

SOC-901: California Gold Rush: 49ers/Miners

Independent Study Online Course Syllabus

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Number of Graduate Semester Units: 3 units
Target Audience: 3rd - 8th grade teachers
Course Access: <https://connect.fresno.edu>

Course Description

This course is designed to help educators deepen their understanding of California's Gold Rush while developing engaging, inquiry-based instructional practices for the classroom. The course focuses on the people, events, perspectives, geography, and technological innovations that shaped the California Gold Rush and transformed California socially, economically, politically, and environmentally.

Participants will explore the significance of Coloma, the James Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park, Grass Valley, Nevada City, the North Star Mine Powerhouse, and the Empire Mine through historical readings, oral histories, video tours, primary sources, photographs, music, maps, and digital resources. Special emphasis is placed on both labor-intensive and capital-intensive mining, westward migration, the experiences of Native Americans and immigrant groups, and the lasting impact of the Gold Rush on California communities.

Throughout the course, educators will engage in reflective, student-centered learning experiences while creating practical instructional materials for classroom use. Participants may choose between two pathways:

- **Option 1:** Build a professional digital portfolio/blog integrating instructional technology tools and primary sources.
- **Option 2:** Develop a complete classroom-ready California Gold Rush instructional unit.

Course assignments emphasize inquiry, historical thinking, literacy integration, resource curation, technology integration, and standards-aligned lesson design.

Historic information is presented through the award-winning text *The World Rushed In* by Dr. J.S. Holliday, docent-led video tours, oral histories, interviews, narratives, primary sources, and multimedia resources.

Note: Required book must be acquired separately.

Required Texts and Course Materials

Book: Holliday J. S., (2002). The World Rushed In: The California Gold Rush Experience. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press. ISBN-13: 978-0806134642

<https://www.amazon.com/World-Rushed-California-GoldExperience/dp/080613464X>

Canvas: This course will be delivered totally online. Canvas is a web-based learning management system (LMS) that provides students access to online resources, documents, videos, assignments, quizzes, forums, etc. Canvas is easy to learn and has a user-friendly interface.

Online Resources: Relevant online resources that support the course content and encourage further investigation will be available throughout the course assignments. Active hyperlinks are utilized throughout the course and will link to the appropriate information when clicked. These include videos, podcasts, worksheets, online activities, journal articles and other resources.

Course Dates

Self-paced; students may enroll at any time and take up to one year, from the date of registration, to complete assignments. Students may complete assignments in no less than three weeks for a 3-unit course (one week per unit).

National Standards Addressed in This Course

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)

(<http://www.nbpts.org/standards-five-core-propositions/>)

First published in 1989 and updated in 2016, [*What Teachers Should Know and Be Able to Do*](#) articulates the National Board's Five Core Propositions for teaching. The Five Core Propositions - comparable to medicine's Hippocratic Oath — set forth the profession's vision for accomplished teaching. Together, the propositions form the basis of all National Board Standards and the foundation for National Board Certification. Course assignments have been designed so students can demonstrate excellence against these professional teaching standards whenever possible.

- Proposition 1: Teachers are committed to students and their learning
- Proposition 2: Teachers know the subject they teach and how to teach those subjects to students
- Proposition 3: Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning
- Proposition 4: Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience
- Proposition 5: Teachers are members of learning communities

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (www.corestandards.org)

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade span.

Common Core Language Arts Standards addressed in this course include:

- Reading for Literature (RL): K-8, 9-10, and 11-12
- Reading for Information (RI): K-8, 9-10, and 11-12
- Writing (W): K-8, 9-10, and 11-12
- Speaking and Listening (SL): K-8, 9-10, and 11-12
- English Language Arts Standards (L): K-8, 9-10, and 11-12

Continuing Education Student Learning Outcomes (CE-SLO)

CE-SLO 1	Demonstrate proficient written communication by articulating a clear focus, synthesizing arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to inform and persuade others, and present information applicable to targeted use.
CE-SLO 2	Demonstrate comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
CE-SLO 3	Reflect on their personal and professional growth and provide evidence of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and professional improvement.
CE-SLO 4	Apply critical thinking competencies by generating probing questions, recognizing underlying assumptions, interpreting and evaluating relevant information, and applying their understandings to the professional setting.
CE-SLO 5	Reflect on values that inspire high standards of professional and ethical behavior as they pursue excellence in applying new learning to their chosen field.
CE-SLO 6	Identify information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, organize that information, identify the best sources of information for a given enquiry, locate and critically evaluate sources, and accurately and effectively share that information.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (C-SLO)

