Introduction
This course examines the idea of the West in the American imagination as expressed in popular literature, captivity narratives, dime novels, travel literature, art, Wild West shows, films, and television, emphasizing the 19th and 20th centuries. We will analyze these images within the context of their times and compare them with the actual lived experience in the West. Moreover, we will consider how the image of the region changed over time as Euroamericans gained more experience with the actual West. Throughout the course, we will focus on four themes: (1) the image of Western hero and the Western heroine, with an emphasis on the social construction of gender, (2) the portrayal of western violence, (3) the racialized West, especially the images of American Indians and Hispanics, and (4) imagined landscapes. We will also examine the Western as a film genre, emphasizing the classic tropes of the genre, gender issues, filmic treatments of violence, the portrayal of American Indians, and the ways in which Western films have served as allegories for current events.

Course Objectives:
By the end of the term, you should be able to:
● Analyze the historical development of the major course themes, using interdisciplinary approaches, including historical analysis and literary and film criticism
● Understand how different cultures in the American West have been portrayed in popular culture
● Analyze and interpret “primary” sources of historical information, including fiction
● Analyze films through “close reading”
● Compare and contrast the imagery of the West with the actual historical experience
● Write an essay and develop your own argument
● Write a research paper that integrates your knowledge of western history, literature, and film
Readings
The following required books are available at the University Book Store and from Internet stores.

Required reading for all students:
Owen Wister, *The Virginian*
Willa Cather, *My Antonia*
Larry McMurtry, *Horseman, Pass By*

In addition, I will post on Blackboard a selection of literary and film criticism, dime novels, captivity narratives, travel narratives, and excerpts from literature. These, too, are required reading, necessary for writing assignments, discussion, and exams.

We will devote Fridays to discussion of the readings and films. You are responsible for completing the reading in time for the discussion and the submission of the analytical papers or Blackboard journal entries. We will also discuss some of the shorter, theoretical readings (such as literary and film criticism) during lectures, and you should come prepared to discuss those, too.

NOTE: There are two “tracks” in this course: Track 1 exploring the Western film genre, and Track 2 examining various images of the West, over time. The chronology for Track 1 is not synchronized with the chronology for Track 2. One of your tasks will be to integrate both tracks within their proper chronology and discover how they influenced each other.

Grading
Grades will be based on six components, plus attendance. *Failure to engage with any of the components may result in an F in the course.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Short analytical papers on readings</td>
<td>150 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blogs on the films</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Journals on Blackboard readings</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term Project</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<td>Attendance at Films</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in discussions</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>575 pts.</td>
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Grading Scale

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>564-575</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>535-563</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>518-534</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>506-517</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>477-505</td>
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<td>460-476</td>
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<td>403-419</td>
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<td>&lt;345</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;345</td>
<td>F</td>
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Grading Rubric
The following rubric provides guidance when grading your essays:

A (Superior essay) – Your thesis is clear and insightful. Your argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound, and all of the ideas in the paper flow logically. You have selected appropriate evidence and/or quotations and analyzed them well. You support every point with more than one example. You anticipate and successfully defuse counter-arguments. You recognize different points of view, as shown in your analysis. You make insightful connections between the past and the present, when appropriate. Each paragraph has a solid topic sentence, and your conclusion is persuasive. Your sentence structure, grammar, and spelling are excellent. You are not over-wordy. You have cited all quotations and evidence.
B (Good essay) – Your thesis is clear, but it may not be particularly insightful or original. Or it may not be easily identified, except by the end of the essay. Or it may be implicit, not explicit. You do a solid job of synthesizing material, but you do not develop your own insights. Your argument usually flows logically and makes sense, but gaps in logic exist. You give evidence to support your argument, but perhaps it’s not the best evidence you could have chosen or is skimpy. Your writing style is clear, but you overuse passive voice or are wordy or redundant. Your sentence structure, grammar, and spelling are generally clear, but there are occasional lapses. You have cited all quotations and evidence.

C (Fair essay) – Your thesis is unclear, vague, or difficult or impossible to identify and provides little structure for the paper. Or it is a statement of an obvious point. Your understanding of the topic seems simplistic. Your paper is a loose collection of statements, rather than a cohesive argument. It wanders from one thing to the next without logic. You have few or no topic sentences, and you have not organized your paragraphs into a coherent framework. Your examples are few, weak, vague, inappropriate, or inaccurate, so that you fail to support your argument. You offer quotations but do not analyze their meaning or show how they support your argument. Your writing is unclear, padded, and riddled with problems in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, or spelling. Nonetheless, it’s clear you made a good-faith effort. You have cited all quotations and evidence.

