Advanced Placement U.S. History

Memorial High School
2019-2020 Course Syllabus

Instructors

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Textbook: *American History: Connecting with the Past*, 15th Edition – by Alan Brinkley, 2015

Course Description:
This course is designed to increase the student's understanding of United States History, its development and institutions, from its beginning to the present. The goals of the class are to develop (1.) an understanding of some of the principle themes in early and modern U.S. History, (2.) an ability to analyze historical evidence, and (3.) an ability to analyze and to express historical understanding in writing and other forms of communication.

AP U.S. History is a rigorous, fast paced and challenging college level. Students should possess strong reading and writing skills and be willing to devote substantial time to study and the completion of class assignments. Emphasis is placed on class discussion, the use of primary and secondary sources, critical reading, and analytical writing. This course prepares students to take the College Board Advanced Placement United States History examination for potential college credit.

Mastery of content and grades are important, but of equal value are the following:

- study and analytical skills
- critical reading of primary and secondary sources
- understanding and developing the historical thinking skills (e.g., Contextualization, Comparison, Causation, and Continuity and Change Over Time)
- developing the ability to make effective arguments
- constructing and evaluating historical interpretations
- using historical knowledge as a guide to present understanding and action
- empathizing with the past

Any college level class requires hard work and a commitment to intellectual growth. All students are strongly encouraged to dedicate themselves to the goals of AP U.S. History and to take the AP Exam at the end of the school year (Friday, May 8th – AM). We hope you will be rewarded with a sense of accomplishment and the belief that even a rigorous class can be enjoyable.

Assignments:
1. Survey text: You are responsible for reading and studying the survey text by Brinkley. Our calendar will detail the schedule for reading and daily activities as well as quiz and test dates. You will *initially* be provided with a study guide to help you take notes while you read. While some of the text will be discussed in detail, much of it will be covered through independent learning.
Note: Chapter reading quizzes based on the text will be given to encourage students to stay abreast of reading assignments. These quizzes ***may or may not* be announced.

2. Supplemental readings: You will be given primary and secondary reading materials (essays, documents, etc.) that will deal with a concept emphasized on tests. The materials are to be read and eventually used to help construct and defend a thesis within timed and untimed written essay.

3. Notes: Good note-taking skills are essential. You are required to take notes on all readings, lectures and discussions. Copying from a web page is lazy and basically useless.

4. Research: Research is a significant part of this college level course. Use of a college library and primary sources in original research will be expected.

Evaluation:

Major Grades (60%)

Exams/Papers/Projects: During each nine weeks at least one exam will be given. Each exam could include both multiple choice and free-response questions. Large projects will also be assigned and be graded as a major grade. **Exams/Projects are 60% of the nine weeks average**. Each nine weeks there will be at least three major grades. Some will be exams; others may be DBQs or papers. Exams will be scheduled on ODD days with other Social Studies classes.

NOTE: This Syllabus and Unit Outline are posted on your instructor's web page all semester.

Minor Grades (40%)

Quizzes and Small Projects and Daily Grades: We will have numerous reading and informational quizzes. They will often be open note and take place at the beginning of class. If you are tardy and arrive after the quiz has started or absent the day of the quiz, you will be required to take a make-up quiz that will not be the same quiz or form, but will cover the same material. It will be your responsibility to schedule makeup quizzes. There will be relatively few daily grades. Homework, group or individual presentations, and many other assignments are considered daily grades. Please be aware that all work done in class or for homework may not be taken for a grade. All assignments are individual assignments unless specifically noted otherwise *(see Academic Honesty)*. This part of your grade will be based on the quality of your participation and responses during classroom activities such as: seminars, discussions, debates, etc. Inattention, off task behavior and unpreparedness will hurt you.

Makeup and Late Work:

1. Makeup work: Makeup tests and quizzes are to be completed by appointment. This appt. must be made and completed within **3 days** after your return to school. If this is not accomplished the result will be a zero for that test/quiz. The responsibility for makeup is entirely the student's!

2. Late work: **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR DAILY WORK/HOMEWORK,** *but major grades will be accepted (with penalty)*. This is a fast moving college level course and you will be expected to rise to those standards.

Special Note: ** Because exams may be curved and opportunities to raise your average with supplemental assignments will be given (film notes, etc.): AT THE END OF THE NINE WEEKS AND SEMESTER, GRADES WILL NOT BE "BUMPED" FROM 79 TO 80, 89 TO 90, ETC. And no additional work will be given.

******Thus, neither students, nor parents should ask for this consideration. ******

General Information:

1. Attendance: The nature and format of this course make it imperative that you be in class every day. Some of the learning in your absence is virtually impossible to make up, but you can minimize the problem by acquiring notes and such from members of your team.

Excused Absences: It is the student's responsibility to make-up class work, test, and quizzes in a timely manner. If you absence is excused I will be very flexible with you in making anything up, as I know that you do have other classes and all will have work for you to complete.

Unexcused Absences: Unexcused absences are **UNACCEPTABLE**. Key point: **DO NOT SKIP** my class and be sure to have absences officially excused by the attendance office.

2. Materials: These items are required each day in addition to your textbook:
    1. 3 ring binder with dividers
    2. Paper (loose leaf, lined, notebook paper / **No** Spiral Paper Accepted)
    3. Blue or Black pen – pretty colors are nice but not for class work
    4. Highlighters in yellow, blue, pink, orange, green. BIC makes a five pack but any brand is fine.

3. National Exam: The advanced placement national exam is administered at MHS in May. It takes approximately 3 hours and consists of 2 parts, multiple choice and essay. *It is our expectation that all students who complete this course will take the AP Exam. **100%** participation is expected.*

Expectations:

1. **Work load**: **This is a college level history course**. The amount of reading and writing necessary for success may be a shock to some students. However, if you organized yourself and are diligent with your time, you will find success. In the first semester (18 weeks) you will read and be responsible for the first 22 chapters of the textbook. Thus, the time to begin reading is NOW! Once you receive your textbook you should plan to read and take notes for APUSH each night. If you pace yourself you will not get overwhelmed. As you become accustomed to the course format and texts, things will fall into place and become manageable. It is important to not get discouraged.

2. **Deadlines are deadlines**: Assignments are due on or before a given due date. You will be provided a calendar throughout the course, so there will be no exceptions, unless in the case of emergency (death, severe illness/injury requiring hospitalization, etc.). Please schedule getting your license, your teeth cleaned, etc for after school.

3. **Academic Honesty**: Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating on a test includes, but is not limited to, copying from another student's test paper; using, during a test, materials not authorized by the instructor; collaborating with another student during a test without permission; knowingly using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an un-administered or previously administered test; or bribing another person to obtain a test that is to be administered; or unauthorized access to previously administered exam questions. Collusion means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing for an exam or in creating work offered for credit. Plagiarism means the appropriation of another's work and the unacknowledged incorporation of that work in one's own written work for credit.

- We consider four (4) words or more taken from someone else or some other written source for which credit is not given as plagiarism.
- Notes for reading quizzes MUST be in student's own handwriting.
- Students in violation of this policy will be dealt with severely. Zeros and detention are the norm.
- Major assignments/papers will be submitted to TurnItIn.com