Student Learning Outcomes for This Course By the end of this course, the students will be able to:	National Standards Addressed*	CE-SLO Addressed**
1. Utilize inquiry-based and student-centered instructional strategies to teach California Gold Rush history and social studies content.	NBPTS 1, 2, 3, 4	CE 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Confidently integrate a variety of technological tools and digital resources into social studies instruction to support student engagement and inquiry.	NBPTS 1, 4, 5	CE 3, 4, 5
3. Design standards-aligned lessons and instructional units that incorporate literacy, inquiry, historical thinking, and classroom application.	NBPTS 1, 2, 3, 4	CE 1, 2, 4, 5, 6

4. Analyze the people, places, and events that shaped California's Gold Rush and contributed to the development of California communities.	NBPTS 2, 3, 4	CE 2, 6
5. Utilize historical thinking skills to analyze primary and secondary sources, interpret evidence, evaluate perspectives, and distinguish between historical fact and myth.	NBPTS 2, 3, 4	CE 2, 4, 6
6. Curate and evaluate collections of books, primary sources, multimedia resources, and digital tools for classroom use.	NBPTS 1, 2, 3, 4	CE 3, 5, 6
7. Develop inquiry-based learning experiences that promote critical thinking, collaboration, reflection, and evidence-based reasoning.	NBPTS 1, 2, 3, 4	CE 1, 2, 4, 5, 6
8. Integrate biographies, oral histories, narratives, and multiple perspectives into social studies instruction to deepen student understanding and engagement.	NBPTS 2, 4	CE 2, 4, 5, 6
9. Acquire historical understandings of California and its communities through oral histories, primary sources, literature, and historical inquiry.	NBPTS 2, 4	CE 2, 4, 6
10. Evaluate the social, economic, environmental, and cultural impact of the California Gold Rush on California and the American West.	NBPTS 2, 4	CE 2, 4, 5, 6
11. Identify and analyze the experiences, contributions, and treatment of Native Americans, immigrants, women, miners, and other groups during the California Gold Rush.	NBPTS 2, 4	CE 2, 4, 6
12. Reflect on professional growth and instructional practice while developing meaningful, classroom-ready instructional materials and learning experiences.	NBPTS 1, 4, 5	CE 1, 3, 4, 5

* Please refer to the section on **National Standards Addressed in This Course**

** Please refer to the section on **Continuing Education Program Student Learning Outcomes**

Topics, Assignments, and Activities

Module Title	Module Assignments and Activities	Points Possible
Home Page	- Welcome Video - Course Syllabus - Policies and Procedures - Introduce Yourself Forum	
Module 1 – Student-Centered Learning & Unit Foundations	- Read: <i>Standards, Firewalls, and General Classroom Mayhem: Implementing Student-Centered Technology Projects in the Elementary Classroom</i> (Hofer and Swan) - Read: Inquiry-Based Social Studies Article - Watch: <i>Reimagining Classrooms</i> - Option 1 Assignment: Blog Creation - Option 2 Assignment: Unit Design & Essential Questions - Forum: Student-Centered Learning, Inquiry & Instruction	30 pts 20 pts
Module 2 – Gold Discovery & Historical Perspective	- Read: Foreword, Preface, Prologue, Chapters 1 and 2 (Holliday) - Watch: Gold Discovery - Watch: Gold Rush (Holliday) - Option 1 Assignment: First Blog Post - Option 2 Assignment: Gold Discovery Lesson - Forum: Gold Discovery & Historical Perspective	50 pts 20 pts
Module 3 – Miners, Mining Methods & Historical Change	- Read: Chapters 3, 4, and 5 (Holliday) - Watch: Miners Oral Histories - Option 1 Assignment: Time Graphics Timeline - Option 2 Assignment: Mining Methods Lesson - Forum: Miners, Change & Historical Impact	50 pts 20 pts
Module 4 – Empire Mine, Resources & Inquiry	- Read: Chapters 6, 7, and 8 (Holliday) - Watch: Empire Mine - Watch: North Star Powerhouse - Option 1 Assignment: GoodReads Bookshelf - Option 1 Assignment: Symbaloo Resource Hub - Option 2 Assignment: Inquiry-Based Perspectives Lesson - Forum: Technology, Resources & Inquiry	50 pts 50 pts 20 pts
Module 5 – Pioneers, Oral Histories & Lesson Design	- Read: Chapters 9, 10, and 11 (Holliday) - Watch: Pioneers Oral Histories - Option 1 Assignment: Gold Rush Lesson Plan - Option 2 Assignment: Inquiry Lesson Sequence / Performance Task - Forum: People, Place & Lesson Design	100 pts 20 pts
Module 6 – Reflection, Synthesis & Culminating Application	- Read: Chapters 12, 13, and Epilogue (Holliday) - Option 1 Assignment: Final Blog Portfolio + Digital Showcase - Option 2 Assignment: Final Inquiry Project / Unit Submission - Add <i>The World Rushed In</i> Reflection to Final Blog / Final Unit - Forum: Reflection, Writing & Application	100 pts 200 pts 20 pts

