Course Description
This course surveys the political, social and economic history of Los Angeles from its earliest settlement by Native Californians to the present. Topics include the environment, urban development, race and ethnicity, the entertainment industry and the media’s portrayal of Los Angeles. Special emphasis is given to the expanding role of Los Angeles as a global city that serves as a destination for diverse immigrant populations and as a center of international commerce.

Grade Distribution
2 Midterms 40%
Final Exam 20%
5 Reading Reviews 25%
Participation 15%

Course Reader and Assigned Readings
Instead of a textbook, this class uses a Course Reader, which contains a collection of essays, chapters and short stories by many of L.A.’s best local historians and authors. The course reader is about as long as a typical college textbook (but costs a lot less!) and is available for sale in the ECC book store. The course reader also contains the lecture outlines and all course materials. Please bring it with you to class every day.

Midterms and Final Exam
The midterms and final exam include identifications, a primary document analysis, and an essay question. You will be given study questions to help you prepare, and you must use a blue book on the day of the test. Blue books may be purchased in the student store.

Lectures
Students are responsible for all the information conveyed in the lectures. You should take notes during lecture and borrow someone’s notes for days that you are absent.

Reading Assignments and Reviews
Please complete the assigned reading before coming to class. Try to keep up with the weekly reading by making it a habit to do your class reading in the evening or day before we meet. Students will write five 2-3 page reviews of the course reading. The questions and instructions are in the course reader.

Participation and Group Discussion
Active participation in class discussion is important to success in the course. Assigned readings must be completed in order to effectively participate. Your final participation grade is based on
your attendance, group discussion, and class participation. Every week students will divide into small groups to discuss primary document materials. Group answers will be graded and will form part of the participation grade. In the event of absence, students must make-up group discussions.

**Attendance**
Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class. More than four absences in the semester will adversely impact your grade. One percentage point will be deducted per absence over three unless written notification of a medical or other extraordinary reason is provided.

**Classroom Etiquette and Cheating**
Students are expected to treat each other and the Professor respectfully. Disruptive behavior interrupts learning and creates a tense classroom environment. Please contribute to a positive learning experience for yourself and the other students. Arrive on time, prepared to participate in class. If you need to leave early, please notify the Professor before class. Out of respect for all the students’ hard work, cheating and plagiarism will absolutely not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when you take credit for the original ideas and/or words of another person. Plagiarism or cheating on any assignment or exam will incur a 0 for the grade.

**Late Policy and “Free Passes”**
Students have two “Free Passes” to hand in late work or complete a test up to one week after the due date. The “Free Passes” do not include the final exam. After the two “Free Passes” are used, no late work will be accepted. I suggest that you save the “Free Passes” for emergencies.

**WEEKLY TOPICS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**Week One**
Aug. 31  
Introduction
Learning Styles Surveys

Sept. 2  
L.A. Geography, Environment and Natural Disaster  
Reading Assignment: Mike Davis, *Ecology of Fear*, pp. 5-55

**Week Two**
Sept. 7  
Holiday – Labor Day

Sept. 9  
Native Americans and the Spanish Exploration and Settlement  
Reading Assignment: Douglas Monroy, *Thrown Among Strangers*, pp. 3-39  
Group Discussion: Native American Stories and the Environment  
Group Contract

**Week Three**
Sept. 14  
The Spanish and the Mission System  
Group Discussion: The Pueblo’s Original Settlers

Sept. 16  
Reading Review #1 Due  
The Spanish Mission System  
The Mexican Era, 1821-1848  
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<th>Week Four</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sept. 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Mexican Era, 1821-1848</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>Romanticization of the Spanish and Mexican Eras</td>
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<td><strong>Sept. 23</strong></td>
<td><strong>U.S. Exploration and Settlement, 1840s-70s</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Assignment:</td>
<td>Bill Deverell, <em>Whitewashed Adobe</em>, pp. 11-25</td>
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<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>Chinatown Massacre</td>
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<td>Group Self-Evaluation Using the Group Contract</td>
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<th>Week Five</th>
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<td><strong>Sept. 28</strong></td>
<td><strong>Urban Growth and Boosterism: 1870s-1910s</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Assignment:</td>
<td>Carey McWilliams, <em>Southern California: An Island on the Land</em>, pp. 113-134.</td>
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<td><strong>Sept. 30</strong></td>
<td><strong>Urban Growth and Boosterism: 1870s-1910s</strong></td>
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<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>Residential Architecture</td>
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<th>Week Six</th>
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<td><strong>Oct. 5</strong></td>
<td><strong>Urban Problems and Reform, 1890-1930</strong></td>
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<td>Reading Assignment:</td>
<td>Mark Wild, <em>Street Meeting</em>, pp. 121-147.</td>
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<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>Community Planning and Leimert Park</td>
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<td><strong>Oct. 7</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reading Review #2 Due</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Radicalism and Unions in the Early Twentieth Century</strong></td>
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<th>Week Seven</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oct. 12</strong></td>
<td><strong>Midterm #1</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Oct. 14</strong></td>
<td><strong>The 1920s: More Boosterism and Growth</strong></td>
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<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>Boosterism and Selling Los Angeles</td>
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<th>Week Eight</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oct. 19</strong></td>
<td><strong>The 1920s: More Boosterism and Growth</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oct. 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mexican Immigration in the Early Twentieth Century</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Discussion:</td>
<td>The Mexican Immigrant Experience</td>
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<td>New Groups and Group Contract</td>
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<th>Week Nine</th>
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<td><strong>Oct. 26</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hollywood and the Film Industry</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Oct. 28</strong></td>
<td><strong>Hollywood and the Film Industry</strong></td>
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One Week with Buster Keaton, 1920

