HIST 469/569
American Indian History: Topic: Plains Indians
Spring 2009
Instructor: Jeff Ostler
Class Hours: 4:00-5:20 MW
Office Hours: 2:00-3:00 WR
or by appointment
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Course Description:

This course focuses on the history of the Native peoples of the Great Plains region of the United States. The goal of the course is to familiarize students with the diversity of Plains Indian communities, their ways of life (including modes of production, social organization and values, worldview, and religious and cultural practices), the larger structures that affected their lives, the strategies they pursued over the past two hundred years of their history, and some of the debates about their history. In analyzing Plains Indian history, I will emphasize (1) that Native communities pursued different strategies and that various strategies all had a logic, and (2) that Native communities exercised agency but often under significant constraints.

Readings:

The following required readings are available for purchase in the Duck Shop, formerly known at the University of Oregon Bookstore:

John G. Neihardt, Black Elk Speaks
Mary Crow Dog, Lakota Woman

There are also several required articles and excerpts from books (list appended) available under “course documents” on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

1. Three papers analyzing and reflecting on a particular issue covered in different periods of the course. Each paper should be about four pages in length.
   The first paper will be due on April 20 and will cover material in the first three weeks of class.
   The second paper will be due on May 18 and will cover material in weeks four through seven.
   The third paper will be due at the time of the final exam and will cover material in the last three weeks of class.
   Each paper will be worth 20% of your grade.
2. Three quizzes to be given in class on April 22, May 13, and June 3. All the quizzes together
will be worth 20% of your grade.

3. A final exam to be given on Tuesday, June 9, at 3:15. I will give you essay questions in advance and ask you to write on two questions. The exam will be open book/open note and will be worth 20% of your grade.

Note: Graduate Students in 569 have additional requirements, as described in a separate document.

Schedule:

**Week 1**
3/30
- Introduction: The Great Plains and the Native peoples of the Plains

4/1
- Land and Animals
  - Readings: Fowler (1), Medicine Crow, Harrod (1), Powell, Morsette

**Week 2**
4/6
- Land and Animals—continued
  - Readings: Barsh and Marlor, Harrod (2), Irwin

4/8
- Horses and trade
  - Readings: West, Hämäläinen

**Week 3**
4/13
- Gender
  - Readings: Peters, Klein

4/15
- Decline of bison
  - Readings: Krech, Isenberg

**Week 4**
4/20
- Disease
  - Readings: Churchill, Dollar, Powers and Leiker
FIRST PAPER DUE
4/22
State projects
Readings: Ronda, Anderson

FIRST QUIZ

Week 5
4/27
U.S. conquest
Readings: Josephy, Fowler (2)

4/29
U.S. conquest—continued

Week 6
5/4
Visions
Readings: Black Elk Speaks (chapters 1-11), Linderman

5/6
Reservations and colonialism
Readings: Ostler, Foster

Week 7
5/11
The Black Road
Reading: Black Elk Speaks (chapters 12-25)

5/13
Who was Black Elk?
Readings: Rice, Steltenkamp
SECOND QUIZ

Week 8
5/18
Education, cattle, dams
Readings: Adams, Iverson, Lawson
SECOND PAPER DUE

5/20
Screening of The Searchers (1956 film, directed by John Ford)
Week 9
5/25
  Memorial Day–no class

5/27
  Discuss *The Searchers*
    Readings: Pye, Colonnese

Week 10
6/1
  Red Power
    Readings: Wilkinson, Crow Dog

6/3
  Red Power–continued
  THIRD QUIZ

Final exam: Tuesday, June 9, 3:15-5:15
  THIRD PAPER DUE


Howard L. Harrod, excerpt on Blackfoot Sun Dance, in *Renewing the World*, pp. 117-134.


