

American History
2009-2010 Mr. Toney

Course Description

American History is the study of significant national events that have shaped the United States. This course will emphasize the impact of historical events on contemporary America. All aspects of the social studies (history, geography, political science, economics, psychology, and sociology) will be incorporated to better understand why and how today's American citizens live the way they do. This course is internally and externally aligned with vigorous state standards. Because of the nature of these standards, and in accordance with the district's curriculum, this course may be somewhat different than your previous history course. This class emphasizes critical thinking and writing. Students will be expected to construct written responses in the form of paragraph and multi-paragraph answers. Students will also be expected to research topics and deliver oral presentations. I welcome each of you to class and look forward to working with you!!!!

Essential Supplies

1. Pen/Pencil: a writing utensil is required **EVERYDAY**. ALL assignments are required to be in **pencil, typed, or BLACK or BLUE** ink
2. Notebook: a notebook used exclusively for assignments and notes
3. "Question of the Day" notebook: a notebook used exclusively for the "Question of Day"
4. Textbook: *American Odyssey*
5. Student planner: used for keeping track of assignments, due dates, projects, tests, etc.

Grading Procedure

The goal of this grading procedure is to reduce the number and percent of students who fail the course and are thereby not ready for work at the next level.

Student grades will be based on a "standards-based" educational model. This is defined as creating an atmosphere of high expectations as meeting grade-level standards or above and requiring students to meet (or exceed) those standards.

Grades will be determined by each student's demonstration of mastering the course material.

I will not assign a grade below a "C"; students are required to redo/revise work to get it at least to the "basic" or "C" level. Students will not receive a "zero" in lieu of a grade when work is not turned in; there is no option not to turn in work.

Students will receive an "I" on any assignment not turned in, and ONE or more "I"s will result in an "I" grade for any report period.

If the student simply never makes up the assignments after the semester then the “I” turns into a grade of “F” (just as it would in a college course or on the job).

Students can complete work, even if it is late (as defined as past the assigned due date) but they cannot receive an “A” on any assignment that is late or turned in incomplete, and students NEVER receive an “F” if the assignment is completed within the quarter.

This course is tiered in the sense that there is a grade differential between formative and summative assessments.

Formative assessments (quizzes, homework, and class work) will be afforded more frequently to students.

Summative assessments, as they measure the sum of a learning experience, carry more weight than other, more minor or formative evaluations.

The course will therefore use the following standard:

Formative Assessments – 10%

Summative Assessments – 70% (35% for exams, 35% for projects)

Finals (Quarter/Semester Exams) – 20%

- All summative assessments will include a scoring guide/rubric that students will receive when the assessment is given. Students will have the benefit of knowing exactly what the requirements/standards are before beginning any summative assessment.
- Students will have the option to retake exams to raise test scores to a “C” by coming in during extra help times (P.A.S.S.).

Educational Philosophy of Course

I believe each student can succeed in this or any other course. The Social Studies is a dynamic and interesting subject. It, more than any other discipline, is about you and I. This course will include a variety of teaching styles. Students will work in groups, listen to lectures, generate their own notes, discuss ideas, create graphic organizers, speak in front of the class, utilize the internet, write constructed responses, read at least four books and complete Reading Workshop responses, write a Goal Statement, and read an extensive amount of primary and secondary source material. I work very hard at making the material interesting and engaging for each student.

Course Syllabus and Quarterly Objectives

The following topics are a tentative schedule of areas of study we will be discussing during the course of the year.

1st Quarter

- A. Critical Thinking and Writing Skills
- B. Reconstruction and its Effects on American Society
- C. The American Western Frontier (and the changes in the American Social Fabric)
- D. The Gilded Age Presidents

2nd Quarter

- E. The Gilded Age and its Economic Impact on American Society
- F. The Progressive Era and How it Changed America
- G. World War One (and how war affects social issues)
- H. The Roaring Twenties (and the creation of a mass consumer society)

3rd Quarter

- I. The Great Depression (and analyzing the basis of economic principles)
- J. World War Two
- K. The Cold War (and how media affects social opinion)

4th Quarter

- L. 1960s Society and the Struggle for Equal Rights
- M. The Greed Decade – 1980s
- N. Economic Prosperity and the 1990s
- O. Today's Society and the Modern American Presidency

** The instructor reserves the privilege to amend the course direction at any time to accommodate student learning. **

Major Course Goals

Students will successfully:

- Utilize prediction as an effective reading strategy
- Assess given historical problems and use comprehensive analysis to determine effective resolutions
- Evaluate the accuracy of information and reliability of sources
- Recognize and practice academic honesty and integrity in academic work
- Analyze the evolution of American democracy, its ideas, institutions, and political process
- Describe the purposes and structure of laws and government

Major Course Projects

This course will emphasize writing, research, and the delivery of information.

Students will be required to write down and answer a “Question of the Day” each class period at the beginning of the hour. These “Question of the Day” entries will be included in assessing the student’s quarter grade.

Each student will be required to read and create a literature response each quarter. This book review will be included in the student’s quarter grade.

Each unit of study will include a research project. This project will take various forms. Students will write research papers (2- 7 pages), generate graphic organizers, construct artifacts, deliver oral presentations, or work together in groups.

Assignments will be very specific as to how students should respond to each question. Most questions require paragraph responses utilizing complete sentences and correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Extra Help

My conference period is 5th hour. I usually arrive at school around 7:00 a.m. Please schedule either of these times to meet with me. I can be reached at jtoney@centralr3.org. E-mail is the easiest way for parents/guardians to reach me. I can also be reached at 431-2616, extension 4155. Please leave a message and I will return your call as soon as possible.

Required/Recommended Reading List

Students are required to read one book per quarter for a book review. The list of books available for class can be accessed through the Central High School webpage. Click on Learning Resource Center, then Core Class Reading for a list of books for Social Studies.