

SOSC 300:
Social Science and Historical Perspectives
Section 009
Course Syllabus—Fall 2009

Dr. James Dunn

Office: Candelaria 2080 Hours: Mondays 10:00 am–11:00 am, Weds 12:30-2:30
and by appointment

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Course Website: <http://geography.unco.edu/department/faculty/DUNN/index.htm> (then choose SOSC 300 in the list)

Course Description:

Like all scientists (such as natural and physical scientists), social scientists ask questions and methodically seek answers to them. Sometimes they work within a specialty (discipline) and other times they collaborate. The methods (tools used) and points of view (perspectives) are used to guide the quest for knowledge and are generally different in each of the broad divisions of science. **This course will focus on the kinds of questions (content), perspectives, and methods used in social science and history.** We will narrow this down to focus more sharply on disciplines found in what are evaluated as the social studies in K–12 schools in Colorado:

History,
Geography,
Economics, and
Civics

To accomplish this, we will ask and work to answer several questions in 3 parts of the course:

Part 1. What are the research methods that these social studies have in common?

Part 2. How do these four disciplines differ?

Part 3. How can a social scientist bring all of these disciplines together to best answer critical questions about events and places?

These three parts will be addressed in overlapping fashion, not in sequential order.

The State of Colorado has published educational standards in the social studies. We will examine those standards in light of what we learn about history and social science. This course provides content necessary to enable teacher-licensure students to address the K–12 Colorado Model Content Standards in Social Studies.

The course is designed to answer the questions above and apply what is learned to new situations. Your knowledge, skills, and ability to apply and communicate what you learn will form the basis of your grade in the course.

Required Materials

Purchase:

Course Reader

Download from my website:

Colorado Department of Education, *Colorado Model Content Standards for Social Studies*

On 2-hour or electronic reserve at Michener Library:

Don Bragaw, "The social studies: the civic process," chapter 2 from *Teaching the Social Sciences and History in Secondary Schools* (Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium, 1996)

Donald G. Janelle, ed., *Geographical Snapshots of North America* (New York: Guilford Press, 1992) — *selected chapters*

Philip J. Gersmehl, "Three strands of meaning: cognitive psychology and geography," chapter 3 (selected pages only) in *Why Not Here? Teaching Geography to a New Standard* (Indiana, PA: National Council for Geographic Education, 1996)

James J. Lorence, *Enduring Voices: Volume Two: From 1865* (New York: D. C. Heath, 1996) — *selected chapters*

Sowden, Steve, David Stea, Mark Blades, Christopher Spencer, and JM Blaut. 1996. Mapping Abilities of Four-Year Old Children in York, England. *Journal of Geography* **95** (3): 107-111.

Assumptions I Make About You

1. I assume that you will work to create original knowledge, unless you are assigned to collaborate with others.
2. I assume that you will question all published and electronic data, and not accept things without confirmation from multiple sources. Critical thinking is valued highly!
3. I assume that you will take responsibility for your own education. Don't wait to learn things from me; probe and question, read further, add to the class; I welcome your contribution!

Evaluation

First, a general point: The surest way to succeed in this course is to attend class. The course grade is based on a point system, with a total of 500 points possible to earn during the semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of all points you earn. Your grade is based on the total points you accumulate on all exams, quizzes, exercises, and activities, according to this scale:

- A 90% or more of possible points (excellent)
- B 80 - 89% (above average)
- C 70 - 79% (average)
- D 60 - 69% (below average)
- F under 60% of possible points (failing)

Two Midterm Exams (100 points each); these consist primarily of multiple-choice, matching, and sometimes essays or several short-answer questions. All items on the exams are drawn from the material covered during class and in the assigned readings. The second exam includes a small review of material from the first exam.

Final Exam (150 points)—this is a comprehensive exam including material from both midterms and the unit on water in the West, reflecting integrated history, geography, and economics perspectives and

concepts from the course.

Graded Exercises (75 points)— Three **Exercises** will be assigned and graded relatively leniently, as they are designed primarily to give you practice applying the concepts discussed in class.

Class Participation (75 points)—Class time will consist of lectures, presentations, and a regularly assigned set of **Activities** (not the same thing as the graded exercises). Students earn participation points by attending class, adding to discussions, and completing all Activities during the semester.

Policies

1. Special Note: **Turn all of your technology off before you come into class.** With permission, you may use a laptop to take class notes. **You will be asked to leave class if you use cell phones, I-pod or other audio devices, or other such technology.**
2. Each student is expected to attend all classes. Attendance is taken at random times. If you'll miss a scheduled exam, quiz, or exercise due date because of illness, family problem, or other valid reason, it is your responsibility to contact me before class (351-2834). Make-ups on exams, quizzes, and exercises are only allowed for excused absences.
3. If you happen to miss an unscheduled in-class activity, you can make-up points only if you turn in the finished activity within two class meetings of the original assignment. Activities cannot be made up after that under any circumstances.
4. If you miss any other class (where no graded assignment or activity occurs), it is your responsibility to obtain notes from someone in class and/or schedule time with me in office hours to cover the missed material.
5. Note the scheduled date and time of the final exam. Final exams will not be offered at any other time. Make your holiday travel plans accordingly.
6. Any form of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in assessment of severe penalties.

Disability Support Services

Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

Honor Code

All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

UNC's Policies

UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link

<http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

Schedule: To be updated on the web: check this every week and listen for specific dates in class!

Focus 1: Social Studies and Social Research

Read Grigsby Chapter 2 in the Course Reader

Read Bragaw on reserve

Read Sowden on reserve and see website link for Activity 1B

Exercise 1 Due September 21, Monday— (20 points)

Midterm I — (100 points) October 7 Wednesday

Focus 2: Connecting History and the Social Sciences to Education

Read Giese and VanSledright in Course Reader.

Print Activity 5 and the 5 sets of documents bring to class with Course Reader;

Read Colorado Model Content Standards for Social Studies (see website for all 4 discipline documents).

Read Gersmehl (in Chapter 4 in Course Reader and Chapter 3 on 2-hour reserve).

Bring printout of Exercise 2 to class.

Read Jeffrey S. Smith, “Anglo Intrusion on the Old Sangre de Cristo Land Grant,” *Professional Geographer* **51** (2): 170-183. (in Course Reader).

Bring Activity 6 to class.

Exercise 2 — Due November 2, Monday (25 points)

Read Heilbroner and Milberg

Read Heyne (in Course Reader).

Exercise 3—Due in class (30 points); Expect to present your work on this Exercise.

Water Allotment Conference Part 1 Monday, November 16

Water Allotment Conference Part 2 Wednesday, November 18

Midterm II — (100 points) Monday November 23.

Thanksgiving: No class on Wednesday November 25 or Friday, November 27.

Focus 3: Applying an Integrated Approach to Social Studies Disciplines: Water in the West

Read Geography Education Standards Project

Debrief Water Conference.

Read Grigsby “Key Concepts...” (in Course Reader).

Review for Final Exam (Last meeting) December 4

Final Exam (150 points)

Date and time to be announced on the course website. The exam takes place in our classroom.