CFB/HIST 3309

North American Environmental History (SMU-in-Taos, June 2013)

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Escape the Dallas Heat and Earn Course Credit!

Given the biblical heat that plagues Dallas every summer, the cool temperatures and gorgeous scenery of northern New Mexico offer the ideal learning environment for SMU students looking to earn course credit and make progress towards the degree. Come to Fort Burgwin next June and study the environmental history of North America with a particular emphasis on the U.S. Southwest. This course examines the complex reciprocal relationship between human societies and the natural world, with attention to these specific themes: Native American resource management; the ecological impact of European arrival in the New World; resource exploitation and commodification in the industrial age; changing ideas about nature; and the roots of current environmental problems and the political solutions devised to address them.

The Fort Burgwin Experience

Courses offered at the SMU-In-Taos program provide intimate class settings that maximize intellectual exchange between faculty and students. Northern New Mexico also boasts a range of field trip opportunities ideally suited to the study of environmental history, including:

Taos Pueblo: One of the oldest continually inhabited dwellings in the U.S., whose residents developed a sophisticated irrigation system to harness the region's scarce water resources.

Fort Burgwin: A historic U.S. Army post established in 1852 south of Taos in order to secure northern New Mexico and guard the road to Santa Fe.

El Valle: A small township south of Taos and home to noted environmental writer Bill deBuys, who conducts tours of his property tracking ecological change over time.

Taos Valley Watershed: The drainage system for northern New Mexico, of critical importance in supplying water for a dry land.

Financial Aid is Available (see the website at: www.smu.edu/taos)

Readings

Shepard Kreeh, The Ecological Indian: Myth and History (1999)

Carolyn Merchant, Major Problems in Environmental History (2011)

Henry David Thoreau, Walden (1854)

Various articles

Key Dates

June 3, 2013

Arrive at Fort Burgwin

June 4, 2013

Classes begin

July 2, 2013

Classes end

July 3, 2013

Depart Fort Burgwin