COURSE TITLE & NUMBER: The American West: HIST 2310
CREDITS: 3 (3 Lec / 0 Lab)
PREREQUISITES: College-level reading ability is required.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

The American West surveys the history of the Trans-Mississippi West, focusing particularly on the period from 1800 to the present. The events of this era are examined from political, economic, military, intellectual, and social perspectives. The interaction between Euro-Americans and Hispanic, American Indian, African American, and Asian immigrant populations and the impact of the mining, timber, ranching, and farming industries on the environment will be examined in some detail.

OUTLINE OF MAJOR CONTENT AREAS:

I. The American West--geography and environment
   A. The geography of the west
   B. Flora of the west
   C. Fauna of the west
   D. Environment and ecology
II. Exploration and contact (1800-1840)
   A. The Lewis and Clark expedition
   B. Government-sponsored exploration
   C. Contacts with American Indians
   D. U.S. government policies
III. The move west (1840-1865)
   A. Settling Texas
   B. Settling California
   C. The Oregon Trail
   D. The Mississippi River boundary
IV. Closing the frontier (1865-1900)
   A. The mining frontier
   B. The timber frontier
   C. The ranching frontier
   D. The farming frontier
V. The ethnic west
   A. American Indians
   B. Hispanics
C. African Americans  
D. Asian immigrants  

VI. The modern west (1900-present)  
A. Urbanizing the west  
B. War’s impact (World Wars I & II)  
C. The growing sun belt (the west since 1945)  

COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:  
Students will  
1. identify the factors that encouraged settlement west of the Mississippi River.  
2. identify the environmental challenges that faced prospective western migrants.  
3. describe the geographical and environmental elements present in the West.  
4. explain the U.S. government policies that encouraged western settlement.  
5. describe the environmental, economic, and social impacts of the mining industry on the western frontier.  
6. describe the environmental, economic, and social impacts of the ranching industry on the western frontier.  
7. describe the environmental, economic, and social impacts of the timber industry on the western frontier.  
8. describe the environmental, economic, and social impacts of the farming industry on the western frontier.  
9. explain the differing settlement patterns in the western states and the process of urbanization in the American West.  
10. compare and contrast the interactions between Euro-Americans and the Hispanic, African American, American Indian, and Asian immigrant populations in the American west.  
11. compare and contrast the interactions between Euro-Americans and the Hispanic, African American, American Indian, and Asian immigrant populations in the American West.  
12. explain the impact of increased emigration to the New West since 1945.  
13. compare and contrast the American frontier experience with that of other countries.  
14. explain the significance of the Lewis and Clark expedition.  
15. describe the evolution of the American government’s policies toward American Indians from the 1790s until today.  
16. list the government-sponsored expeditions that explored and mapped the west and describe their findings  
17. explain the environmental challenges that face the American West in the 21st century.  
18. explain how the federal government’s presence grew in the American West as a result of World War II.
19. describe the population shifts that have occurred in the western states since 1945
20. describe the economic future of the American West.

MNTC GOALS AND COMPETENCIES MET:
History & the Social and Behavioral Sciences
Human Diversity

HCC COMPETENCIES MET:
Communicating Clearly & Effectively
Thinking Creatively and Critically

STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS:
Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and be prepared to contribute to and participate in class discussions.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT SHALL TAKE PLACE USING INSTRUMENTS SELECTED/DEVELOPED BY THE COURSE INSTRUCTOR.

SPECIAL INFORMATION: (SPECIAL FEES, DIRECTIVES ON HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, ETC.):

AASC APPROVAL DATE: February 16, 2012
REVIEW DATE: February 2017