What is the West? Where does it begin or end? How have boundaries and regional identities changed over time? How has the region been produced, created, consumed, and experienced by settlers, industrialists, tourists, Hollywood, Native peoples, and/or the Federal Government? This course will examine the history of the trans-Mississippi West with a special focus on the concepts of myth-making, economic development, and region. Beginning in the late 19th century, we will follow a loose chronological narrative as we try to learn more about the people, events, images and forces that have shaped our understanding of life and culture in the region. The course will cover migration and immigration of various peoples in the West, the development of state and federal power, the place of the West in film, literature and popular culture, and the often-contentious politics surrounding tourism, environmentalism, race, ethnicity, and gender in the region.

Required Books
The following books are available at the Co-op or for purchase on-line.
1- Oliver La Farge, *Laughing Boy*
2- Edward Abbey, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*
3- Walter Nugent, *Into the West: The Story of Its People*
4- Linda Gordon, *Impounded: Dorothea Lange and the Censored Images of Japanese American Internment*

The following packet is available at Speedway Copy and Binding in the Dobie Mall.
5- Course packet for the class.

The following resources are available via the links provided, you may need your UT EID to sign into the library for some of the following articles.
6- Online resources:
“He Loved to be in our Face. Still does, no doubt” by Terry Tempest Williams
http://outsideonline.com/outside/magazine/1097/9710edward.htm

“A Long Strange Yarn, Ken Kesey and the Pendleton Round-Up,” Andrew Duffin,
http://www.historycooperative.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/journals/ohq/106.1/duffin.html

http://www.historycooperative.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/journals/whq/34.1/warren.html
Suggested Reading:
G. Burton, *Searching for Tamsen Donner*
All books are available at the University Co-op. The course packet can be purchased at Speedway Copy and Printing, Dobie Mall. Phone 478-3334.

Requirements:

Students are expected to complete the assigned **readings by the beginning** of each class. Attendance and **class participation will be taken into account** in determining course grades. Students will turn in a take home midterm and a take home final exam and will complete one 3-5 page paper assignment.

Participation and Writing Assignments: This class involves a combination of lectures, written work, group work, exams, and discussions.

Do not INGORE the readings; spend some time analyzing what you have read. Questions to consider for in-class discussions: What is the author’s main point? Do you agree or disagree with the author? If so, why? If not, why not? What personal experience, history, or outside knowledge can you draw on that relates to the readings and/or lecture material? Is there a particular aspect of the reading that stood out? Why? To succeed in this class you will need to read all assignments and come to class ready to discuss them.

There will documentaries and films shown in class. You should take notes when these are shown as you will be tested on their content or expected to analyze them on exams. We will parts, if not all, of at least two films in class. Films are subject to change.

Films:

1) Stagecoach
2) Lone Star

Short Papers: Choose one topic, and write a short 3-5 page paper. **50 points.** Papers should include page numbers and footnotes. All sources must be clearly noted as per *The Chicago Manual of Style.*

**Paper 1:** Oliver La Farge, *Laughing Boy.* Assignment description: Draw on at least TWO outside secondary sources in addition to assigned readings and lecture material to address the following questions: How does La Farge portray Native American/white relations in the American West? How was *Laughing Boy* an expression of the time that it was written, published, and read? What does it tell us about the how Americans viewed Navajo Indians in the first half of the twentieth century? What does it tell us about how Americans viewed the American West as a “frontier” in the 1920s and 1930s? **Due date: 2/22**

**Paper 2:** Authors Linda Gordon and Gary Y. Okihiro present both an assessment of Japanese internment and Dorothea Lange’s photographs of those Japanese who were
interned. You will use both written and visual sources for this paper. First, examine at least 3 photographs in this book with great care. What do you think the individuals photographed were feeling and how did they respond to being photographed? Compare at least one photograph to evidence presented in Gary Okihiro’s section of the book and to that of at least two other authors (outside sources). What do Lange’s photographs of the internment experience tell us about that experience? Are images more powerful than words? What, if anything, surprised you about the photos? What was Lange trying to convey with her photographs? Why were her photographs kept from public view for so long? You must use evidence or specific examples to answer the above questions. 