Course Wrap-up – Grading and Evaluation	• Final Reflection Forum • Course Evaluation • Course Completion Checklist Grade Request / Transcript Request	
	TOTAL POINTS	750 points

Grading Policies, Rubrics, and Requirements for Assignments

Grading Policies

- Assignments will be graded per criteria presented in the course rubrics.
- A = 90-100% and B = 80-89%, (anything below 80% will not receive credit.)
- The discernment between an A or a B letter grade is at the discretion of the instructor based on the quality of work submitted (see course rubrics).
- Coursework falling below a B grade will be returned with further instructions.
- All assignments must be completed to receive a grade and are expected to reflect the quality that teacher-training institutions require of professional educators. If completed assignments do not meet this standard, students will be notified with further instructions from the instructor.

Grading Rubrics

Grade	Percent	Description	Rubric
A	90-100%	Excellent	Meets all course / assignment requirements with significant evidence of subject mastery and demonstration of excellent graduate level professional development scholarship.
B	80-89%	Very Good	Adequately meets criteria for all course/assignment requirements - demonstrates subject competency with very good graduate level professional development scholarship.
NC	Below 80%	Unacceptable	Does not meet the minimum criteria for all course/assignment requirements and demonstrated little, if any, evidence of acceptable graduate level professional development scholarship.

Writing Requirements

- **Superior:** Writing is clear, succinct, and reflects graduate level expectations. Clearly addresses all parts of the writing task. Maintains a consistent point of view and organizational structure. Includes relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- **Standard:** Writing is acceptable with very few mistakes in grammar and spelling. Addresses most parts of the writing task. Maintains a mostly consistent point of view and organizational structure. Includes mostly relevant facts, details, and explanations.
- **Sub-standard:** Writing contains noticeable mistakes in grammar and spelling. Does not address all parts of the writing task. Lacks a consistent point of view and organizational structure. May include marginally relevant facts, details, and explanations.

Lesson Plan Requirements

- **Superior:** Instructional goals and objectives clearly stated. Instructional strategies appropriate for learning outcome(s). Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is clearly delineated and authentic. All materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson clearly listed.

- **Standard:** Instructional goals and objectives are stated but are not easy to understand. Some instructional strategies are appropriate for learning outcome(s). Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is present. Most materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson are listed.
- **Sub-standard:** Instructional goals and objectives are not stated. Learners cannot tell what is expected of them. Instructional strategies are missing or strategies used are inappropriate. Method for assessing student learning and evaluating instruction is missing. Materials necessary for student and teacher to complete lesson are missing.

Instructor/Student Contact Information

Throughout the course participants will be communicating with the instructor and their classmates on a regular basis using asynchronous discussion forums. Students are provided with instructor contact information in the event they want to make email or phone contact. In addition, students are encouraged to email or phone the instructor at any time. Students will also receive feedback on the required assignments as they are submitted.

Forums

Participation is an important expectation of this course and all online courses. Online discussions promote reflection and analysis while allowing students to appreciate and evaluate positions that others express. While students may not be engaging with the same students throughout this course, they will be expected to offer comments, questions, and replies to the discussion question whenever possible. The faculty role in the discussion forum is that of an observer and facilitator.

