



COURSE DESCRIPTION

U.S. History is designed to give students an overview of the political institutions, social movements, cultural trends, economic changes, and geographic conditions that have impacted the past and present. This is a yearlong class designed to promote an understanding of historical events and current issues from multiple perspectives. The class is divided into two semesters:

- The first semester focuses on the formation and development of the United States by exploring its indigenous roots, colonial beginnings, independence, expansion, regional struggles, and its emergence following the Civil War. Students will conclude the semester by completing the **Civil War Curriculum Based Assessment** on the causes of the Civil War. This is a state and school district requirement.
- The second semester begins by looking at the social, political, and economic conditions in the United States following the Civil War and its emergence as a social, political, and economic power at the dawn of the 20th Century. Students will devote the remainder of the second semester completing the **Cultural History Project**, which allows students to conduct independent research on the evolution America's cultural history from a number of different vantages including, but not limited to popular culture, entertainment, art, music, sports, foreign policy, war, political scandals, symbolic events, influential leaders, social taboos, cultural outcasts, technological developments...

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation: Prepared participation is essential. Come to class prepared to think, ask questions, take excellent notes and engage in meaningful discussion. We should think, talk, and act as democratic citizens. That means the classroom environment is a venue for discussion, negotiation of competing ideals, debate and compromise. We must gather information through listening, reading, thinking, and then critically evaluating information in order to form our own opinions.

Notebook: Students need a three ring binder with the following sections: 1) daily log 2) notes 3) handouts 3) assignments 4) assessments

Journal: Each student needs to have a spiral notebook to be stored in the classroom for in class writing. Specifically, class often starts and concludes with journal writing prompts. In addition, students will write

Assignments: Expect regular reading assignments. Completing these will be necessary to participate in daily class activities, discussions, and lectures. Other assignments may range from overnight tasks to multi-week projects. Expectations will be clear and generally provided in writing. If work needs to be completed outside of



class students will submit work on the posted due-date. You should save your work for each unit in order to prepare for the unit assessments!

Assessments: There are a variety of assessments infused throughout each unit. These include, but are not limited to quizzes, class debates, simulations, essays, and tests.

Extra Credit: You can earn extra credit by participating in pre-approved community and government events, entering history or citizenship-related contests (e.g., essay contests), or reading and reviewing a book or film approved by me. Other opportunities may be made available. Extra credit is not a substitute for turning in your regular coursework.

Grading: Grades will be based on participation in classroom activities, assignments, and assessments, and will be calculated on the percentage of earned points from total points possible. I use the following standard grading scale:

93 = A	73 = C
90 = A-	70 = C-
87 = B+	67 = D+
83 = B	63 = D
80 = B-	60 = D-
77 = C+	below 60 = F

Sensitive Materials: There are times in the course of Social Studies classes where sensitive materials will be shown to students. These materials may include nudity (indigenous people, war), violence (war, civil conflict), extreme poverty, and some written/video material with language considerations. It is your right to not view these materials if you are sensitive to them. You will be given different materials to incorporate the same information. When very sensitive materials are to be shown in the class, letters will be sent home to parents.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to modification, but I will give you notice of any changes.

A key to being successful in this class is desire and commitment. If you are willing to commit yourself to doing your best, I will do all I can to help you achieve your best.