GEOG/HIST 488B/688B: LANDSCAPE OF LAKE TAHOE

Spring 2017

**Note:** Supplemental information regarding course requirements, including detailed assignment guidelines, is posted on the course WebCampus site. Students should read the material on WebCampus as well as this syllabus in the first week of class and check the site at least once a week for new information and announcements.

**Instructor Information**

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Office location: MSS 208  
Phone: 775-784-6452  
E-mail: raymond@unr.edu

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Focusing on Lake Tahoe and the surrounding area, this interdisciplinary course will consider an iconic local landscape as both a physical and a cultural creation. We will examine the contemporary reality and the historical origins of present-day Lake Tahoe, and analyze it as part of many different systems: physical, social, and perceptual. Diverse methodologies for the study of landscapes will be introduced through readings and presentations by guest lecturers, and current policy issues will be considered. Students will combine historical and field-based methodologies to study and understand the multiple landscapes of Lake Tahoe. A final, integrative project of each student’s own design will synthesize these perspectives to interpret a particular facet of our immediate surroundings.

This course satisfies CO 13 of the Silver Core Curriculum.

*CO 13 – Integrative Experience:* Students will be able to integrate and synthesize Core knowledge, enabling them to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues.

Geography/History 488B/688B helps students to develop the skills described in CO 1 (Effective Composition and Communication), CO 3 (Critical Analysis and Use of Information), CO 5 (History & Culture), CO 6 (Cultures, Societies, and Individuals), and CO 11 (Global Contexts).

*This is an interdisciplinary, cross-listed course that draws on Lake Tahoe expertise from many disciplines at the university and beyond. The attached schedule is suggestive, depending on participants’ availability.*
Student Learning Outcome (SLOs) and Correlation to Core Objectives (COs):

Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Integrate skills of written, oral, and visual communication to analyze and document the origins and current environmental challenges of Lake Tahoe (CO 1, CO 3, CO 13)
2. Explain the ways that landscape is both a physical and a cultural creation (CO 13, drawing on CO4 and CO5, CO9)
3. Articulate and evaluate diverse cultural, national, and international influences in the local landscape (CO 5, CO 6, CO 11)
4. Apply appropriate geographical and historical methodologies to understand why Lake Tahoe looks the way that it does today (CO 13)
5. Analyze and synthesize the impact of political, social, and economic systems on the local landscape (CO 6)

BOOKS

Matthew S. and Michael J. Makley, Climbers, Courts, and a Washoe Indian Sacred Place (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2010).

Stephen Mills, American Landscapes (Edinburgh: Keele University Press, 1997).

Douglas Strong, Tahoe: From Timber Barons to Ecologists (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

Additional readings will be available on WebCampus.

ASSIGNMENTS

488B/688B course requirements:

1. READINGS ASSIGNMENTS: Most weeks there will be a brief (1-page) homework assignment related to that week’s readings. These will be the basis for class discussion (see #5 below), and will be submitted to insure that you have read and understood the assignment. They will be assessed cumulatively, at the end of the semester, as part of the class participation element of the grade. (SLO 3, 5)

2. REVIEW OF STRONG: Each student will submit a 3-4 page, typewritten analysis of Strong’s environmental history of Lake Tahoe. Guidelines for the review, which is to be an analytic critique of the work, and not simply a book report, will be discussed in class and posted on WebCampus. This work provides the basis for our understanding of Lake Tahoe as an environmental system. (SLO 3, 4, 5)
3. PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS: During the semester there will be two papers, each 5-6 pages in length. The first of these is text-based, and historical in nature. You will be asked to locate two primary sources about Lake Tahoe, and explain what they reveal about the origins or development of this landscape. One of your sources must be textual (historical document, oral history, poem, novel, etc.) and the second must be visual (map, chart, photograph, painting, etc.). Your sources and your question must be submitted and approved in advance. Specific guidelines for the primary source analysis will be discussed in class, and posted on WebCampus. Part of the Special Collections session will be devoted to locating primary sources on Lake Tahoe. (SLO 2, 4)

4. FIELD ANALYSIS: The second paper will be field-based rather than textual. During the course of the semester, as part of your final project (Lake Tahoe field trip), you’ll be visiting some part of the particular Lake Tahoe landscape that you’ve defined for yourself. Using appropriate maps and visual resources, explain what you learn about your topic by field observation. How does the site reflect the influence of political, social, and economic forces we’ve studied? Specific guidelines for the field analysis will be discussed in class, and posted on the WebCampus. (SLO 2, 4, 5)

5. CLASS PARTICIPATION: This class requires active participation by all members. You are expected to attend faithfully, to have the readings completed beforehand, to ask cogent questions of the speakers, and to participate in class discussions. More than one unexcused absence will jeopardize your grade, although attendance alone will not insure a good class participation grade. Weekly assignments and any extra credit will be factored into the class participation grade. (SLO 2, 3, 5)