D (Poor essay) – Your paper shows a lack of effort or minimal comprehension of the subject. It’s not absolutely clear that you have read the material you’re writing about. Your paper is simply a rant about an issue. Your argument is extremely difficult to understand and confusing, owing to major problems in structure and analysis. You’ve failed to cite your quotations and evidence.

F (Failure) – You clearly did not read the material you’re writing about, or you plagiarized part or all of your paper.

This grading rubric is based on standards adopted by the history department. For the department’s official standards, see: http://history.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/index.php.

Short Analytical Papers
For each of the three books, you will write an analytical paper of approximately 750-1000 words. You must submit your paper through SafeAssign by 11:00 a.m. on the day it is due, as indicated in the syllabus. Here’s what I expect: Choose one of the course themes that seems central to the reading. Using your best English, write an essay analyzing the reading in light of this theme. I do not want a “book review.” The point is to think deeply about one of the themes as represented in the reading and analyze it. Make an argument (that is, a debatable claim) and support that argument with examples from the reading. I reward intellectual daring.

Journals
Primary sources are posted on Blackboard. After reading these sources, you will post a journal entry on Blackboard before the class discussion on the given reading. The assignment portal will “close” at 11:00 a.m.

For each reading or set of readings, select one interesting aspect (preferably one that covers all the readings in the set), and record your reflections, thoughts, and insights. These reflections DO NOT need to be formal essays; they DO need to show thoughtful consideration of relevant themes and a close reading of the source. They should be neither rants nor reviews. Strong “A” journals will show some depth of understanding and cite examples to support your points. I will provide on-line comments and post a grade on the totality of the journals at the end of the term.
**Film Blogs**

For five of the ten films, you will post a blog analyzing an interesting aspect of the film while drawing on one or more of the theoretical frameworks that we read in the course. This blog does not need to be a formal essay, and it should not be a “film review.” Instead, it should thoughtfully, yet briefly, explore a relevant theme. You may also note your thoughts on symbolism, narrative structure, characters, and so forth. These blogs will be visible to all students in the course. I strongly suggest that you write your blog the same evening that we’ve viewed the film, so that it will be fresh in your memory. They are due on Thursdays, by 7:00 p.m. I will provide on-line comments and a grade for each blog on a 5-point scale, as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-F</td>
<td>0</td>
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**Term project--Undergraduates**

This assignment involves analyzing four Western films, in conjunction with appropriate readings. On your own, (1) view at least three additional Western films, beyond those viewed as a class, focusing on a particular theme of your choice and selected from a list I will provide on Blackboard. (You may also use films that aren’t on the list, with my advance approval.) Films are available in Knight Library, at the Eugene Public Library, on cable/satellite channels, and through Netflicks and other commercial services. I urge you to watch these films in a format larger than your computer screen. Choose a fourth film from those viewed in class and any course readings that may be appropriate. (2) You should also read three academic journal articles on the historical issues raised in the films and (3) scholarly film criticism. Academic articles on historical issues may be found through JStor; consult me if you are struggling to find appropriate articles. Examples of scholarly film criticism may be found in the folder of Graduate Student Readings. I will also provide a suggested list, and you may find additional readings on JStor. (For example, if you choose a set of films that focus on the portrayal of Native Americans in films, you might also read historical analyses of the Indian Wars and some of the recent scholarly criticism regarding the portrayal of Native Americans on film.) It is strongly advised that you meet with me at least by the fifth week of the term to discuss your selected films and readings to ensure you get on the right track.

In your essay, analyze the films and their treatment of at least one of the course themes (or some other theme, with my approval), and place those films within the historical context of their production. (Readings in this course will help with developing that context. You may also want to consult Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation,* on reserve in Knight Library.) Strong papers will also draw on one or more of the works of popular literature we have read in this class. This paper should be 8-10 pages long, plus bibliography. I will evaluate your paper based on your argument, your analysis of the films and their historical context(s), and the overall coherence of the essay. I will also weigh your selection of films and supporting materials in determining your grade. The essay should demonstrate your best English grammar, spelling, and proofreading. (For formatting instructions, see below.)

Due Date: Upload your paper through “Safe Assign” on Blackboard by 5 p.m. on March 14.

**Note:** Late final projects will be graded down 5 points for each day it is late, including weekends. I will accept no papers after the final exam.
Term Project—Graduate Students
You will choose four works of popular literature and film (but no more than one film) centered on a single theme, in consultation with me, along with appropriate films and readings from the class. Write an analytical essay that places those works within their historical context, drawing on appropriate historiographical and theoretical literature to assist you in this analysis. This paper should be 12-15 pages long, including footnotes, plus a bibliography. Due Date: Upload your paper through “Safe Assign” on Blackboard by 5 p.m. on March 14.

