

United States History: Inquiry
Course Expectations and Grading – 2009/2010
Watershed School
Instructor: Judith Masseur

US History Inquiry is a college preparatory course. This is a rigorous course designed to challenge students in the context of the study of US History and in historical research. The course is a full year course and students will earn one credit if they are successful in fulfilling the course expectations.

Course Objectives

1. Students will synthesize major events in US history, which will include establishing a basic understanding of the chronology of US history.
2. Students will foster a deeper understanding of themes and events by posing questions and analyzing historical information. Students will gain an understanding of the modern world using historical insight.
3. Students, using history as a backdrop, will gain a more comprehensive understanding of their lives as citizens of the United States.
4. Students will engage in academically rigorous activities, included, but not limited to: posing questions, forming hypotheses, critically analyzing primary and secondary sources, discussing and writing about content, designing and reading maps, and drawing conclusions about the impact of history on the modern world.

Course Expectations

1. Students are expected to be to class on time and to be well prepared to engage in discussions.
2. Assignments are to be handed in when due. Late assignments will be accepted, but will be assessed at a lower grade, to be determined by the extent of the assignment.
3. Students are expected to have a three ring binder for handouts and notes. It is imperative that students retain all materials and organize well. All handouts and notes will be dated.
4. Students are expected to actively engage in their learning. Each student will be expected to participate in class activities and discussions.
5. There should be a mutually respectful environment within the class. Students should feel comfortable taking risks. Any behavior that inhibits others from feeling comfortable will be addressed.
6. Please approach me with any issues you have. I can be reached by e-mail: j_masseur@yahoo.com or by phone: 763.3191. Please know that I am here for you to make this experience as rewarding as possible and I expect myself to be your most valuable resource in this class.

Save all work. Please do not ask for handouts, notes, assignments, outlines, etc. unless you are absent. Please ask a classmate for lecture notes if you have missed a class. If there are any problems please let me know as soon as possible.

Assessment

The two sections of this course (semester one and two) will be assessed separately, but will be combined for students to earn the full credit. Students will be assessed based on their performance on the following:

- Tests

Tests will be given at the end of each unit as determined by the syllabus. Tests will consist of essays, identifications (short answer) and map/graph analysis. They are comprehensive may cover materials from the readings that was not discussed in lectures.

- Expository Writing (Essays)

Essays and research papers will be assigned with each unit. Students should expect a major research paper in the second half of the year. Students will be expected to be familiar with and use the Chicago (Turabian) method of documentation for all essays/research papers.

- Maps

Maps are expected to be neat and well organized. They will serve both as a tool to understand geographical changes in the US throughout its history and to hone geographical skills. As with essay, maps will align with units.

- Homework

Students will be assigned homework on a regular basis. It is the students responsibility to see me if there needs to be clarification of the expectations on any given assignment.

- Précis

A précis is designed to refine your skills in short concise writing. You will receive instruction on how to write a précis, it will be based on readings either in the text or from primary sources.

- Class Participation

Class participation is defined by attendance, punctuality, engagement in discussion and class activities and overall commitment to high quality work. I will be sure to discuss any issues I see regarding class participation, but I am confident that this will not be necessary.

Texts*

Bailey, Thomas A. and David M. Kennedy. The American Spirit. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

Garraty, John A. and Mark C. Carnes. A Short History of the American Nation. Boston: Longman, 2001.

Marcus, Robert D., David Burner and Anthony Marcus. America Firsthand. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2010.

Meyers, Marvin, et al. Sources of the American Republic. Oakland, NJ: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1960.

Roark, James L., et al. The American Promise. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2007.

*** please note that this list, while comprehensive does not reflect the use of supplemental readings.**