Coursework Hours

Based on the Carnegie Unit standard, a unit of graduate credit measures academic credit based on the number of hours the student is engaged in learning. This includes all time spent on the course: reading the textbook, watching videos, listening to audio lessons, researching topics, writing papers, creating projects, developing lesson plans, posting to discussion boards, etc. Coursework offered for FPU Continuing Education graduate credit adheres to 45 hours per semester unit for the 900-level courses. Therefore, a student will spend approximately 135 hours on a typical 3-unit course.

Services for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are eligible for reasonable accommodations in their academic work in all classes. In order to receive assistance, the student with a disability must provide the Academic Support Center with documentation, which describes the specific disability. The documentation must be from a qualified professional in the area of the disability (i.e. psychologist, physician or educational diagnostician). Once documentation is on file, arrangements for reasonable accommodations can be made. For more information and for downloadable forms, please go to <https://www.fresno.edu/departments/disability-access-education>.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty

All people participating in the educational process at Fresno Pacific University are expected to pursue honesty and integrity in all aspects of their academic work. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be handled per the procedures set forth in the Fresno Pacific University Catalogue and Handbook - <https://handbook.fresno.edu/graduate/academic-policies>

Technology Requirements

To successfully complete the course requirements, course participants will need Internet access, can send and receive email, know how to manage simple files in a word processing program, and have a basic understanding of the Internet. Please remember that the instructor is not able to offer technical support. If you need technical support, please contact your Internet Service Provider.

Getting Help with Canvas: If you need help with Canvas, please contact the FPU Help Desk by phone: (559) 453-3410 or email: helpdesk@fresno.edu. Help is available Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 7:00 pm.

Final Course Grade and Transcripts

When all work for the course has been completed, students will need to request their final grade by accessing the form at ce.fresno.edu/grade-request. Once the instructor receives the request and posts their final grade, students will receive an email communication from the University. Please allow at least two weeks for the final grade to be posted before you order your transcripts online.

University Policies and Procedures

Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the information presented in the Academic Catalog and for knowing and observing all policies and procedures related to their participation in the university community. A summary of university policies may be found on the university website at <https://www.fresno.edu/departments/registrars-office/academic-catalogs>.

Fresno Pacific University Student Learning Outcomes (FPU-SLO)

FPU-SLO 1	Oral Communication: Students will <i>exhibit</i> clear, engaging, and confident oral communication – in both individual and group settings – and will critically <i>evaluate</i> content and delivery components.
FPU-SLO 2	Written Communication: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> proficient written communication by <i>articulating</i> a clear focus, <i>synthesizing</i> arguments, and utilizing standard formats in order to <i>inform</i> and <i>persuade</i> others.
FPU-SLO 3	Content Knowledge: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> comprehension of content-specific knowledge and the ability to apply it in theoretical, personal, professional, or societal contexts.
FPU-SLO 4	Reflection: Students will <i>reflect</i> on their personal and professional growth and <i>provide evidence</i> of how such reflection is utilized to manage personal and vocational improvement.
FPU-SLO 5	Critical Thinking: Students will <i>apply</i> critical thinking competencies by <i>generating</i> probing questions, <i>recognizing</i> underlying assumptions, <i>interpreting</i> and <i>evaluating</i> relevant information, and <i>applying</i> their understandings to new situations.
FPU-SLO 6	Moral Reasoning: Students will <i>identify</i> and <i>apply</i> moral reasoning and ethical decision-making skills, and <i>articulate</i> the norms and principles underlying a Christian worldview.
FPU-SLO 7	Service: Students will <i>demonstrate</i> service and reconciliation as a way of leadership.
FPU-SLO 8	Cultural and Global Perspective: Students will <i>identify</i> personal, cultural, and global perspectives and will employ these perspectives to <i>evaluate</i> complex systems.

FPU-SLO 9	Quantitative Reasoning: Students will accurately <i>compute</i> calculations and symbolic operations and <i>explain</i> their use in a field of study.
FPU-SLO 10	Information Literacy: Students will <i>identify</i> information needed in order to fully understand a topic or task, <i>explain</i> how that information is organized, <i>identify</i> the best sources of information for a given enquiry, <i>locate</i> and critically <i>evaluate</i> sources, and accurately and effectively <i>share</i> that information.