001: The American West; Ramirez/Spring 2011

All reading or viewing listed is due BEFORE class on the day it is assigned.

[Reader] = Readings in Reader

Films listed are streamed through Library reserves, unless noted.

This schedule is subject to some revision. If I make changes as the semester progresses, I will alert you well in advance in class, via email and also by posting updates on CULearn.

Unit 1: Defining and Interpreting the American West

Tue 1/11: Introduction

Thurs 1/13: The West as an Idea
  • Richard White, It’s Your Misfortune Ch. 21, “The Imagined West”
  • Selection from The Virginian [Reader]
  • Keith Basso, Wisdom Sits in Places pp. 1-8 only [Reader]

Tue 1/18: Imagined West
  • Writing Analytically pp. 31-58, 63-65 [Reader]
  • Watch Shane [streamed on Chinook library reserve]
  • Annie Proulx, “Brokeback Mountain” [Reader]

Thurs 1/20: Frontier History and New Western History
  • Writing Analytically, pp. 96-102, 109-120, 123-129 [Reader]
  • Frederick Jackson Turner, Selection from “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” [Reader]
  • Patty Limerick, Something in the Soil, Introduction [Reader]

Unit 2: The Native American West

Tue 1/25: Native American Sense of Place
  • Unit 1 QUIZ (first 10 min of class)
  • Kidwell and Vielie, “Land and Identity” [Reader]
  • Keith Basso, Selection from Wisdom Sits in Places (Ch. 1 + 105-110) [Reader]

Thurs 1/27: Native American Experiences of Colonialism
  • Walter Echo-Hawk, “A Context for Understanding Native American Issues” [Reader]
  • Richard White, It’s Your Misfortune, Ch. 4 and (on Removal, Wars, Assimilation)

Tue 2/1: Tribal Sovereignty Denied and Recognized
  • Kidwell and Vielie, “Tribal Sovereignty” pp 61-70 [Reader]
  • Richard White, It’s Your Misfortune pp. 491-94 and 579-588 (on Reorganization, Indian Termination and Self Determination)

Thurs 2/3: Native American Resistance
• Charles Wilkinson, “Red Power” [Reader]
• Watch We Shall Remain “Wounded Knee” section [streamed on Chinook library reserve.]

Tue 2/8: Contemporary Issues of Tribal Sovereignty
• Kidwell and Vielie, “Tribal Sovereignty” pp 70-79 [Reader]
• Watch Homeland [streamed on Chinook library reserve.]

Thurs 2/10: Contemporary Issues of Tribal Sovereignty
• Winona LaDuke, “Northern Cheyenne: A Fire in the Coal Fields” [Reader]
• Glance through Native Action website: http://www.nativeaction.org/ -- a biography of Gail Small is available there under the “staff” link.
• Jeff Kray, “Coal Bed Methane Producers Required to Treat Produced Water” [Reader]

Unit 3: Distributing and Exploiting Western Lands

Tue 2/15: Distributing Western Lands and Resources
• Unit 2 QUIZ (first 10 min of class)
• Richard White, It's Your Misfortune Ch. 6 “Distributing the Land”
• John Wesley Powell, Selection from Report on the Lands of the Arid Region [Reader]

Thurs 2/17: Mining and Its Legal Legacies (Mining Law)
• Patty Limerick, “The Gold Rush and the Shaping of the American West” [Reader]
• Charles Wilkinson, “The Miner’s Law.” [Reader]
• Tony Davis. “Hardrock Mining Showdown” [Reader],

Tue 2/22: Mining and Its Environmental Legacies (Mining Waste)
• Watch Poison in the Rockies [streamed on Chinook library reserve]
• Limerick et. al., Cleaning up Abandoned Hardrock Mines (focus on pp. 1-10 and 16-22)
• Look at the EPA’s “Adopt Your Watershed” website: http://water.epa.gov/action/adopt/

Unit 4: Western Water

Thurs 2/24: Western Water Law
• Charles Wilkinson, “Western Water from the Miners to Leopold to the Spirits” [Reader]
• Western Water Law (BLM info sheets) [Reader]
• “Federal Reserved Water Rights” [Reader]

Tue 3/1 – Midterm (covering Units 1-3)

Thurs 3/3 – Rise of Utilitarian Conservation
• Richard White, It’s Your Misfortune pp. 391-415
• Gifford Pinchot, “Principles of Conservation” [Reader]