Easy Street with Charlie Chaplin, 1917

Week Ten

Nov. 2  Reading Review #3 Due
The Great Depression
Group Discussion: Photography

Nov. 4  The Great Depression and European Expatriates

Week Eleven

Nov. 9  Midterm #2

Nov. 11  Film Noir: Double Indemnity, 1944.

Week Twelve

Nov. 16  Film Noir: Double Indemnity, 1944.
Group Discussion: Double Indemnity

Nov. 18  World War II
Group Discussion: The Zoot Suit Riots
Group Self-Evaluation Using the Group Contract

Week Thirteen

Nov. 23  Post War Los Angeles
Reading Assignment: D.J. Waldie, Holy Land, pp. 4-16; 33-46

Nov. 25  Reading Review #4 Due
Post War Los Angeles
Group Project: Disneyland

Week Fourteen

Nov. 30  The Civil Rights Movement in L.A. and the 1960s
Group Discussion: Rock Music

Dec. 2  The 1970s and 1980s

Week Fifteen

Dec. 7  The 1990s
Reading Assignment: Mike Davis, City of Quartz,” pp. 223-236
Group Discussion: Los Angeles Rap Music in the 1980s and 1990s

Dec. 9  Reading Review #5 Due
The L.A. Environment Revisited

Week Sixteen

Dec. 14  Final Exam
Dec. 16  Pick-up final exam and course grade consultation
**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Upon completion of History 27, students will identify and explain major social, economic, political and cultural patterns in the history of Los Angeles in a written or oral assignment.
2. Given a primary or secondary source relating to the history of Los Angeles, students will accurately identify the source and then apply appropriate historical methods to explain what the source reveals about its historical context.
3. Given primary and/or secondary source(s) pertaining to a significant aspect of economic, political, social or cultural patterns in the history of Los Angeles, students will develop and persuasively argue an historical thesis in a written or oral assignment that effectively uses the sources as evidence.

**Course Objectives**

1. Assess the impact of environmental problems and geographical location on the development of Los Angeles.
2. Compare and contrast the motives of the Gabrielino Indians and the Spanish for settling in the Los Angeles Basin and discuss each group’s interaction with the natural environment.
3. Identify the strengths and weakness of the Spanish Mission and Mexican Ranchero systems and analyze the impact of these institutions on the Gabrielino Indians.
4. Trace the arrival of settlers from the United States and evaluate their impact on the environment, race relations, the economy and politics during the second half of the nineteenth century.
5. Discuss the ways in which city “boosters” attracted newcomers to Los Angeles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
6. Evaluate the economic growth of Los Angeles in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and its impact on the development of the urban infrastructure.
7. Describe political corruption in local Los Angeles politics during the first half of the twentieth century, and the successes and failures of reform movements to end the corruption.
8. Evaluate the efforts of radicals and unions to recruit membership in Los Angeles and the strength of the conservative resistance of the economic and political elite.
9. Describe the development of the film industry in New York City and relocation to Los Angeles, and its impact on the social and economic life of the city.
10. Discuss the impact of the Great Depression on Los Angeles and the city’s response to poverty within the national context of the New Deal.
11. Compare the glowing portrayal of Los Angeles created by boosters at the turn of the century with the apocalyptic, noir vision that emerged in film and literature in the mid-twentieth century.
12. Trace the relationship between the Los Angeles economy and military spending by the federal government during World War II, the Cold War, and the post-Cold War periods.
13. Explain the explosive growth of suburbs during the postwar period.
14. Determine the extent to which urban growth in Los Angeles was guided by urban and community planning.
15. Assess the role of Mexican Americans, African Americans and Asian Americans in the social, political and economic life of the city during the second half of the twentieth century.
16. Analyze the impact of the Federal Immigration Act of 1965 on Los Angeles, how the city has dealt with immigrants and how immigrants have shaped Los Angeles since 1965.
17. Assess the institutional response of crime and violence in the late twentieth century, including the rise of gangs and the growing threat of terrorism.
18. Identify and analyze critical issues facing Los Angeles in the twenty-first century.