

HRS/HIST 168: Images of America (Spring 2007)

Instructor Contact Information:

Professor Keith Atwater teaches Modern Humanities, Classical Humanities, Asian Humanities, American Humanities, Middle Eastern Humanities, and Hebrew Bible / Old Testament at American River College. My office there is in Davies Hall, third floor, (D386); my e-mail is atwatek@arc.losrios.edu; and my office phone and voice mail is 916-484-8008. Please contact me if you need assistance. Our CSUS Humanities office is in Mendocino Hall, second floor; their number is 278-6444. I have taught American History, English Composition, and Music, and was a lecturer in the CSUS Humanities, History, and English departments from 1993 to 2000. I have a passion for cultures, arts, literature, comparative religions, human rights, and teaching – I have taught middle school, high school, community college, private Christian college, and state university. I will hold office hours every Tuesday before class from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in MND 2021.

Catalog Description:

HRS/HIST 168 is an interdisciplinary survey of the major events, trends & figures in American history viewed through the lenses of American literature, visual arts, architecture and music. The arts in America are studied in relation to major ideas, significant personalities, & important events from the period of the early republic to the present.

Section Description:

Using literature (both fiction and non-fiction), elite and popular arts and artifacts such as music, architecture, photographs, etc. this course will introduce students to American culture. Students are expected to read, write, and think about what it means to be an American, what values and assumptions Americans may hold in common, and whether American experiences reflect the existence of a distinct national character. This is an “Intensive Writing” course, which requires 5000 words of college level analytical writing.

Learning Goals:

Successful students in HRS/HIST 168 will demonstrate:

- the ability to recognize, explain and analyze American cultural traditions
- an understanding & appreciation of the diversity of American experiences
- the ability to compare and contrast various artistic expressions
- the ability to think creatively and critically about the relationships of artistic expressions and their historical and cultural contexts
- the ability to use information from multiple disciplines analytically
- the ability to write clear, correct and informed prose

Required Texts:

Douglass, Frederick: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* Dover Thrift paperback
Lame Deer, John & Richard Erdoes: *Lame Deer Seeker of Visions* Bantam paperback
Pohl: *Framing America* softcover edition

Required Work:

attending and participating
four analytical essays, each @ 4 to 4½ pages (100 points each) 400 points
one midterm exam (short answer, fill-in, and short essay) 100 points
one final exam (short answer, fill-in, and short essay) 100 points
points possible: 600

Evaluation / Grading:

A = 92-100% of 600 points

A- = 90-91% of 600 points

B+ = 88-89% of 600 points

B = 82-87% of 600 points

B- = 80-81% of 600 points

C+ = 78-79% of 600 points

C = 72-77% of 600 points

C- = 70-71% of 600 points

D+ = 68-69% of 600 points

D = 62-67% of 600 points

D- = 60-61% of 600 points

F = 0 – 59% of 600 points

Important Information:

Class will begin promptly at 5:30 p.m. Frequent latecomers will not be allowed in to class

It is departmental policy that a maximum of one week of absences is allowable without penalty. You will not succeed if you don't come to class weekly, and stay until 8:20 p.m.

ALL assignments are due at the start of the class meeting. Any work offered after the first 10 minutes will be considered "late" and the penalty for late work is 10 points/day (even if turned in late on the due date).

In a once-a-week evening class, it may be tempting to arrive late, eat dinner in class, (sorry, no food! water okay; snack during break) and leave early – or slip out during the break. I will in fact notice and mark my daily attendance accordingly.

I will insist upon thoughtful, polite, and hopefully stimulating discussion, comments, and questions. Be sensitive to civility, especially regarding gender, race, religion, etc.

The "intensive writing" requirement is scrupulously administered by the university. 5000 words of college level, original, analytical prose is required. You can't "skip" a paper and hope for a C in class. Plagiarism is defined by the university as submitting any work that is not your own. This will result in an F paper, and possibly failing the class. Papers are scored for clarity, communication skills, and content. In-class arts analysis – slides and videos – are also to be included in papers. This is not a class that can be completed successfully by writing "good" papers at home and attending every other week.

I am here to help you learn. I can look at rough drafts if submitted 2 weeks prior to due date. I can also help you brainstorm topics and guide you to assistance if there are writing skills challenges. Be aware that you may have to put in more time and energy if you haven't done much essay writing, and / or if your first language is other than English.