6. FIELD TRIP PROJECT: In lieu of a final research paper, 488B students will prepare a field trip guide to some particular Lake Tahoe landscape of their own definition. These projects may be individual or collaborative, and will develop during the course of the semester. Field guide examples will be presented and discussed during the semester, and general requirements for this project—which must be both historical and geographical in nature—will be posted on WebCampus. Interim developmental stages throughout the semester are posted on the syllabus. With good planning, assignments #3 and #4 can help you prepare for your field trip project. The final project is due at the last class meeting, in a form that can be posted and shared with the entire class. At our exam week meeting we’ll discuss them and decide which ones are our favorites, and why. 688B students will complete a formal research paper instead, described below. (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

688b course requirements:

In addition to requirements 1-5 above, 688B students will be expected to complete a research project (15-20 pp.) that applies at least one of the various methodological frameworks introduced in this course to analyze and interpret the landscape of Lake Tahoe. This is an interdisciplinary assignment, and you are expected to combine textual and field-based sources in your research. It can be based at the lake itself, or in one of the many extended systems of which Tahoe is a part. The methodological framework(s) that you choose for your project may be one of those presented in the course, or another of your choosing; but you must consider Tahoe as a landscape.
You are free to conceive this assignment broadly, subject to instructor’s approval. We will be discussing the project, and the stages of its development, at separate seminar-style meetings for 688B students, to be held outside of class, 4 times during the semester. Additional critiques submitted by 688B students in these seminars will be included as part of the final project grade. Due dates for the respective stages of research project development will be issued separately to 688B students in the seminars. Findings will be presented in class at our final regular session.

**ASSESSMENT:**

Student learning will be assessed in the assigned writing, research, and oral components throughout the semester. Grades will be based on performance on the following:

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<tr>
<th>grading</th>
<th>488B</th>
<th>688B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong review</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>primary source analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>field analysis</td>
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<td>class participation</td>
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<td>field trip project</td>
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<td>final research project</td>
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Students enrolled in 688B will be held to a higher standard of performance than 488B students.

**Grading Criteria**

**F** denotes work that is not done or not acceptable. It demonstrates that the student has no idea what the course material is about, suggesting a lack of interest or effort and frequent absences from class. If you complete the assignments and come to class regularly it is virtually impossible to receive an F.

**D** is given for work that is inadequate. It omits important points, contains more than a few inaccuracies, and is badly organized, suggesting that the student has not been paying much attention to the course or is having conceptual problems. A student who attends class but does not contribute to it is assumed to be doing D work.

**C** is given for work that is average. The student shows familiarity with the subject, but assignments lack detail or effective organization, or fail to follow instructions. The C progress report might make general points but fail to support them with specific evidence, or it might be merely a collection of facts, with no coherent discussion of them. The C discussant might
sporadically ask an extraneous question, but not submit weekly assignments that show command of the readings or awareness the themes of the class.

**B** denotes work that is above average in quality. It demonstrates that the student knows and understands the material covered in class, and that s/he is capable of synthesizing it in a variety of ways, including reflective weekly readings responses, analytic refinement of an American landscape topic for the progress reports, and submission of a final project that is accurate, detailed, and well organized. The B discussant’s assignments reflect active engagement with the readings, and an ability to relate them to the student’s own landscape investigation.

**A** is for work of exceptional quality. This grade is for work that presents a clear thesis supported by persuasive evidence and analysis, logically organized, and free from typing or grammatical errors. An A-level final project demonstrates the student’s ability to build on what he or she has learned during the semester, so as to explore new subject matter employing a variety of both geographical and historical skills. The A discussant’s weekly assignments employ the readings to reflect on and extend course themes, offer an informed and reflective perspective on the topic under consideration and its connections to the student’s own landscape investigation.

**COURSE POLICIES:**

**Deadlines and Policies Regarding Missed Work**

Assignments are due in class on the dates indicated in the Course Schedule. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** Readings should be completed prior to the course meeting each week. Extra credit opportunities will be available.

**Grade Ranges:**

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<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<td>87-89</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<th>Range</th>
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<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>64-66</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-63</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<td>any grade below 60 is failing</td>
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**Academic Dishonesty**

The university’s Academic Standards policy states:

Academic dishonesty is against university as well as the system community standards. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:
Plagiarism: defined as submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one's own; or assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one's work to be used in this fashion.

Cheating: defined as (1) obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual or unauthorized use of books, notes, text and other materials; (2) obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination; (3) taking an examination for another student, or arranging for another person to take an exam in one's place; (4) altering or changing test answers after submittal for grading, grades after grades have been awarded, or other academic records once these are official.

Sanctions for violations of university academic standards may include the following:

(1) filing a final grade of “F”; (2) reducing the student’s final course grade one or two full grade points; (3) awarding a failing mark on the test or paper in question; (4) requiring the student to retake the test or resubmit the paper.