Due: 3/18

**Paper 3:** Paper on Edward Abbey’s *Monkey Wrench Gang*. Assignment description. Draw on at least TWO outside secondary sources in addition to assigned readings, and lecture material to address the following questions: how is *The Monkey Wrench Gang* an expression of the time that it was written, published, and read? What does it tell us, if anything, about how Americans viewed the American West as a “frontier” in the 1970s and 1980s? What does it tell us about how Americans viewed Indians in the second half of the twentieth century? This book was clearly linked to, and spawned, environmental activism of the era. Does it still come across as a call for action? Papers should include page numbers and footnotes. All sources must be clearly noted. 

Due: 5/3

**Grades**

Grades will be figured on a scale of points divided as follows: 100 points for the midterm, 150 points for the final exam, 50 points for the paper, and 50 points for participation and attendance for a total of 350 possible points.

Participation and attendance grade breakdown: **50 points.**

Your grade will be determined by attendance, quiz scores, and your in-class participation (i.e. in-class writing assignments, group work, and discussion). Attendance and in-class participation will be worth 30 points. Quizzes: I will give 3 quizzes, each will be worth 10 points. You can drop your lowest score. 20 points.

Student responsibilities: You should attend class. You should come to class prepared and ready to speak about the readings, lectures, and issues presented in the course. You are expected to participate in both smaller group work and larger class discussions. You will also be completing a number of “in class” writing assignments. These are designed to prepare you for exams. Your participation will be assessed by me -- and your Teaching Assistant: Neel Baumgardner.

Mr. Baumgardener will announce his office hours on the first day of class.

We will utilize a plus/minus system in determining grades along the lines of the following scale.

Students receiving between 94-100 percent of the total points will receive an A.  
90-93 = A-  
87-89 = B+  
83-86 = B
Group Work/In-class assignments and Discussions: On days when group work, in-class assignments or discussions are scheduled, you should bring your books or course packets to class.

Course Policies
The dates for the exams and the paper assignments are clearly marked on the syllabus. I will accept late papers only in cases of verifiable emergency. I will also consider requests for make-up exams in cases of emergency.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic honesty is very important. You are expected to complete your own work. You may use web resources but must cite them as per The Chicago Manual of Style. If you have any questions about quoting or using the internet, feel free call me, 475-7253, or email me. I will also follow University guidelines regarding plagiarism and student conduct. For further information see: http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu/~virgil/essay/research/plagiarism.html

All cell phones and electronic games should be turned off during class. Please respect the classroom environment and your fellow students. This means: do not check your email or browse websites during class time.

Class Schedule

Week 1:
1/18 Introduction to class.
Discussion: What does the West mean to you?

1/20: What is the West?
Real and Imagined space and the importance of a region to national identity.
Frederick Jackson Turner, The Significance of the West in American History (course packet)


Nugent, Ch. 1
Week 2:
1/25: Lecture: Myth Making and regional development
Reading:
Nugent, Ch. 2
Possible showing of film clips: *Stagecoach* and others.

1/27: Economic Development in the West
Readings:
Nugent, Ch. 3

Week 3:
2/1: Westward Expansion -- of various sorts.
Wagon Trains and the Donner Party
Reading:
Nugent, Ch. 4

2/3: Western politics: Lecture on Suffrage and Janette Rankin

Discussion

Week 4:
2/8: Lecture: National Parks and the Beginning of Conservationism
Readings:
Course Packet.
Nugent, Ch. 5-6
Group work.

2/10: Consumerism and Navajo and Puebloan People
Readings:
Bsumek, Ch. 1, “Creating the Navaho,” in Course Packet.
La Farge, *Laughing Boy* 1-40

In class discussion.

