

APUSH Course Content and Organization

This course is designed to increase the student's understanding of United States History from its beginnings until the present, its development and institutions. The goals of the class are to develop (1) an understanding of some of the principle themes in early and modern US 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.

APUS History is a rigorous, fast-paced and challenging course designed to be the equivalent of a college freshmen US History survey course. Students should possess strong reading and writing skills and be willing to devote substantial time to study and the completion of class reading assignments. Emphasis is placed on class discussion, the use of primary and secondary sources, critical reading, and analytical writing. The course prepares students to take the College Board Advanced Placement United States History examination and possibly receive college credit.

Mastery of content is important, but of equal value is:

- ❖ Study and research skills
- ❖ Critical reading of primary and secondary sources
- ❖ Making historical analogies
- ❖ Constructing and evaluating historical interpretations
- ❖ Using historical knowledge as a guide to present understanding and action
- ❖ Empathizing with the past

Any AP class requires hard work and a commitment to intellectual growth. All students are strongly encouraged to dedicate themselves to the goals of APUS History and to take the AP Exam at the end of the school year (May 8, 2009). I hope that you will be rewarded with a sense of accomplishment and the belief that even a rigorous class can be enjoyable.

Grading Scale: 90-100, A; 80-89, B; 70-79, C; Below 70, F

Six Weeks Grading:

- ❖ Tests=70% (tests, projects, research papers, etc.)
 - All tests will be cumulative. Most will contain both writing and multiple choice questions similar to the AP Exam. All tests will be inclusive. The material for every test will include both textbook and outside readings as well as any pertinent class room material. There will be 2 to 3 exams per six weeks.
- ❖ Daily and Homework=10%
 - A variety of oral, written, group and individual assignments will be given including points for participation during class discussions.
- ❖ Notebook and Quizzes=20%
 - Reading quizzes will be given after every chapter.
 - Notebook will be taken up once each six weeks and will be cumulative for the entire year.
 - There may be other quizzes either announced or unannounced as needed.
 - Chapter Notes

Semester Exam: The semester exam is 1/7 of your semester grade.

Needs for the class:

- ❖ **Good attitude**
- ❖ **Pens or pencils to bring everyday**

- ❖ **3 ring notebook**—we keep everything we do ALL YEAR long so get a big one
- ❖ **a spiral (or maybe more than one)**—your choice of color and size
- ❖ **highlighters**—colors of your choice
- ❖ **dividers**—pkg. of 6—sections are below—can be handmade

Notebooks: Notebooks are taken up approximately one week before the end of each six weeks. This notebook is to contain all work from the year. Included are:

- ❖ **Title Page**—You need an attractive title page.
- ❖ **Vocabulary**—Vocabulary cards/sheets go here.
- ❖ **Chapter Notes**—You will need to insert your spiral here when time for grading.
- ❖ **Daily Work**—All work returned to you will be placed into the corresponding area in your notebook.
- ❖ **Tests and Quizzes** —Every exam is cumulative, therefore, all tests are to be kept.
- ❖ **Readings**—All readings given you should be kept here.
- ❖ **Notes**—This is for class notes. Every exam is cumulative so keep them all.

Pockets of notebook—Call me silly, but **nothing should be in the pockets when the notebook is turned in for a grade.

Late Work/Tardy Policy

- ❖ **Absences**—You have one **class period** for every day you are absent to turn in make-up work according to school policy. However, because you are being given all your assignments at the beginning of the six weeks, it is reasonable to expect that you will have your work the very next day you are here. Missed tests will have to be made up on your own time. Major projects are due the day they are due regardless of your attendance, so if you are absent on one of those days, please make arrangements to have someone else bring your work in for you.
- ❖ **Late work**—I grade papers that are turned in on time. If it is not in the box by the assigned time, I won't take it. Since you have received all your assignments at the beginning of the six weeks, it is reasonable to expect that you will have your assignments ready to turn in on time. If you have an extenuating circumstance, you may discuss the matter with me and I will make a decision based on your persuasive points. (A game or having to work the night before does not count as an extenuating circumstance; taking your grandmother to the hospital does!)
- ❖ **Tardy**—You are tardy **if you are not in your seat when the bell sounds**. After two tardies, you will be assigned an 9th hour as per school policy. If you are more than 15 minutes late, you are absent, no questions asked.

Air Conditioning

I can change temperature a few degrees but I will usually have it where it is comfortable for me. If you tend to be cold, bring a jacket or your own blanket. I usually have a blanket or a sweater I will loan you. Don't touch the thermostat. If you ask properly, I will usually adjust it to a more appropriate temperature shortly.

Gum

Gum will be allowed unless it is a distraction or it because against school policy to chew gum. If I find gum under my desks, we will discontinue this privilege.

Room Service

I am not your maid! Clean up after yourselves. Do NOT leave your books in here for the next class period. I will not keep lost/left articles for you, but will send them to the office.

Getting ready to leave

We work until the bell rings or I tell you to put up. If you put up early, then I feel obligated to assign more work. When I tell you to put up, you are to stay in your seat until the bell rings--no gathering around the door ready to leave. Remember, I release you not the bell.

