

## APUSH

### 2024-2025 TENTATIVE COURSE SYLLABUS

**Course Description:** This course is designed to provide a college-level experience, as well as preparation for the Advanced Placement Examination in May of 2025. An emphasis is placed on interpreting documents, mastering a significant body of factual information, and writing analytical essays.

The Advanced Placement U.S. History course is very intense; it is taught at level commensurate with that of a first-year college course. The reading, writing, and thinking required can be quite daunting, especially for high school sophomores. **Create a schedule *now* and stick with it.** (To help you in this, I have placed the reading and tests schedule on the calendar portion of the class webpage.) Do not allow yourself to fall behind. I have little sympathy for those students who choose not to complete the work that is required. This course fulfills the United States history graduation requirement, but is not specifically required for graduation. Therefore, the requirements of the course will not change to suit the abilities of the students. Advanced Placement courses are demanding and require daily work. Students planning to earn a score of 3 or better on the national exam, or a “B” or better in the course, will spend a **MINIMUM** of **SEVEN** hours per week studying. Begin planning and preparing now to be successful in this class and take the A.P. exam in May.

Finally, remember that history is not a list of names, dates, and facts, but an interpretation of those facts, and, as such, is always biased by the perspective of the presenter, whether because of race, class, gender, ethnicity, political affiliation or other considerations. Consequently, in history there aren’t “right or wrong” answers; there are well reasoned, well supported and well-articulated answers, as well as poorly reasoned, poorly supported, and poorly articulated answers. So, question everything in order to determine what you believe and why you believe it.

**TEXTBOOK:** You will be responsible for weekly readings from the following text. Due dates are on the accompanying pacing guide, your google calendar, and on the class website.

*THE AMERICAN PAGEANT: A History of the Republic*  
David M. Kennedy and Lizabeth Cohen  
17<sup>th</sup> ed., Houghton-Mifflin, 2020

**Document Readings:** Primary and secondary sources will be provided for additional readings. Some of these will be individually copied for your use at home.

**Online Progress Checks:** Additionally, students will be expected to complete multiple choice, short answer, DBQ and LEQ practice questions for each unit on the AP Classroom website.

**Required Summer Readings:** Students are expected to have read and taken notes on the first six chapters in *The American Pageant* by the first day of class. **Notes must be hand written, by the student.** I will begin the course with the assumption that you have read this material, and you will be responsible for demonstrating your understanding of it starting on day one.

## Course Guidelines:

1. All school policies will be enforced. Please review the Student Handbook.
2. You are expected to take hand written notes in class, as well as on assigned readings, and keep track of all materials received in this class. Do not throw anything away. You will need all your materials (old tests, assignments, handouts, etc.) to review at the end of the year. **Bringing your reading notes to class and using them as a reference/outline for lectures is expected.** I recommend using sticky notes or a side by side note taking strategy with your reading and lecture notes.
3. Homework will consist of weekly reading and/or writing assignments, regular reading and note-taking from *The American Pageant*, and daily reviewing of class notes, as well as other projects and presentations. All written work completed outside class will be **typed or written in blue or black ink**. This is not my rule, it is the College Board's. There will be very few homework grades. The good news is that you can plan your schedule around long term or regularly scheduled assignments. The bad news is that if you slack off for a week, it will be extremely difficult to catch up... so don't slack off.
4. All assignments are due no later than 3:30 pm on the assigned date. Assignments (including reading notes) submitted late, electronically or on paper, will receive a maximum grade of 50%. All homework dates are on the [class webpage](#).
5. I use the following semester long percentage system for grading:
  - Assignments -30%**
  - Weekly Reading Notes -20%**
  - Open Notes Quizzes -10%**
  - Unit Tests-30%**
  - Semester Exam-10%**
6. In the past, students have tried to cope with the increased workload of APUSH by engaging in cooperative work. This could be study groups, note sharing, and using social networking sites or blogs to communicate, among other things. In general, this is acceptable, even encouraged. **HOWEVER**, keep these few very important things in mind:
  - The best notes you can have are ones you take for yourself. Research has consistently shown that the act of note taking, by hand, increases the likelihood of retaining information, even if the notes are not reviewed. (This is not meant to be construed as an endorsement of not reviewing one's notes!)
  - **The only resources students are allowed to use on reading quizzes are their own handwritten notes. If you take notes thoroughly and with intention, and regularly bring them to class, you will be very successful on reading quizzes.**
  - Each week I will check your notes and ascribe a grade for quality and thoroughness.
  - Any work turned in for credit needs to be done individually, unless explicitly stated by the instructor. Plagiarism or other cheating will result in a failing grade.
7. A significant portion of a student's success on the national exam is determined by two short answer questions (SAQ) and two essay questions, consisting of one document-based question (DBQ), and one long essay question (LEQ). These questions require students to

recall information on a wide range of historical events, analyze both primary source evidence as well as historical interpretations, and present their analysis in a formal written essay. Consequently, we will frequently practice analysis and writing skills, both in class and outside of class. I will tell you now that I am aware that this is not English class, so that you don't have to bring it up later.