Week 5:
2/15:
Lecture: Indian wars and contested homelands.
Readings:
LaFarge, LaFarge, *Laughing Boy*, 41-99

Discussion

2/17:
Immigrants, Emigrants and African Americans and the West
Reading:
Arleen De Vera, *The Tapia-Saiki Incident* in course packet.
Nugent, Ch. 7
La Farge, 99-end of book.
Group work

Week 6: Paper One Due in Class

Reading:
Deverell, “Plague in Los Angeles, 1924” in Course packet

2/24: Cowboys: Real, Imagined, and Acted
Reading:
http://www.historycooperative.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/journals/whq/34.1/warren.html

Week 7:
3/1: The West and the Great Depression: Lecture on the 1930s.

Readings:
Gordon: *Impounded*, p. 1-47 and examine the photographs in ch. 1 and 2, pp. 85-132
Group work
Take Home Mid-term handed out
From the New Deal to World War II
Lecture on World War II and Asian Americans

Reading:
Dorthea Lange, “Migrant Mother, March 1936."
John Steinbeck, “The Migrants.” 1936
Dr. Yoshiye Togasaki, “World War II in the West: Manzanar, 1942-1945.”
Al Waxman, “The Zoot Suit Riot, 1943.”
Lange to Waxman essays are in Course packet.

**Week 8:**
3/8: **Take home exam due.**
Lecture: Navajo Code Talkers

3/10: WWII and the West
Lecture: The West mobilizes for war and beyond.

Readings:
John Garcia, “World War II in the West: Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941”
Maya Angelou, “World War II in the West: Changing of the Guard, 1942.”

Group work.

**Week 9: Spring Break: 3/14-19**

**Week 10:** WWII and the 1950s
3/22:  
*Impounded* Paper Due today (Paper 2)
**War and social change** Film: Atomic Cafe

3/24: Economic Growth, and Community Organization in the post-War era.

Readings:
Nugent, ch.8
In-class writing.

**Week 11:**
3/29: The Remaking of the West and the Cold War.

Reading:
Steve Fox, “From the Beat Generation to the Sanctuary Movement: Cold War Resistance Cultures in the American West.” Coursepacket
Discussion

**3/31: The 1950s: Lecture on The Beat Generation and the West**
Abbey, Ch. 5-8, pp. 53-128.
Jack Kerouac, “Going on the Road,” 1951

**Group work:** New Reflections of a rapidly changing West.

**Week 12:**
**4/5: Brown Power, Black Power, Red Power**
Readings:
Abbey, Ch. 9 and 10.
Nugent, Ch. 9
Discussion of Rebellion in the West.

**4/7: Radicalism in the West**
Readings:
Mel and Eldridge Cleaver, “Watts, 1965.”
Abbey, ch. 18-26, 254-299
Mary Crow Dog, “Siege at Wounded Knee,” in course packet

**Week 13:**
**4/12: Lecture on Recreation, Land Use, and the West**
Land use and conservation: Example: Glen Canyon Dam/Lake Powell
Readings:
Abbey, Ch. 11-17
“He Loved to be in our Face. Still does, no doubt” by Terry Tempest Williams [http://outsideonline.com/outside/magazine/1097/9710edward.htm](http://outsideonline.com/outside/magazine/1097/9710edward.htm)

**4/14: Reconfigurations of land, politics, and people**
Reading: Mike Davis, “Ecocide in Marlboro Country,” in course packet.
**Week 14**

**4/19:** The Rise of Western Conservatism.  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fdc985gNU8c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fdc985gNU8c)

Readings:  
Abbey, ch. 27-end (including the epilogue).

**4/21:** New Right, Continued.  
Nugent, Ch.10

**Week 15: 4/26:**  
Late Twentieth Century West: 1970s-1990s: punks, skaters, a new western style.

Readings:  
Nugent, ch. 10

**4/28:** The West as moving target  
Readings:  
John Wayne Receives a Congressional Gold Medal, 1979  
The Duke: “More than just a hero,”  
*High Country News* Spoofs Real Estate Development, 1994  
Raulph Lauren Builds his Ranch in Colorado, 1988  
All in course packet.

**Week 16:**

**5/3:** Class conclusion: What is the West?  
Movie: *Lonestar*  
Paper 3 due.

**5/5:** Finish *Lonestar*, End of class discussion.  
Take Home Final passed out to students. **Due date of final: May 11, 2:00 in my office.**