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Office hours: MW 1:30 - 3:30

History 463/563: West Coast Cities

Course Description

The West Coast is different. Its cities exhibit many patterns--patterns of physical development, governance and authority, and ethnic and race relations--that are impossible to explain only with reference to the industrial cities of the Northeast and Midwest (the staples in the field of urban history). This course will consider West Coast urbanism through a survey of classic and recent scholarly literature. Special attention will be paid to questions of urban planning, race, and ethnicity.

General Information

This course is intensive in both reading and writing. Class participation is essential. You are expected to prepare well, to attend every session, to arrive promptly, and to participate thoughtfully in discussion.

If you need special assistance in order to facilitate your participation, please see me immediately so that proper arrangements can be made.

Readings

Course readings are selected from a variety of scholarly works. All readings will be made available electronically through Canvas. While there are no texts to purchase, students will have to print out PDFs to bring to class. Coming to class without a copy of the texts will count against your participation grade.

Assignments/Grading

There are no exams or quizzes for this course. Your grade is based on participation and writing. The breakdown is as follows:

In-class participation:	10% of total grade
Reading responses:	10%
Mapping assignment (due 5/20):	5%

Prospectus (due 5/8):	25%
Final Paper (due 6/12):	50%

Participation and short assignments:

This course is a combination of lecture and seminar format, which means that the quality of your learning experience is dependent upon the full participation of each member of the group. Students must arrive, *on time*, ready to engage in informed discussion. Students will also be given a variety of short, in-class exercises.

Reading Responses:

Students are required to post brief reading responses to Canvas one half hour *before* each Wednesday class meeting. Responses must address both of the week's readings, from both class meetings. For each reading, students must identify 1) the author's research question, 2) the author's sources and methods, and 3) the author's argument. After identifying these three elements of the work, students should then provide a brief comparative analysis. This section should not read as a review, but as a critical, objective analysis. You may compare the two works to one another, or you can compare one of them to an earlier assigned course text. Your responses must be grounded in the reading, and must therefore include citations. (Parenthetical citations with page numbers are fine for the reading responses.)

Please keep all of your reading responses in a single document, labeling each response by date, with the most recent response at the top of the document. Upload the document to Canvas for each date when a response is due. Your name should appear at the top of the document, and the title of the document should be your last name, followed by "reading responses." For example, my document would be named "Howell_reading_responses.doc"

The reading responses are more for you, than for me. They are intended to help you to develop critical reading habits, clarify your ideas, and to sharpen your expression. *I will not be providing written feedback on the responses*, but will only spot read them, from time to time, throughout the term. At the end of the quarter, I will read all of your responses at once, and grade them as a whole. If you would like feedback during the term, please come to my office hours and we can discuss your responses in person.

Prospectus and Paper:

You will be asked to write a 3-page essay prospectus, and a 10-page historiographical essay.

Historiography is the study of historical literature, rather than of the history itself. Students will develop a historiographical research question, and will do an in-depth analysis of a coherent body of literature. Some examples of research questions:

--How does the literature on San Francisco treat the subject of working class women?

- How does the literature on postwar race relations portray the urban West?
- How does the literature on Seattle treat labor relations?

The essay must consider at least four scholarly books, only one of which can be a text assigned in the course. Detailed assignment prompts to come.

Grading Policies

Students are expected to attend every session, but will be permitted one unexcused absence. Each subsequent absence will result in a 1/3 drop in the student's participation grade (an A- will become a B+, a B+ becomes a B, and so on).

Promptness is crucial to the success of a seminar course. For every three instances when a student arrives late, his or her participation grade will drop by 1/3 (A- to B+).

The prospectus will be accepted late, but the grade will drop 1/3 for each 24-hour period after the due date. Because grades are due shortly after finals week, final papers cannot be accepted late.

A note on academic honesty: you are responsible for understanding what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it. Any instances of plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, will result in a failing grade for the course, and will be reported to the university. If you have any questions at all, please come talk to me. Also please consult the library's Plagiarism Guide:

<https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/citing-plagiarism>

Learning Outcomes (students will be able to . . .)

- Identify the central argument or purpose in a scholarly source
- Identify the research question, source base, and methodology for a secondary source
- Understand the central features of West Coast urbanism
- Write a historiographical essay

Technology Policies

No screens. Students are not permitted to open a laptop in class. The only exception to this rule is when a student discussion leader wishes to project images. Cell phones and all other electronic devices are prohibited; no exceptions.

Contacting me

Email is best for short questions. If you have a substantive question, please come to my office hours.

Schedule (tentative)

Week 1:

4/1:

Introductions, no reading

4/3:

Carl Abbott, *How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Urban Change in Western North America* (University of New Mexico Press, 2010).

Week 2:

4/8:

Barbara Berglund, *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846 - 1906* (University Press of Kansas, 2007).

4/10:

Jessica Sewell, *Women and the Everyday City: Public Space in San Francisco, 1890-1915* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

Week 3:

4/15:

Michael Kazin, *Barons of Labor: The San Francisco Building Trades and Union Power in the Progressive Era* (University of Illinois Press, 1989).

4/17:

Robert Johnston, *The Radical Middle Class: Populist Democracy and the Question of Capitalism in Progressive Era Portland, Oregon* (Princeton University Press, 2006).

Week 4:

4/22:

Matthew Klingle, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (Yale University Press, 2009).

4/24:

Ocean Howell, *Making the Mission: Planning and Ethnicity in San Francisco* (University of Chicago Press, 2015).

Week 5:

4/29:

Phoebe Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (University of California Press, 2006).

5/1:

Howell, *Making the Mission*

Week 6:

5/6:

Becky Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920 - 1965* (University of Chicago Press, 2002).

5/8:

Walking tour (dress appropriately) / Historic film exercise

Prospectus due.

Week 7:

5/13:

Walking tour (dress appropriately) / Historic film exercise

5/15:

Chris Agee, *The Streets of San Francisco: Policing and the Creation of a Cosmopolitan Liberal Politics, 1950-1972* (University of Chicago Press, 2014).

Week 8:

5/20:

Jeffrey Craig Sanders, *Inventing Ecotopia: Seattle and the Roots of Urban Sustainability* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010).

Sanborn Mapping Assignment due

5/22:

Robert Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton University Press, 2003).

Week 9:

5/27:

Memorial Day. No classes

5/29:

Alison Isenberg, *Designing San Francisco: Art, Land, and Urban Renewal in the City by the Bay* (Princeton University Press, 2017).

Week 10:

6/3:

Eric Avila, *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

6/5:

Mark Brilliant, *The Color of America Has Changed: How Racial Diversity Shaped Civil Rights Reform in California, 1941-1978* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Final Exam Week:

Paper due 6/12, Noon.