Tue 3/8: Western Water Management – Dam(n)ing the Colorado River
• Richard White, It’s Your Misfortune pp. 522-527, 552-558
• John McPhee Encounters with the Archdruid pp. 153-245
Thurs 3/10: Colorado River past and present
- **Watch:** *Cadillac Desert: The American Nile* [streamed on Chinook library reserve.]
- Joe Gelt, “Sharing Colorado River Water” [Reader]
- **Watch:** “Under the Great Divide” (on the CBT) – [on CULearn, *NOT library reserves*]

Tue 3/15 – Colorado River – Close to Home
- “Windy Gap Firming Project Fact Sheet” (from *Northern Water*) [Reader]
- “Frequently Asked Questions” on the Moffat Collection System Project proposed by Denver Water [see website on CULearn]
- **Watch** video about the on the Moffat Collection System Project proposed by Denver Water [on CULearn, *NOT Library Reserves*]
- Kurt Siegler, “Colorado Water Projects Prompt Calls for River Protection” [Reader]
- Laura Snider, “Boulder County: Gross Reservoir EIS Inadequate” [Reader]

**Unit 5: Western Borderlands**

Thurs 3/17 – Continual Streams of Migration to the American West – Who is Welcome?
- **Unit 4 QUIZ (first 10 min of class)**
- Helen Thorpe, *Just Like Us* pp. 1-20

Tue 3/21-3/23 – break
*I recommend that you read all of *Just Like Us* over break. We will divide up the discussion of this book, but it will be best to read it straight through.*

Tue 3/29 – Contemporary Issues in Immigration
- Helen Thorpe, *Just Like Us* pp. 21-268

Thurs 3/31 – An Overview of Immigration Policies – Shifting Policy Goals
- Ewing, “Opportunity and Exclusion: A Brief History of Immigration” [Reader]
- “Basics of the United States Immigration System” [Reader]

Tue 4/5 – Contemporary Issues in Immigration
- Helen Thorpe, *Just Like Us* pp. 269-382

Thurs 4/7 – Dialogue Day
- **Unit 5 QUIZ (first 10 min of class)**
  - (You must have met with me to discuss your Current Issue Paper with me by this date).

**Unit 6: Conserving/Preserving Western Public Lands**

Tue 4/12 – **Conserving** Western Public Lands and Resources
• Watch “The Greatest Good” [streamed on Chinook library reserve.]

Thurs 4/24 – Preserving Western Public Lands and Resources
• Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac selection [Reader]

Tue 4/19 – Dialogue on Utilizing and Protecting Public Lands
• John McPhee, Encounters with the Archdruid, Ch. 1, pp. 3-75

Thurs 4/21 – Contemporary Dialogue on Utilizing and Protecting Public Lands
• Look at material on the Roan Plateau posted on CU Learn
• Current Issue Paper Due

Tue 4/26 – Research Reports

Thurs 4/28: Research Reports and Review

FINAL EXAM

Tues May 3, 4:30-7 pm
The American West: CAMW 2001 – Spring 2011
Dr. Karen Ramirez

Reader Contents (generally in reading order)


The American West: CAMW 2001
Dr. Karen Ramirez

Complete Reading and Film Selections

Introductory Unit

Focus on: Defining the West and West as Place/Space


Focus on: What do we talk about when we talk about the West?, or Popular/Imagined West


**Focus on: Frontier West and New West**


**Distribution of Western Lands Unit**

Selection from Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia.* (1787).


**Sub-focus on Mining and Mining Law Reform**


**Cultural Contestations, or Racial/Cultural Implications of western Expansion Unit**


**Western Borderlands Unit**


Public Lands and Wilderness Ideal Unit

http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/consrvbib:@field(NUMBER+@band(amrvg+vg11)):


McPhee, John. Encounters with the Archdruid. Farrar; Straus & Giroux, 1971. 3-75. Print.


Sub-focus on Grand-Staircase Escalante National Monument


Sub-focus on OSMP

Sub-focus on Energy


Water Unit


Sub-focus on Colorado River


Sub-focus on Colorado’s Northern Water NISP Water Project


Native American West Unit


*We Shall Remain: Episode 5: Wounded Knee.* PBS, 2010. [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/the_films/episode_5_about](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/the_films/episode_5_about)


*Sub-Focus on Development of Sand Creek Massacre NHS*


Browse the NHS website at http://www.nps.gov/sand/index.htm

**Immigration Unit**