Formatting Papers
All papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins and a Times New Roman 12-point font. Indent the beginning of each paragraph by 5 spaces. Do not add a space between paragraphs. (Microsoft’s default format is 1.5 spaces with an extra space between paragraphs, so you need to reset those defaults.)

Citations: If you’re identifying a quotation within an assigned book or reading that’s the sole subject of your paper or journal entry, you should simply cite the page number in parentheses at the end of the sentence. In all other instances, please use the Chicago Manual of Style citation method for footnotes (not internal notes). (See Blackboard for examples of proper citations.)

Examination
For the final exam, there will be two components, a matching section and an essay section. In the matching section, you will match a name, place, or term to the statement best identifying it. In the essay section, you will answer two questions, drawing on the lectures, films, and readings. You will have a choice of questions to answer. Each essay will be graded on the basis of the argument you make, the evidence you use to support your argument, your demonstrated understanding and synthesis of the information and the historical interpretations provided both in class and in the readings, and the overall coherence of the essay.

Films
Attending the films is a key component of the class. Attendance will count as follows:
- 100 = Attended all 10 films
- 90 = Attended 9 films
- 80 = Attended 8 films
- 70 = Attended 7 films
- 60 = Attended 6 films
- 0 = Attended fewer than 6 films

Participation in class discussion
Think of our discussions about the readings and films as lively conversations, and engage your classmates in that spirit. Our collective purpose is to explore, analyze, and reflect on the readings and films. I have four ground rules: (1) Come prepared for discussions by critically reading all the assigned materials, and always bring the readings to class. (2) You must participate in our conversations with thoughtful discussion. The quality is more important than the quantity. (3) Don’t try to lead the conversation astray in an effort to cover your lack of preparedness. (4) Show respect for your classmates’ ideas, even (or especially) when they’re different from your own. Come prepared to express your ideas and have them challenged by others.
**Attendance, Tardiness, and Make-Up Policy**

Attendance is required. There will be a brief quiz at the beginning of each class, for which you’ll need to bring a 3 x 5 index card. After the first two absences, I will deduct 5 points from your participation grade for each additional absence. Exceptions will be made only in the event of a documented university-sponsored activity, a protracted illness (with acceptable documentation), or some major calamity, at my discretion. (That said, if you have the flu or another contagious illness, please stay home. Save your absences for these unanticipated events.)

I do not accept graded course work after the class period for which the assignment is due, with the exception of the final paper (see above). “Make up” exams and late essays will be accepted, at my discretion, only for a documented excused absence due to illness, death or severe illness in your family, an unavoidable calamity, or a documented school-sponsored activity in which you are officially representing UO. **No other excuses will be accepted, period.** If you anticipate an absence that does not fall within this make-up policy, I always accept assignments early.

**Plagiarism Policy/Academic Misconduct**

All work that you turn in must be your own. Any work submitted for credit that includes the words or ideas of anyone else must fully and accurately identify your source with a citation. (By the way, submitting the same paper to more than one class for credit is also academic misconduct.) If you are confused about this or do not understand the consequences of academic dishonesty at the UO—or the ethical issues behind these university policies—please read these guidelines:

http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/

In the event of an act of plagiarism, I will impose sanctions, as provided in:

http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/StudentConductCode/tabid/69/Default.aspx#Academic_Misconduct. The minimum sanction will be an F on the assignment, but plagiarism can also merit an F in the course, even for a first offense.

**Classroom Etiquette**

Please be sure to turn off all electronic devices (including computers, except for a documented disability) while in class and the film lab. Please also refrain from text messaging in class or in the lab. Ringing cell phones and text messaging in class are my pet peeves; they disturb your classmates and me. (And in the film lab, the light from your device distracts!) Repeated failure to turn off your electronic devices may result in dismissal from the classroom. I also request that you arrive on time and stay until the end of class, including the films.

**Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please arrange to see me soon. Request a letter from Disability Services that verifies your disability.
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND READINGS

Week 1
M ♦ (Jan. 6)  Turner and the Wild West
W ♦ (Jan. 8)  Dime Novels and the Creation of the Western Genre
Film Lab (Jan. 8)  Great Train Robbery (1903) and Stagecoach (1939)
Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Jan. 9)
F ♦ (Jan. 10)  Discussion of dime novels and Stagecoach
Journals due on Blackboard by 11:00 a.m.