Copying someone else’s entire paper or article is a clear example of academic dishonesty, but note that plagiarism can take other, less obvious forms as well. “Language, ideas, thoughts or work of another” includes any material used in your assignments and essays that was written or produced by others. Using brief phrases or sentences from books, articles, internet sites, documents, or other sources without letting your reader know where they came from is a form of plagiarism. You must properly acknowledge your use of other people’s words by placing them in quotation marks and citing all sources used in your paper. Even if you paraphrase someone else’s ideas and do not quote them directly, you must still indicate where those ideas came from. Citations should also be given for little-known facts and statistics.

All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Office of Student Conduct and become part of the student’s academic record. Potential employers as well as the directors of graduate and professional programs to which students may apply can request copies of these records, in which case the academic dishonesty charge will be disclosed.

Academic Success Services

Your student fees cover use of the Tutoring Center, the University Writing Center, and the Math Center. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these services as needed.
Tutoring Center: ph. 784-6801 or visit www.unr.edu/tutoring
University Writing Center: ph. 784-6030 or visit www.unr.edu/writing_center
Math Center: ph. 784-4433 or visit www.unr.edu/mathcenter

Students with Disabilities

The History Department is committed to equal opportunity in education for all students, including those with documented physical disabilities or documented learning disabilities. If you have a documented disability and will be requiring assistance, please contact me or the Disability
Resource Center (Thompson Building Suite 101) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Audio and Video Recording

Surreptitious or covert videotaping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

*** indicates electronic version available on WebCampus

week 1  What do we mean by landscape(s)?

week 2  Lake Tahoe as a landscape
assignments: Mills, “Introduction” 1-10; Groth, “Frameworks for Cultural Landscape Study”***; begin Strong

week 3  Vegetation, climate and fire history - Scott Mensing
assignments: Lindstrom; “Holocene paleoclimate records ..”***

week 4  library orientation session - Jacque Sundstrand
Meet in Special Collections Department, MIKC
assignment: Mills, “Interpreting Landscape Images”

STRONG REVIEW DUE

week 5  Why is Lake Tahoe not a national park? - Donald Pisani
assignment: Moehring, “Comstock Urban Network”***

PRIMARY SOURCE TOPIC PROPOSAL DUE

week 6  Class and ethnicity at Tahoe - Donica Mensing
assignments: Hardesty, “Ethnographic Landscapes”***; Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment, chapt. 2, pp. 76-78
week 7  Landscapes of capital - Bill Rowley  
assignments: Richard Wilson, *Sawdust Trails* (to be distributed in class) 

FIELD GUIDE PRELIMINARY IDEAS DUE

week 8  The Washoe at Lake Tahoe - Lynda Shoshone  
assignments: begin Makely; Watershed Assessment, chapt. 2, pp. 34-47. 90-91

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

week 9  Spring Break - no class

week 10  Snow and water resources: possible Tahoe snow survey field trip - details TBA  
assignment: Muir, “Lake Tahoe in Winter”***; Twain, selection from *Roughing It***; Bird, selection from *A Ladies Life in the Rocky Mountains***; LeConte,  
selection from *A Journal of Ramblings Through the High Sierra of California***

week 11  When worlds collide - recreation and culture at Cave Rock - Matt Makely  
assignment: complete Makely 

REVISED/REFINED FIELD GUIDE PROPOSAL DUE

week 12  Scenery and science -- Jeff Cowen (TRPA) and Glenn Miller  
assignment: 1.  Lake Tahoe Watershed Assessment, pp. 86-90;  
2.  selections from TRPA 2001 Threshold Evaluation Report, including Executive Summary, Introduction (chapt. 1), and chapt. 8 (1-25.). This document is available online at: [http://www.trpa.org](http://www.trpa.org).  It is located under TRPA Regulations, and identified as Thresholds.  
3.  Environmental Improvement Program Update Summary - available online. References are in the reading section under TRPA - EIP.

FIELD ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

week 13  Art and landscape - Colin Robertson  
assignments: Mills, “Landscape Art” and “Cultural Landscapes of the West”;  
Raymond, “Outside the Frame: Landscape, Art, and Experience in the Sierra Nevada” ***
**Week 14**

Landscapes of tourism - Alicia Barber
Assignment: Raymond, “A Place One Never Tires Of”; Mills, “Theme Parks and Heritage Landscapes”

**688B Research Paper Drafts Due**

**Week 15**

Trials and triumphs of multiple lenses: What have we learned about landscapes of Lake Tahoe?
Assignment: Tuan, selections from *Topophilia*

**Field Trip Projects Due**

**Week 16**

Final meeting - exam week
Come prepared to vote for your favorite Tahoe field trip and explain why.

**688B Research Papers Due**