8. Every other week during first semester, and weekly in second semester, I will be holding extra sessions during Academic Flex Time. These sessions will be dedicated to exam practice and content review. Students are not required, but are strongly encouraged, to attend as many of these sessions as possible. To that end, I will pull all APUSH students for these sessions, but will not “teacher request” you. That means you will be able to, if you so choose, put yourself into another ET. (There will be cookies...)
9. It is your responsibility to find out about any assignments missed during absences. I will not remind you. All assignments, projects, readings etc. will be posted on the class website. You are responsible for checking the class website daily.
10. I am available before school beginning at 7:15 am, after school, and via e-mail if you need help. Additionally, most days my Enrichment Time is a quiet study hall, and you are welcome to sign up for any needed help during those periods. If you are struggling with anything, please come see me for assistance ASAP. Do not wait until a “situation” becomes a “crisis”.
11. The final post national exam weeks of the course will be devoted to a project or projects which will explore some of the more entertaining aspects of US history which are not on the national exam.

**Units will typically contain the following activities:**

**Lecture and discussion of topics:** Students will participate in discussions based on course topics.

**Reading quizzes:** You will have short quizzes on the assigned chapters of *The American Pageant* (TAP) intermittently. These quizzes typically will not be announced ahead of time. Students may use their **own handwritten reading notes** on the quizzes.

**Primary Source Analysis:** Students analyze primary sources using the H.A.P.P.Y. method.

- **H**istorical context: What events shaped/triggered the document? What other events were taking place at this time? Describe the political, intellectual, social and economic environment of the time.
- **A**udience: For whom, specifically, generally, and logically, was the document intended? What details in the document help you determine the audience?
- **P**urpose: Why was the document created? What elements of the document help you determine the purpose? How does the author's POV and/or the document's format shape the purpose?
- **P**oint of view: Who, specifically, generally, and logically, produced the document? What are the references, direct and inferred, to the author's POV (i.e. professional, racial, gender, social background) in the document? What details reflect the author's POV?
- **whY** is it important: Does the document reflect continuity, or change over time? What details tell you this? How does it impact/reflect contemporary and/or current opinions on the topic? What are the limitations (is it credible?) of the document?

**Thesis Paper Analysis:** Students are provided with opposing viewpoints expressed in either primary or secondary source documents and in writing must determine the following:

- The Thesis:
  - o What is the main argument of each author?
- The Evidence:
  - o Looking at the supporting evidence, analyze whether they are logically interpreted by the authors. Do they clearly support the thesis?
- Critical Analysis:
  - o What do the sources add to your own understanding of the topic?
  - o What points are strongly made and well documented?
- Final Analysis: (Your opinion is expressed here without the use of any form of the pronoun “I”.)
  - o Which of the sources makes the most convincing case and why?
  - o For each source, complete the thesis, evidence, and critical analysis sections.

**History in the Making:** Students will compare how the issues they are studying were viewed in the past. They will then assess the extent to which earlier interpretations differ from that presented today.

**SAQ/DBQ/LEQ Deconstruction:** Students will begin by reading and deconstructing DBQs and LEQs from previous College Board exams. As proficiency grows, they will progress to thesis development, paragraph construction, and full essay writing.

**Six Degrees of Separation:** Students will be provided with two events spanning decades, but related by their theme. They will select six events in chronological order that link the first event in the series with the last. Students will write the name of each selected event, and use their research and knowledge of the time period to create an argument to support the events selected. Students must emphasize both **cause and effect and/or demonstrate continuity or change** over time in their linking.

**Chronological Reasoning:** Students are provided with ten events, in no particular chronological order, which they will then place in order, naming the decade in which each occurred. Students will complete the exercise by providing the following:

1. Identify the period in which these occur;
2. Identify continuity or change over time exemplified by the selections; and
3. Identify the theme(s) under which these issues and developments might be categorized.

**Unit test:** A test will be given at the end of each unit. The test will contain some or all of three components: analytical multiple-choice questions (MC), analytical short answer questions (SAQ), and either a free response essay (LEQ) or a document-based question (DBQ). Each component of the exam will emphasize the application of historical thinking skills to answer the question. Information from prior units is often a critical component of the response.

\*\*These activities are organized around AP U.S. History’s eight major themes—American & National Identity (NAT), Politics & Power (PCE), Work, Exchange and Technology (WXT), American & Regional Culture (ARC), Social Structures (SOC), Migration & Settlement (MIG), Geography and the Environment (GEO), America in the World (WOR) — and are designed to develop the student’s historical thinking skills.