Reading Assignment (Blackboard or link below):
Buffalo Bill, from Boyhood to Manhood (1884)
http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/dp/pennies/texts/ingraham1_toc.html
OR
Deadwood Dick, the Prince of the Road (1877)
http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14902/14902-h/14902-h.htm

Week 2
M ♦ (Jan. 13)  Buffalo Bill and the Indians
W ♦ (Jan. 15)  Western Film, Cold War, and Regeneration through Violence
Film Lab (Jan. 15)  Fort Apache (1948)
Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Jan. 16)
F ♦ (Jan. 17)  Discussion of the final paper/Fort Apache

Reading Assignment:
Costello, Matthew, “Rewriting High Noon: Transformations in American Popular Political Culture during the Cold War, 1952-1968,” from Hollywood’s West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History (B)
►Begin reading The Virginian—it’s a long book.
►Graduate students:

Week 3
M ♦ (Jan. 20)  NO CLASS-MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY
W ♦ (Jan. 22)  Stand Your Ground: Western Justice
Film Lab (Jan. 22)  High Noon (1952)
Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Jan. 23)
F ♦ (Jan. 24)  Discussion of The Virginian and High Noon
Analytical paper on The Virginian due by 11:00 a.m. (through Safe Assign)

Reading Assignment:
Wister, The Virginian (1902) (417 pp.)
Browse Richard Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation (on reserve in Knight Library)
►Graduate Students:
►Additional meeting with graduate students this week, TBA
Week 4
M ♦ (Jan. 27) Captivity Narratives: Savage and Noble Indians
W ♦ (Jan. 29) Picturing Indians
Film Lab (Jan. 29) The Searchers (1956)

Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Jan. 30)
F ♦ (Jan. 31) Discussion of readings and The Searchers
Journals due on Blackboard by 11:00 a.m.

Reading Assignment (Blackboard):
Olive Oatman, The Captivity of the Oatman Girls Among the Apache and Mohave Indians (1857) (pp. 61-159)
OR
Fanny Kelly, Narrative of My Captivity Among the Sioux Indians (1871) (excerpt)
►Begin Reading My Ántonia

Week 5
M ♦ (Feb. 3) Cowboy Heroes and the Masculine Mystique
W ♦ (Feb. 5) Western Women/Johnny Guitar
Film Lab (Feb. 5) Magnificent Seven (1960)

Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Feb. 6)
F ♦ (Feb. 7) Discussion of My Ántonia and Magnificent Seven
Analytical paper on My Ántonia due by 11:00 a.m. (through Safe Assign)

Reading Assignment:
Tompkins, Jane, “Death,” from West of Everything: The Inner Life of Westerns (B)
Willa Cather, My Ántonia (176 pp.)

Week 6
M ♦ (Feb. 10) Western Landscapes
W ♦ (Feb. 12) Photographing the West
Film Lab (Feb. 12) The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance

Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Feb. 13)
F ♦ (Feb. 14) Discussion of The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (1962)

Assignment:
Work on your term paper!

Graduate students:
Brian W. Dippie, “Drawn to the West,” Western Historical Quarterly 35 (2004): 4-26 [JStor]
Week 7  M ♦ (Feb. 17)  Mexicans in Literature and Film
       W ♦ (Feb. 19)  Indians in Literature and Film
       Film Lab (Feb. 19)  *A Fistful of Dollars* (1964)

**Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Feb. 20)**

F ♦ (Feb. 21)  Discussion of readings and *A Fistful of Dollars*
Journals due on Blackboard by 11:00 a.m.

**Reading Assignment:**

*Joaquin Murieta: The Brigand Chief of California* (excerpt) (B)

**AND**

*Mark of Zorro* (excerpt) (B)

► Begin reading *Horseman, Pass By*

► Graduate students:

Gloria Anzaldúa, “The Homeland, Aztlán,” from *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (B)

► Additional meeting with graduate students this week, TBA

Week 8  M ♦ (Feb. 24)  Romancing the West
       W ♦ (Feb. 26)  Distopia
       Film Lab (Feb. 26)  *The Wild Bunch* (1969)

**Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (Feb. 27)**

F ♦ (Feb. 28)  Discussion of *The Wild Bunch* and *Horseman Pass By*

**Analytical paper on *Horseman, Pass By* due by 11:00 a.m. (though Safe Assign)**

**Reading Assignment:**

McMurtry, *Horseman, Pass By* (192 pp.)

Week 9  M ♦ (March 3)  Television West
       W ♦ (March 5)  Disney’s West
       Film Lab (March 5)  *Little Big Man* (1970)

**Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (March 6)**

F ♦ (March 7)  Discussion of *Little Big Man*

**Assignment:**

Work on your term project!

► Graduate students:

Week 10  M ♦ (March 10)  Europeans and the West
W ♦ (March 12)  Thinking About Lone Star/Review
▷ Film Lab (March 12)  Lone Star (1996)—and discussion—this will be an extended lab period, with refreshments provided

Blog due by 7 p.m. on Thursday (March 13)
F ♦ (March 14)  NO CLASS

Term Paper due by 5 p.m. (Please submit through Safe Assign.)

FINAL EXAM: M ♦ (March 17) ● 10:15-12:15