

**Advanced Placement United States History**  
**Course Syllabus**  
**2014-2015**  
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**Purpose:** The Advanced Placement program in United States History is designed to provide students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge necessary to deal critically with the problems and materials of United States history. The course prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by full-year introductory college survey courses. In this pursuit, the acquisition of factual knowledge is the beginning point of the process, not the end. Students will learn to interpret and evaluate the relative significance of primary and secondary source material, and to present their evidence and conclusions clearly and persuasively in an essay format.

**Textbook:** *America's History*, Henretta et. al., Bedford St. Martin's, Boston: 2014

Students may find it helpful to take notes in, highlight, or otherwise mark in the text. Students would be well advised to supplement the reading of the basic text with other standard textbooks to provide varying interpretations of significant historical trends. Copies of other standard AP textbooks are available for students to borrow. Many former students have found an outline of American history useful. Many supplements will be published in the fall and correspond to the US History redesign. Remember, this is **optional and it does not take the place of a thorough reading of the textbook.**

**Additional Reading:** One or more major outside reading assignments will be required throughout the year. Portions of the following may be read:

*The Federalist Papers*, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, *Great Expectations: America and the Baby Boom*, *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the 1920s*, *Democracy in America*.

Additionally, scholarly essays and primary source readings will be distributed throughout the year. Many of those readings will focus on conflicting historical interpretations. Throughout the year students will be reading a collateral text dealing with some aspect of multiculturalism.

**Grading:** Grading is based on a total points system. Each assignment has a total possible points value (i.e. major test = 100 points, optional main idea log = 40 points, reading quiz = 10 points). At the end of the quarter a student will have completed a number of assignments worth a certain number of total points. The total possible points will be divided by the points the student has earned to determine the final grades (i.e. total possible points = 1500, total points earned = 1375, grade = 1375 divided by 1500 = 91.6 = A). Throughout the year, students will complete a variety of assignments such as tests, quizzes, short answer questions, Document-Based Question essays (DBQs), essays, unit reviews, main idea logs and visual and significant events assignments per unit. The school grading scale is followed.

**Honor Code:** Students will abide by the honor code statement “**I have neither given nor received help on this assignment**” for all assignments unless specifically exempted by the instructor. Violations of the honor code pledge will result in a zero for the assignment, a disciplinary referral to the office for action consistent with the school system policy on cheating, and potential loss of status in honor societies. Examples of violations of this policy include (but are not limited to) giving or receiving help on any in-class or take-home test, essay, or quiz, plagiarism of material on take-home essays, and discussion of any quiz, test, or essay questions with students who have not yet completed that assignment.

**Tests and Essays:** Tests will generally consist of a multiple-choice section and an essay section designed to mirror the revised AP Exam as closely as possible within the framework of the class period. Each test is likely to cover a significantly greater volume of material than many students have previously experienced. These tests will emphasize factual information, multiple causation/multiple outcome, and the concept of change over time and will require students to interpret and evaluate the events of history and support their conclusions with relevant specific factual information. The multiple choice section of each of these tests will include at least ten stimulus-based questions in which student are asked to examine excerpts from primary and secondary historical sources and answer questions based on those stimuli. Essay tests will consist of either one long answer essay, four short answer essays, or a DBQ. There are likely to be no more than seven to eight major grades per quarter. The limited number of grades per quarter means that each major grade has a significant impact on the quarter grade. Students need to be aware of this and responsibly prepare for each major assignment. In addition to test essays, several additional in-class or out-of-class essays or DBQs will be required throughout the year. Each will count as a major grade. “Pop” quizzes will be used daily if it is apparent that students need additional incentive to responsibly keep up with reading assignments.

**Mandatory and Optional Assignments Expectations:** Mandatory take home tests or main idea logs will be given throughout the year if necessary for certain units. Following that, optional chapter take home tests or main idea logs may be completed by students for a grade. **Students may use their textbooks on take home tests but are to work independently with NO sharing of information allowed between students.** Optional assignments are designed to allow student to shore-up areas of weakness. Additionally, Mandatory assignments may vary from student to student based on individual weaknesses that need to be strengthened.

