

Lecturer: George Gastil

B.A., Earlham College

M.A., History, UC Santa Barbara

ggastil@sdsu.edu

Office Hours in AL-519:

MW 1:00-1:50 pm; Th 1:30-2:30 pm

We can also meet on Zoom at various times.

Easy Contact: Usually, the easiest way to reach your instructor is through the Inbox on Canvas.

Course Description: History 445 explores the economic, political and cultural history of California, from early human settlement to recent times. Topics include Native American cultures, Spanish and Mexican influences, the Gold Rush, agriculture, the growth of cities, ethnic diversity, industrial change, and political reform. We will examine California as a region of cultural and technological innovation as well as economic and environmental challenges. Our course also includes a unit on California government where we will consider our state's unique structure as well as avenues for public participation on policy issues at the state and local level. Most importantly, the course encourages you to read, write, think, and discuss critical issues as a historian.

Required Reading:

Gastil, *Connecting California: Readings in Early American History*. Second Edition.

Gastil, *Connecting California: Readings in Modern American History* (Volume 2).

Cherny, *Competing Visions: A History of California*. Second Edition. Available on Digital Commons (for no charge) at this link: <https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/book-gallery/1/>

Student Learning Goals:

1. Students will understand and analyze the major themes and issues in California history and the historical forces that have shaped them.
2. Students will investigate the racial and cultural diversity of California and the struggles over power and freedom and how these have shaped the region.
3. Students will explore and critically analyze both primary and secondary source material.
4. Students will probe the nature of historical interpretation.
5. Students undertake historical research using primary source material and improve writing skills.

Engagement in Class: This class is designed to involve a high level of student engagement. Computers or other devices may be used only for specific classroom purposes. Also, please plan to access the class regularly on Canvas to make sure you are getting all the reading handouts and

assignments and noticing the announcements.

Class Participation: Please come prepared to discuss class topics. Missing one class in a semester will not impact your grade if you participate effectively on the days you are present. If you have to miss more than one class, please contact me. If you are missing a significant amount of participation credit you may want to do alternative activities to earn points. You will do three **Participation Self-Reports** where you may comment on your participation and also share insights on your growth in the class.

Online Discussions: The first forum will include student introductions. Subsequent forums will allow you to discuss various historical topics, share written work, give feedback and encouragement to other students, and comment on your learning and growth in the class. Forums will normally require a *first post* in the week listed with any additional posts due by the following Monday.

Essay Exams: You will be writing short essays on specific topics as well as longer essays on broad themes. Essays will emphasize key points in our reading and class discussions. You will also write about topics that you find especially interesting in *Connecting California*, emphasizing a variety of primary and secondary sources contained in the book. You will be including pictures in your essays. Your last essay exam will include recent topics and also themes related to course as a whole.

Special Project: Each student will do a project on a topic we are covering in the class. Your project could take the form of a website, mini-exhibition, short story, video, or work of art. Students will share projects in an online forum. As part of the special project the first assignment will be a three page Research/Planning Report emphasizing the historical context of your project, key points you plan to get across, and the primary and secondary sources you used in your research. After that, you will finish the project, share it in some form in an online forum, and reflect on your experience of doing the project and sharing projects with other students.

Grading: Students earn points for the following (1000 points=100 percent):

Participation Self-Reports	140 (three reports)
Online Discussions	150 (five forums)
Special Project: Research Planning Report	100
Special Project: Sharing and Reflections	100
Essay Exam I	120
Essay Exam II	120
Essay Exam III	120
Essay Exam IV	150

Points on Canvas: Written assignments must be turned in on Canvas to be graded. For your grade in the course, you need 940 points for an A, 900 points for an A-, 870 for a B+, 830 for a B, 800 for B-, 770 for a C+, 730 for a C, 700 for a C-, 670 for a D+, 630 for a D or 600 for a D-.

Accommodations for Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the [Student Ability Success Center](#) at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact them as soon as possible.

Schedule of Reading, Discussion Topics, and Assignments

Please come prepared to discuss the topics listed. Please use the handouts in the Reading Handouts section. The handouts are also helpful for taking notes and preparing for essay exams.

Written assignments (in **bold**) are designed for completion in the week listed, but they are not due until the following Monday. **Discussion** forums on Canvas will normally require a *first post* in the week listed with any additional posts due by the following Monday.

August 24	Course Overview	
August 31	Myths and Realities in Early California California's Native Cultures	Gastil (<i>first book listed</i>), Ch. 1 Cherny, Chapter 1; Gastil, Ch. 2
Sept 7	European Exploration and Colonization	Cherny, Ch. 2
Sept 14	A Closer look at European Exploration Online Discussion 1: Introductions and Early Class Topics	Gastil, Ch. 3
Sept 21	A Closer Look at the Mission Era, 1769-1821 Essay Exam I (Cherny, Chapters 1-2; Gastil, Chapters 1-4)	Gastil, Ch. 4
Sept 28	Mexican California, 1821-1846 A Closer Look at the Mexican Era Participation Self-Report I	Cherny, Ch. 3 Gastil, Ch. 5
Oct 5	War, Conquest and Gold, 1845-1855 A Closer Look at the Gold Rush Era Online Discussion 2: Sharing Student Writing	Cherny, Ch. 4 Gastil, Ch. 6
Oct 12	Calif. and the Crisis of the Union, 1850-1870 The Civil War Era and the Railroad, 1850-1870 Essay Exam II (Cherny, Chapters 3-5, Gastil Chs. 5-7)	Cherny, Ch. 5 Gastil, Ch. 7
Oct 19	California in the Gilded Age, 1870-1900 California in the Progressive Era, 1895-1920 Special Project: Research and Planning Report	Cherny, Ch. 6 Cherny, Ch. 7

Oct 26	The Modernization of California (1870-1920) California Between the World Wars, 1919-1941 Online Discussion 3: California Perspectives, 1870-1920	Gastil, Vol.2, Chs. 8-10 Cherny Ch. 8
Nov 2	World War II: The Great Transformation Perspectives on Mid-Twentieth Century California Essay Exam III (Cherny, Chapters 6-9; Gastil Vol. 2, Chs 8-12)	Cherny Ch. 9 Gastil, Vol. 2, Chs 11-13
Nov 9	Postwar California: Prosperity and Discontent Online Discussion 4: Documenting Experiences, 1920-1960 Participation Self-Report II	Cherny, Ch. 10
Nov 11	Contested Visions: Activism and Politics, 1964-1970 An Era of Limits: The 70s, 80s and 90s Special Project: Sharing and Reflections (online)	Cherny, Ch. 11 Cherny, Ch. 12
Nov 23	No Class	
November 30	Conflict, Consciousness and Creativity (1960-2010) California Enters the New Millennium Online Discussion 5: Perspectives on Recent and Current California	Gastil, Vol. 2, Chs. 14-16 Cherny, Ch. 13
Dec 7	California Politics and Policy Issues Major Themes in California History	Gastil, Vol. 2, Ch. 17
Finals Week	Participation Self-Report III and Essay Exam IV due Dec. 16	