Restroom Passes

Leaving to go to the restroom during class is a privilege. You can not learn if you are not in the classroom, especially since so much of our work will be done as a participation grade, so leaving class for any reason will be limited. If you become a chronic asker, you may be refused. Therefore, if you have a physical problem where you need to go frequently, you need to be sure and let the nurse and me know so we can document it.

Hall Passes

Again, you need to be in the room to learn, but if you need to leave class for any reason, then you must have the lovely hall pass with you. If you do not, you can face disciplinary actions from the administration.

Textbooks

- ❖ The APUS History textbook is America Past and Present, 6th revised, AP ed. by Divine (and a bunch of other people). You should have already received your textbook before school. This book is school property and you may not write or highlight in it. Therefore, if you desire to write or highlight in your textbook you can see about purchasing one on the Internet. I don't really know if there are any available and before you purchase one, please check with me to make sure you get the right version.
- ❖ We will also be using several supplemental readers for primary and secondary source documents. You will be given copies of all readings at a reasonably early enough time to read them. It is your responsibility to read these according to the calendar and to keep up with them. Since all exams are cumulative, there may be questions from a reading in Sept. on a May exam, so keep up with them. You may write or highlight on these to your heart's content. Once I hand them to you, they are yours and I encourage you using your highlighters.
- ❖ We will also be reading a couple of historical books. I have planned to read at least 3 other books during the year. These will be given to you in an appropriately early enough time.
- ❖ AP Exam Review: The school has purchased one review book which you will be given during the year. You are not to write in it for any reason. However, there are many other review books which are much better that you may purchase on your own. One of the best is United States History: Preparing for the Advanced Placement Examination by John Newman and John Schmalbach and published by Amsco Publications. The ISBN is: 1567656609.
- ❖ Website: The textbook website is http://wps.ablongman.com/long_divine_app_6 . Again, it is not our exact book, but it is close enough and you are welcome to use any of the resources there.

Accountability and Independent Learning

You are responsible for reading and studying the textbook as well as all other readings. The six weeks calendar will be given to you at the beginning of each six weeks as well as all readings for the six weeks. In addition, you can access most of the assignments from the ICA at www.nicenet.org and join the class using class key # _____, unless you have already joined, in that case, you may just log in and it will take you straight to the class. I will not be able to put the reading handouts on the site as it does not allow for uploads,

however, all other assignments will be listed on the site. Also, any assignment that is not required to be handwritten can be turned in via the ICA. The six weeks calendar will also be posted on my website www.orgsites.com/tx/adadams. There I will be able to upload copies of the readings and many of the assignments in pdf form and you will be able to download them from there at home.

The AP US History Exam

The examination is given every May and is three hours and five minutes in length and consists of two sections: a 55 minute multiple-choice section and a 120- minute free-response section. The free-response section begins with a mandatory fifteen minute reading period. Students are advised to spend most of the fifteen minutes analyzing the documents and planning their answer to the document based essay question (DBQ) in Part. A Suggested writing time for the DBQ is 45 minutes. Parts B and C each include two standard essay questions that, with the DBQ cover the period from the first European explorations of the Americans to the present. Students are required to answer one essay question in each part in a total of 70 minutes. Suggested time to be spent on each of the essay questions they choose to answer in Parts B and C is 5 minutes of planning and 30 minutes of writing. Both the multiple choice and the free response sections cover the period from the first European explorations of the Americas to the present, although the majority of questions are on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the multiple choice section, approximately 20% of the questions deal with the period through 1789, 45% with the period 1790-1914, and 35% with the period 1915-present. Whereas the multiple choice section may include a few questions on the period since 1980, neither the DBQ nor any of the four essay questions in parts b and C will deal exclusively with this period. In the multiple choice section, political institutions, and behavior and public policy account for approximately 35%, social change and cultural and intellectual developments for approximately 40%. The remaining questions are divided between the areas of diplomacy and international relations, approximately 15%; economic developments, approximately 10%. The questions in the multiple choice section are designed to test students' factual knowledge, breadth of preparation and knowledge based analytical skills. Essay questions are designed, additionally, to make it possible for students from widely differing course to demonstrate their mastery of historical interpretation and their ability to express their views and knowledge in writing. Scores earned on the multiple choice and free response sections each account for one-half of the student's examination grade. Within the free response sections, the DBQ counts for 45 %; the two standard essays count for 55%. The 2009 AP US History exam is scheduled for May 8. We will begin a review in mid-April regardless of whether students are taking the exam or not. The cost of the exam is \$85 and it will be determined at a later date if the school will pay a portion of the cost depending on our school finances, but if you want to take the exam and the money is a problem, we will work something out.

Finals Exams

The students will receive exemptions as per school policy. However, the final semester exam may be exempted provided the student has taken the AP exam and meets attendance and discipline requirements for exemptions.

Tutorials

I will be in my room most mornings at 7:30 for any students who has questions about any of the assignments. Three days before each exam I will offer a 7:30 study session for the coming exam and beginning three weeks before the AP exam we will review every day during class. Also, I am at school most afternoons until after 4. In addition, you may contact me on my school email adadams@howeisd.net whenever you need to. You may also contact me by cell phone 903-821-0830 if necessary.

Good luck and let's have a great year! If you have any questions or comments, feel free to talk to me before or after class, and before or after school. I'll be here for you!!!!

