
AP United States History
Christ Church Episcopal School, 2012-13
Mr. Woodward, Room 210
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Course Description:

This course is designed to provide a college-level United States history course and preparation for the Advanced Placement Examination in May 2013. A heavy emphasis is placed on mastering a significant body of factual information, analyzing both primary and secondary sources, major interpretations within U.S. History, and writing critical essays. First semester topics will include life and thought in colonial America, revolutionary ideology, constitutional and national development, Jeffersonian and Jacksonian democracy, nineteenth-century reform movements, Manifest Destiny, sectional divisions leading to the Civil War and Reconstruction periods, and late-nineteenth century industrialization and urbanization. Later topics will include a study of immigration, political reform movements such as Populism and Progressivism, World War I, the Jazz Age, the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, the Cold War, and the changing late-twentieth century society.

In addition to these topics, this course will study and trace themes including American diversity, the development of a unique American identity, the evolution of American culture, demographic changes over the course of America's history, economic trends and transformations, environmental issues, the development of political institutions and the components of citizenship, social reform movements, the role of religion in the making of the United States and its impact in a multicultural society, the history of slavery and its legacies in this hemisphere, war and diplomacy, and the place of the United States within the global community.

Furthermore, students will be responsible for answering the "why" questions of history. Rather than simply learning information, it is important for this course that students understand the motives and consequences of actions. Students will also learn to discuss ways that interpretations of events have changed over time, how the issues of one time period have had an impact on the experiences and decisions of subsequent generations, and how such reevaluations shape the way historians see the world today.

Students will have regular opportunities to practice written exercises, in the form of both document-based questions and free-response questions. The instructor will provide ample explanation of the methodology and expectations for such exercises in advance, and students will receive verbal and/or written feedback from the instructor for each assignment.

Texts:

Kennedy, David M., Lizabeth Cohen, and Thomas A. Bailey. *The American Pageant*. 13th edition. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006.

Heffner, Richard D., ed. *A Documentary History of the United States*. 7th edition. New York: Signet, 2002.

Madaras, Larry and James M. SoRelle, eds. *Taking Sides*. 11th and 12th editions. Dushkin, 2004, 2007. (*selections to be provided by the instructor*)

Assignments and Grading:

Grading Percentages: Tests—40%, Essays/DBQs—45%, Quizzes—15%

Any student scoring below **75% on any major assignment (test, essay, DBQ) must arrange a personal conference with Mr. Woodward to discuss the result.**

Course Calendar and Information: All class assignments are posted on Net Classroom; regular reminders of upcoming due dates and assignments will be given in class. Additionally, the course calendar, syllabus, and other resources can be accessed through the course wiki (work in progress!!): <http://woodwardapush.wikispaces.com>.

TESTS:

A test consisting of AP-level multiple choice questions will be given at the end of each unit of material (approximately five per semester). These tests will be designed not only to assess students' recognition of, understanding of, and ability to analyze the material, but will also serve to expose students to the style of questions which will be encountered on the AP exam. Tests will draw from readings, notes, and classroom discussion.

ESSAYS/DBQs:

Students will complete one to two major written assignments per unit. These will be modeled after AP-level free-response essays and Document-Based Questions, and are designed to develop students' analytical and compositional skills in preparation for the AP exam. Particular training and instruction will be provided in class for each type of question. Some written assignments will be completed outside of class, and it is thus imperative for students to remember that written assignments are *always* to be completed individually without aid from others. Written assignments will be graded according to a standard scale/rubric to be provided to students.

QUIZZES:

Quizzes will be given regularly and will draw from weekly reading assignments. The format will be multiple choice, and quizzes will be announced in advance.

HOMEWORK:

Students are expected to maintain a regular habit of reading, studying, and reviewing in order to meet the high demands of this course. Developing a method for reading comprehension and retention is an essential skill for this course. There will be no regular homework grades outside of the weekly reading quizzes; however, a student's level of preparedness will be evident from participation in class. All students are expected to contribute meaningfully to the classroom dialogue.

SEMESTER EXAM:

The exam given at the end of the first semester will be a shortened version of an AP Exam. This exam will count as 20% of the semester grade, with the remaining components of the student's average counting 80%. Students are required to sit for the AP exam in May, which will be in lieu of a second semester exam.

Course Expectations and Policies

1. **Preparation:** Come prepared for class each day. Adequate preparation and organization are essential to a demanding course such as this one. Because of the rigor and amount of material that you will be responsible for in this course, you should expect to do work for history prior to each and every day of class. “Every day is history day!”
2. **Participation:** Contribute to a classroom atmosphere based on respect for each person’s desire and right to learn. Curiosity, questioning, and creative thinking are essential elements of historical investigation and study.
3. **Reading:** Keep pace with the course readings, which provide an essential foundation of knowledge that we will build upon during class. This is a demanding course with a significant reading load, and there is no substitute for students’ own work outside the classroom!
4. The **Honor Code** will be in effect for all assignments. Please be very familiar with Honor Code regulations on class work and homework, as well as how to avoid plagiarism. If you are unsure whether you are allowed to work with other students on an assignment, assume that you may not, or ask me.
5. **Absences:** You are responsible for all work missed because of absences. Refer to the class calendar for upcoming assignments, and **do not** assume that you will not have to complete an assignment because you were absent! Students who miss (only) the day of a test or major assignment will be expected to complete the assignment on the day of their return. Repeated absences on the day of tests or essay due dates, or excessive absences for the semester, will result in a phone call to parents. **Communication** about absences, especially planned ones, is essential and greatly valued—be proactive in this regard.
6. **Late Assignments:** Assignments turned in late without prior permission or a valid excuse will be subject to a penalty of one letter grade per day late. No assignment may be turned in more than one week late.
7. **Extra Help:** My goal is to help you do your best work in this course. Please communicate with me about any difficulties you are having in the course. As mentioned above, any student scoring below 75% on a major assignment is **required** to have a meeting with me. But be proactive as well if you are having trouble with the readings, connecting the material together, taking notes, writing essays, etc. I am generally available during E Period.
8. **Extended Time:** Students who have been approved for extended time and desire to use this for assignments should communicate this to me prior to the assignment.
9. **Decorum:** Please be punctual and appropriately attired for class.
10. **Computers:** Students may use laptop or tablet computers as classroom aids; however, these should not be used in ways that will distract from the purpose of the class. In other words: no games, no photo browsing, no instant messaging, and please turn your wireless port or switch to “off.” Students who violate this policy will forfeit their ability to use computers in the classroom.