**Homework:** Homework will consist almost exclusively of reading assignments, with an occasional outside essay. Students who are having difficulty with the course may need to initiate additional reinforcing activities (optional assignments). As students, you are responsible for completing and mastering assignments on time.

**Makeup Work:** Attendance in class is absolutely essential to the successful completion of the course and to the attainment of a passing grade on the National Advanced Placement Examination. Students returning from excused absences are responsible for completing missed in class assignments promptly. Be aware that the instructor is under no obligation to accept work after its assigned due date.

**Additional Help:** The AP experience may place greater demands on students than those to which they are accustomed, especially those taking multiple AP classes. It is likely that you will need to meet with the instructor from time to time to overcome problems you are having. I welcome those opportunities to help you one-to-one, and I encourage you to make arrangements to see me if you're experiencing difficulty. Mandatory conferences will be scheduled with those students experiencing significant difficulty. I am available almost every morning and many afternoons. For an appointment, please sign up on the “Additional Help” calendar on the front board or stop by to see me if you have a quick question!

Optional test review sessions will be offered before or after school following each major test.

**National AP US History Exam:** The Advanced Placement Program of the College Board affords students the opportunity to receive college credit for AP classes by successfully passing a national examination offered on **Friday, May 8, 2015 at 8 am**. The exam consists of:

Section I:

Part A: 55 Multiple Choice questions, 55 minutes, 40%

Part B: 4 Short-answer questions, 45 minutes, 20%

Section II:

Part A: 1 Document-based question, 60 minutes, 25%

Part B: 1 long essay question (chosen from a pair), 35 minutes, 15%

***AP students are strongly encouraged to take the national examination.***

### **Keys to Success in AP U.S. History**

1. Keep up to date with all reading assignments. When you fall behind it becomes difficult to catch up.
2. Pay attention to dark-typed headings since they give you clues of what to look for in each section.
3. After you finish a section, be certain you can express the main idea the author had in mind. This gives meaning to the factual information.
4. Highlight (or sticky-note) important concepts and facts in your textbooks.
5. Become an active reader. Ask yourself questions as you read and predict what is likely to happen next. Make inferences. That is, “read between the lines” and try to ascertain the larger purpose the author has in presenting this material.
6. Do more than memorize what things are. Understand information as a cause and effect of a broader trend or movement. You should always seek to understand the connections between isolated bits of information and understand how and why they are part of a bigger picture.
7. Begin studying for tests and quizzes early. The volume of material makes it difficult to adequately prepare for assessments on the night before.
8. Find your own method of taking meaningful class notes and review those notes each night.
9. Take advantage of optional assignments to strengthen areas of weakness.
10. Actively seek out help when you need it. I want you to be successful both in class and on the AP exam. In order for that to happen, we must work as a team. I am here to help!

### **Materials required in addition to your textbook:**

- 3-ringed binder
- loose-leaf paper
- blue or black ink pens; pencils for multiple choice tests

### **Rules:**

1. Obey all school rules!
2. Respect Everyone (this includes your fellow classmates and teacher)!
3. Absolutely no food, drinks, gum, electronic devices or other classes’ work in the classroom. These items will be confiscated.
4. Be in your seat when the tardy bell rings.
5. Raise your hand for permission to speak.
6. Come prepared each and every day. This means having your homework, blue/black pen, etc.
7. Absolutely NO cheating!
8. Come in each and every day with an open mind and a great attitude!

### **Consequences:**

1. Verbal/visual warning
2. Teacher-student conference (detention)
3. Parental notification
4. Office referral
5. All school rules/consequences will apply

I am looking forward to a wonderful year! I am always here to help and/or answer any questions or concerns you have. Feel free to email me any time.

Yours in Education,

Abby H. Woodard