

AP United States History Syllabus

Mr. Klein-Room 1410

[Link to Mr. Klein's email address](#)

Phone number: 515-965-9610

Scheduled Assistance

Daily: 8:00-8:20; 8th period

Monday through Thursday: 4th period

Purpose (from the College Board)

"The AP U.S. History course is designed to provide students with the analytic skills and factual knowledge necessary to deal critically with the problems and materials in U.S. history. The program prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by full-year introductory college courses. Students should learn to assess historical materials—their relevance to a given interpretive problem, reliability, and importance—and to weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. An AP U.S. History course should thus develop the skills necessary to arrive at conclusions on the basis of an informed judgment and to present reasons and evidence clearly and persuasively in essay format."

Introduction (from the College Board)

The A.P. U.S. History course focuses on the development of historical thinking skills (chronological reasoning, comparing and contextualizing, crafting historical arguments using historical evidence, and interpreting and synthesizing historical narrative) and an understanding of content learning objectives organized around seven themes, such as identity, peopling, and America in the world. In line with college and university U.S. history survey courses' increased focus on early and recent American history and decreased emphasis on other areas, the A.P. U.S. History course expands on the history of the Americas from 1491 to the present.

Course Objectives

1. Learn the depth and breadth of United States history from pre-Colonization to modern day
2. Develop writing skills necessary for success in college-level social science courses
3. Build "historians' habits of mind" that allow for comprehensive document analysis, bias detection, source evaluation & the interpretation of primary & secondary sources of all types
4. Prepare for success on the AP Exam
5. Use United States history as a prism through which we examine and understand our modern world
6. Help students build mature habits of study, time management, and planning

What to Expect from Class

Students are expected to participate in class through discussions, debates of key issues, and document analysis. Students are expected to continually develop their writing skills through regular short essays, essay exams and maintain a notebook of all class materials.

The volume of material involved in a survey course of U.S. history is high, and students should expect to do a lot of close reading. Students will not only read in the text, but also from outside sources. The class pace typically is one chapter every week.

Disclaimer

AP United States History is challenging and fast paced compared with other high school courses (remember, this is the equivalent of a year-long college survey course). The class takes more time and requires more homework. There will be a focus on strengthening skills in taking objective exams, writing clear and compelling essays and analyzing historical data. Therefore, regular study, frequent practice in writing, historical analysis, class discussions/debates, and study/review/and test-taking strategies are major elements of the course. Part of the class will also focus on the study strategies that are essential in order to be successful on the AP exam in May.

Class Text

Divine, Robert A. *AMERICA: Past and Present. Ninth Edition.* (Boston: Longman, 2011).

Materials Needed

1. Bring your **textbook** to class each & every day
2. A **notebook** for lecture notes and/or textbook notes.
3. Bring your charged **Chromebook**, and use it when asked to do so, and for its intended purpose.

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Behavioral Expectations

The work habits/behavior standards are for grades 6-12 courses in our district. These work habits/behavior standards will be reported throughout the semester and are as follows:

1. Organization and Readiness
2. Productivity and Accountability
3. Collaboration Skills

Performance Levels for Work Habits/Behavior Standards

MS = Meets Standard

PM = Partially Meets Standard

DM = Doesn't Meet Standard

NE = No Evidence

These descriptors are intended for feedback and communication and do not impact a student's GPA.

Academic Grading

For each assignment or test, students will be graded using the ACSD's Levels of Proficiency. Each level of proficiency will correspond to the following scales.

4.0 = 100% = Advanced

3.0 = 85% = Meeting

2.0 = 70% = Progressing

1.0 = 50% = Beginning

0.0 = 0% = Insufficient



LEVELS OF PROFICIENCY

ADVANCED

ADV

ADVANCED

The student demonstrates learning beyond the expectations of proficiency.

MEETING

MTG

MEETING

The student demonstrates learning that meets the expectations of proficiency.

PROGRESSING

PRG

PROGRESSING

The student demonstrates learning that partially meets the expectations of proficiency.

BEGINNING

BEG

BEGINNING

The student demonstrates learning that begins to meet the expectations of proficiency.

INSUFFICIENT

INS

INSUFFICIENT

The student has not yet submitted the required amount of evidence. It is missing or it is incomplete.



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Grading Categories

Each assignment will fall into one of the six categories with the following weights:

- 5% Textbook and Reading Notes
- 35% Essential Question Exams
- 25% Stimulus Based Multiple Choice
- 10% SAQs
- 15% DBQs
- 10% LEQs

Weighted Grades

Students who successfully complete courses requiring special rigor will receive an additional quality point or "weighted grade" for each course. This means that the semester grade of "A" is worth 5.0 points for a weighted course, the grade of "B" is worth 4.0 points, and so on. The appearance of the letter grade will NOT be changed on your report card, but will be calculated for your weighted G.P.A.

