Dear Prospective Student:

I cordially invite you to explore the history of California, our Golden State. California is a state like no other, with 12% of the total U.S. population and an economy that is the eighth largest in the world. It was not always so. In 1846, there were only about 500 Americans in all of California. The state grew by leaps and bounds beginning with the Gold Rush and into the twentieth century as American everywhere began to think of it as the “Land of Opportunity.” My own parents came here for the same opportunity. The opportunity has ebbed and flowed, but the “California Dream” lives on.

In our class, we will cover the social and political history of California from the earliest times to the present. California was once the habitat of numerous Native Americans living along the Pacific Coast. Can you believe there was smog already from Indian campfires in the Los Angeles Basin when the first missionaries arrived? Their world was forever disrupted by the arrival of the Europeans, beginning two hundred years before the missions with Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542. The exploration period was followed by the Spanish colonial period, which culminated in the development of California’s famous 21 missions a day’s journey apart over a stretch of 650 miles. The Mexican period begins with the overthrow of the Spanish in 1821, until California is taken by force by the Americans in the War with Mexico, 1846-1848. This is followed immediately by Statehood (California was never a U.S. “territory”), the first California state constitution, the Gold Rush, and the Civil War. The late nineteenth century is dominated by the transcontinental railroads, and for California, the Southern Pacific Railroad in particular within the state. The railroad’s dominance leads to another constitution. By the turn of the century, the California Progressives brought a new political solution to California’s problems, with many state constitutional changes. They are followed by the Great Depression and the California New Dealers of the 1930s. Even before the 1930s, California becomes a beacon of hope to the dispossessed looking for opportunity. From the 1930s to the 1970s, California matures into an economic and technological powerhouse and eventually outstrips New York as the most populous state in the Union. The rest of the story, from the 1980s to the present, is one of continued growth, but with some “boom and bust.”

As our text, we will use the time-honored Andrew Rolle (now with Arthur Verge) *History of California*. (We will use the Seventh Edition, not the Eighth Edition, so you will be able to buy a used edition if you need to.) Rolle was a former professor at Occidental College in Eagle Rock and authored several books on California history. His book highlights the many changes that California has experienced over the last 160 years. It should provide a base for some interesting discussions on California history. I think you will be pleased.
History 210, Section 15218, will be totally (100%) on-line, meaning that we will not have any meetings on campus. You will need to go into Blackboard on the first class day to introduce yourself and show you are present. This class will be accessed entirely through Blackboard. It will require that you access the course on-line, do the readings, participate in discussions, and take tests. The test will include both multiple choice and also one or more essays. You will submit your essay online by answering a series of questions that amount to an essay.

History should be fun, and I will try to make it so. While it will require some commitment and effort on your part, it will also be rewarding as you learn many things you did not know about California history. I will be there to assist you with problems. Hopefully, you will be able to look back at some interesting discussions with other students about the history of the Golden State.

If you need to contact me before the class starts, I can be reached by email at rdyke4@hotmail.com. I am attaching some information below about on-line courses and the Blackboard format.

Sincerely,
Dr. Dyke

Some Facts about On-Line Learning

Welcome to the glorious world of online learning! Hopefully, you have taken the time out to gather all of your course materials prior to the class starting. If not, no problem, just head to the College of the Canyons bookstore conveniently located on campus with the instructor’s name, course section#, and the name of the class you are taking and the team members working there will be happy to assist you. If this is your first time taking an online course then you will want to familiarize yourself with Blackboard, which is what most instructors use to deliver their online class. Below is a link to an orientation for Blackboard for all of those who are new to the Blackboard platform.

Blackboard Orientation:

http://www.canyons.edu/offices/distance_learning/OnlineOrientation/

The instructor will try to have the course accessible as soon as possible when Winter Session officially begins. If your course does not appear in Blackboard please check the following things before calling Blackboard tech support

- Has the class officially started?
- Did you pay for the course?
- Do you have any holds on your account that would deny you access?
• Has it been more than 24hrs since you have added the class to your “My Canyons” account?

If you are still having problems and none of these are an issue please contact Blackboard tech support at the following:

Phone: 661-362-3344
Email: bbsupport@canyons.edu

I hope you will view this course as an opportunity to have an interesting look back at our state’s past! Welcome to History 210!