COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
In a lecture given recently on campus, Barry Lopez, a nature-writer and an activist, framed issues regarding the human exploitation of the environment around three questions concerning human identity: 1) who we are; 2) where we come from; and 3) why we are here. The readings in this course take up all three of these questions, but make the most significant contribution to number two; the material in this course offers insight into the quandaries of development that territories in the Americas faced during 1865 to 1920, explaining to us, in 2006, “where we have come from” as a country. This particular historical period was a time of im/migration and development as the Industrial Revolution worked to shape and change American identity in the areas of economics, politics, religion, geography, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and others. Through our readings, and in addition to our literary discussions, we will ask the following types of questions:

What does it mean to be human? Does the forward progress of civilization demand human domination over nature? How do our technologies influence our relationship to the land and to its settlement/development? How do they influence relationships between different groups of people? How does access to resources in an increasingly industrial and technological system of Capitalism draw boundaries between the different groups of people living in the Americas during this time? How do the boundaries established between these various groups of people work to define some, more than others, as “American”?

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- **Presentation (25%)**: You will do a major presentation on a topic assigned by me or decided on after discussion with me. Your presentation will either address secondary criticism or the further work of an author we have covered in class. You should present the major ideas of the reading you were assigned and then apply it to the work(s) we have read together.

- **Paper (45%)**: You will write one major paper. You will submit: 1) a proposal (5%) outlining what you intend to write on and what sources you will use; 2) a rough draft (10%); and 3) a final draft (30%).

- **Attendance (10%)**

- **Participation (20%)**
ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, AND PARTICIPATION

There are no excused absences. I will call roll at the beginning of each class. I expect you to raise your hand, look at me, and say “here” or “present.” It is your responsibility to make sure that I have marked you on the attendance roll. If you come to class late (which you should not make a habit of), you need to see me after class has ended to be sure that I have marked you present (but late). Coming to class late four times equals a full absence.

LATE WORK

You should turn your work in on time. Late assignments will be appropriately downgraded.

PLAGIARISM

Any suspicion of plagiarism will be turned over to Student Judicial Affairs and could result in your failure of the course and/or expulsion from the university.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

According to the University Catalog, California State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, color, or national origin. If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at CSU Chico, you must register with Disability Support Services V/TTY: 898-5959.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE (pick up packet of secondary readings at Chico Copy and Postal – secondary readings from this packet will be assigned for each course meeting)

Mon 8/21 Introductions and background

Mon 8/28 Marti
  Secondary: Virgin Land

Mon 9/4 NO CLASS: Labor day

Mon 9/11 Marti/Austin
  Presentations: Kolodny, Annette. The Lay of the Land and The Land Before Her; Slotkin, Richard. The Fatal Environment
  Secondary: Frontier Experience
Mon 9/18 Austin

**Presentations:** Wild, Peter. “Sentimentalism in the American Southwest: John C. Van Dyke, Mary Austin, and Edward Abbey”; Lewis, Nathaniel. *Unsettling the West.*
**Secondary:** *Environmental Imagination,* “Divided Narrative”

Mon 9/25 Austin/Muir

**Secondary:** “There was a part of her in Indian Life”

Mon 10/2 Muir

**Presentation:** Leighly, John. “John Muir’s Image of the West.”
**Secondary:** *Fatal Confrontation*

Mon 10/9 London

**Presentations:** Auerbach, Jonathan. “‘Congested Mails’: Buck and Jack’s ‘Call.’”; Crow, Charles. “Ishi and Jack London’s Primitives.”; Wilcox, Earl J. “Overtures of Literary Naturalism in *The Son of the Wolf* and *The God of His Fathers.*”
**Secondary:** “Wild, Wild North” (internet)

Mon 10/16 London

**Secondary:** “Psychoanalyzing the Narrative Logics of Naturalism” (internet)

Mon 10/23 Sinclair

**Presentation:** Marx, Leo. *The Machine in the Garden.*

Mon 10/30 Sinclair

Mon 11/6 Webber

Mon 11/13 Webber

Mon 11/20 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving

Mon 11/27 Quiroga

**Presentations:** Paredes, Américo. “With His Pistol in His Hand.”; Ude, Wayne. “Forging an American Style: The Romance-Novel and magical Realism as Response to the Frontier and Wilderness Experiences.”; **Magical Realism**
**Secondary:** “Quiroga’s Exceptional Protagonists” (internet)

Mon 12/4 Quiroga; Closing remarks