Guiding Practices:

Multiple and Varied Assessment Opportunities

All students should have multiple and varied assessment opportunities to demonstrate higher levels of achievement. Additional opportunities may include being reassessed on only the

content/skills not mastered, spiraling assessment of content/skill on subsequent assessments, reassessment of an alternate form of an assessment (e.g., Form B instead of Form A), student revisions of work products based on descriptive feedback, or alternative methods of assessments (e.g., an oral response rather than a written test).

Guidelines for reassessment opportunities include the following:

- Students will be provided the opportunity to be reassessed - best practice is to provide additional opportunities for students to demonstrate learning during future assessments.
- Teachers determine appropriateness and authentic need for reassessments.
- Reassessment method will be provided at the discretion of the teacher.
- Reassessments will be given within a reasonable time frame that the teacher determines and students will be communicated with in advance.

Homework / Independent Practice

Homework is an opportunity for students to practice skills, apply knowledge, review and build on past learning, and extend learning. Homework is individualized and based on each student's progress towards established standards. The purpose of the assignment will determine whether or not a grade is given and will be clearly articulated to students. Through independent learning tasks (homework), students assume more responsibility for their learning and are given opportunities to apply what they have learned to new situations or experiences.

Extra Credit and Bonus Points

To ensure that grades reflect progress toward and achievement of the standards, giving extra credit points or bonus points will not occur in this class.

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- Productivity and Accountability
- Collaboration Skills

For those of you accessing this document electronically, the work habits tool can be accessed online: [Work Habit Tool Online Link](#). We will be using the following performance levels

Performance Levels for Work Habits/Behavior Standards:

MS = Meets Standard

PM = Partially Meets Standard

DM = Doesn't Meet Standard

NE = No Evidence

These descriptors are intended for feedback and communication and do not impact a student's GPA.

Formative and Summative Assessment: Definitions

- **Formative Assessment:** Formal and informal processes teachers and students use to gather evidence for the purpose of improving learning.
- **Summative Assessment:** Assessments that provide evidence of student achievement for the purpose of making a judgment about student competence or program effectiveness.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism (from the ACHS Handbook)

"Students will do their own schoolwork. Academic dishonesty ("cheating") is prohibited, and includes but is not limited to: looking at or copying another student's schoolwork, allowing another student to look at or copy your work, plagiarism and copying from sources without proper citation, use of telecommunication devices during testing, forgery, lying to school officials..." This would also include any practice of sharing protected information about tests with students who have not yet taken them.

HOW TO STUDY FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES

1. Understand that **reading is not studying**. You need to read the text & materials as you go through the chapter(s). Studying involves going back over materials and **re-viewing**.
2. When you read, be an **active reader**. Take notes, annotate, recite, and quiz yourself when you get done. Do *something*.
3. Use **spaced practice**. Many touches with material over time beats massed practice (cramming).
4. **Start early** so that you have time to visit with your teacher if you don't understand something. You should always walk into a test "knowing what you don't know." Quiz yourself so that you have **feedback** in your learning.
5. Activate your auditory channel by **reciting**. Reciting is re-stating a reading out loud and in your own words. Summarizing anything is very effective.
6. Use **elaborative rehearsal**. Go beyond rote memorization. Ask yourself questions about terms: why is this important? How does it relate to the major themes of the chapter? Yes, you need to know the definition and a term's characteristics. But you also need to ask the most important question: so what?
7. Be an **active studier**. Take notes, summarize, and quiz yourself. Take your original notes and re-format them... any time you change formats or reorganize your notes it is considered elaborative, and therefore good.

3 Key Questions for potential AP Students

1. Can you read?

- a. AP students are most successful when they have reading abilities in the 70th percentile or better. This is not a hard and fast rule, but generally students below this mark tend to struggle with the college-level textbook and other materials used in class.
2. Will you read?
 - a. You are a bit of a “hamster on a wheel” in this class, in that the reading never stops. You should expect, on average, 8-10 pages per night... every night... and weekends... from now until early May. 800+ pages in 150+ days of school. Do you have the discipline to do a little bit of work each and every day?
3. Do you have the time to read?
 - a. Desire aside, what does your schedule look like? Can you designate 30-60 minutes per day (plus studying) to this class? **The College Board recommends taking no more than 2 AP courses at a time (or 3, if one of them is not reading based).** In college, you are in class about 15 hours per week, and have the rest of the time to read & study. In high school, you are in school 35 hours a week. Sports... jobs... band/choir... social time... other classes... youth group & other activities... family time... can you make this work?

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