

U.S. History - Course Description

This required 11th grade course explores turning points and changes over time in American history, with a focus on the 20th century. While examining the social, political, economic, and technological developments that have shaped the modern United States, students will develop crucial intellectual, reasoning, reflection, and research skills. (The state-designed framework can be viewed [here](#).)

Content, Procedures, and Pacing

Class will begin with a 3-5 minute warm-up activity or quiz that students complete individually, during which time attendance will be taken. This will be followed by a whole-group meeting for sharing, discussion, and instruction. Typically, there will be some type of activity and time for independent or small-group work to do in-class assignments or to work on the weekly assignment.

When we do use a textbook, which will not be often, we will use History Alive! Pursuing American Ideals, Teachers Curriculum Institute (TCI). Hardcopies of the text will be available to use in class; an electronic version (.pdf) will be available on the course website for use outside of class. Students who do not have Internet access at home can check out a textbook when needed. The textbook will be supplemented with a considerable amount of additional material, including activities, discussions, readings from other sources, current event articles, videos, and on occasion, lectures.

Each week there will be one assignment designated (and clearly identified on Google Classroom) as the Weekly Assignment. The Weekly Assignments will be the only assignments graded and entered individually in Powerschool. Students will have many other assignments each week, but those will be part of their participation grade. Having only one graded assignment per week allows for more in-depth feedback on student work. Assignments will be graded closely based on how well they reflect understanding of content and demonstrate critical thinking. Keep in mind that with only one graded assignment a week, each assignment is worth a significant amount of the total grade.

Each semester there will be two assessments: a mid-term (at the end of the quarter); and a final (at the end of the semester). These will be document-based essay questions (DBQ's), which assess historical thinking skills, such as analysis and interpretation, in addition to factual knowledge. Weekly assignments and in-class activities/assignments will build the content knowledge and the document analysis and interpretation skills needed to do well on these assessments.

Grading

35% - Weekly Assignments (one per week—see description above)

35% - Participation (attendance and in-class assignments)

5% - Quizzes

25% - Assessments (mid-term and final)

Attendance

As noted above, doing well on the weekly assignments is important to doing well in the class; and attending class is important to doing well on the assignments. Most of the activities we do during class will be related to or in support of the assignments, which in turn build the knowledge and skills necessary for doing well on the assessments. To reinforce the importance of engaged attendance, participation credit will be given based on attendance and completion of in-class work. If students have an excused absence, they will need to complete all assignments and activities posted on Classroom for that day in order to receive participation credit. If they have an unexcused absence, they will receive a zero for that day's participation grade. Similarly, students can make-up quizzes they miss if the absence is excused, but not if it is unexcused.