**United States History**

2014-2015

**Teacher: Dustin Kuluris**

**Availability: Lunch and after school by appointment in room 10**

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**Course Webpage:** [**http://dkuluris.weebly.com**](http://dkuluris.weebly.com)

**Course Introduction:**

This United States History is a true survey course – that is we start at the beginning and get to the contemporary period by the end of the year. The strength of the course is that it is comprehensive; the weakness is that like all survey courses the content is a mile long and an inch deep. In addition to the history, the course places emphasis on skill building. Students will be asked to critically evaluate primary and secondary sources, cause and effect relationships, competing ideologies and alternative versions of the same historical event. Students will have ample opportunity to utilize maps, charts, graphs and other forms of data as we move through the content. History is a loaded topic fraught with complexities and controversy. This course will not shy away from those issues. Our main text is considered a social history – meaning that it emphasizes the roles and stories of the average working person as a more representative reflection of our nation’s story. Current event discussion and analysis will be a continuous component of our daily work in class.

**Course Webpage:** The course website will have a description of material covered in class, homework extra materials and all due dates. It is your responsibility to look at the page especially if absent.

**Late Policy:** This is a college prep course and the late policy reflects this. I realize that this course is demanding on your time, as is much of your schedule, however, I expect to receive your work in a timely fashion.

1. I will not accept late homework assignments. This includes reading guides and any other assignments that are not portfolio assignments, quizzes, or exams. I am generally an understanding person, however, my patience for excuses is limited.
2. If you are absent on the day that an assignment is due – the assignment is due the first day you are back at school even if your class doesn’t meet on that day. This includes quizzes and exams.
3. If you have an extended excused absence for health or family issues, we will come up with a reasonable and flexible schedule for you to complete your work.
4. You have one week after receiving a grade to make up any quizzes, exams, or portfolio assignments. If you receive a failing grade (69% or lower) on any of these assignments, you are expected to make it up.

**Extra Credit:** No extra credit will be given

**Absences:** If you miss class for any reason, it is YOUR responsibility to find out what you missed by contacting me or one of your classmates or using the website. No excuses. FALA’s official Attendance/Tardy Policy is listed at the end of the Syllabus.

**Phones:** NO!

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism will not be accepted and will be punished in accordance with the FALA student handbook.

**Retake Policy:** In order to promote student learning and mastery throughout each semester teachers will allow students to retake all major assessments except the final exams or final projects at the end of Semester 1 and Semester 2. Students can earn 100% for retakes on formal assessments. Students may retake all Formal assessments except for the summative final exam. Students have one week to retake the assignment after a grade is posted. Homework and in class work cannot be retaken and will not be accepted late.

**Participation:** Participation is expected from all students. Lack of participation will result in points lost in graded in class activities.

**Materials:**

Pen and notebook for notes

**Course Texts:**

Main Texts:

* Who Built America? Volume I. 3rd ed. Bedford St. Martin’s Press, 2008.
* Who Built America? Volume II.3rd ed*.* Bedford St. Martin’s Press, 2007.

Your homework assignments will primarily be from this text. We will be dealing with many other sources of information throughout the course, but mostly, these other readings will be presented during class time.

**Assessment Weights:**

* Homework/ Class Work (Informal)= 30%
  + Homework and class work are assigned to help students access essential historical context. Such assignments include reading guides and author bios. Timely participation with homework and class work is necessary for students to comprehend material covered each day.
* Projects & Portfolio (Formal)= 30%
  + Each student will have a portfolio for this course that will demonstrate their development over the course of the year in regards to skill development. All essays will count for your portfolio grade.
* End of Semester Summative Exam and Final Project (Formal)= 20%
  + A final exam will be given at the end of the semester. The exam assesses student mastery of skill and thematic objectives. A project will also be due at the end of the semester
* Quizzes (Formal) = 20%
  + *Quizzes* will correspond to the most present unit of study.

**Grading Points and Scale:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Numerical Average** | **Grade Point Value** |
| A+ | 99-100 | 4.0 |
| A | 93-98 | 4.0 |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.33 |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 |
| B- | 80-82 | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.33 |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.67 |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.33 |
| D | 63-66 | 1.00 |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.67 |
| F | Less than 60 | 0.0 |

**Key rationales for this course:**

* History matters. Studying historic perspectives of all people provides a strong foundation for understanding how and why the past and present are connected.
* No account of history is neutral or objective – this goes for secondary and primary sources alike. By recognizing that all history is selective and emphasizes some events and/or perspectives more than others, we learn that history calls upon us to engage in critical thinking. Furthermore, it causes us to consider more deeply the role of the historian, how their experiences influence their work, and the process that takes place in “telling history.”
* Ordinary people make history. Hearing the voices of ordinary people allows us to obtain a more complete understanding of how history developed and the role of ordinary people in its making. In essence, such a position allows a lens in which to see how history is relevant to each and everyone of us.

**Historical thinking skills to be employed and improved upon in this course:**

* Chronological Reasoning
  + Historical causation: The ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate the relationships among multiple historical causes and effects, distinguishing between those that are long-term and proximate, and among coincidence, causation, and correlation
  + Patterns of continuity and change over time: The ability to recognize, analyze, and evaluate the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of varying lengths
  + Periodization: The ability to describe, analyze, evaluate, and construct models that historians use to organize history into discrete periods
* Comparison and Contextualization
  + Comparison: The ability to describe, compare, and evaluate multiple historical developments within one society, one or more developments across or between different societies. It also involves the ability to identify, compare and evaluate multiple perspectives on a given historical experience
  + Contextualization: The ability to connect historical events and processes to specific circumstances of time and place and to broader regional, national, or global processes
* Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence
  + Historical argumentation: The ability to define and frame a question about the past and to address that question through the construction of an argument that contains a clear, comprehensible and analytical thesis, supported by relevant historical evidence
  + Appropriate use of relevant historical evidence: The ability to describe and evaluate evidence about the past from diverse sources and requires attention to the content, authorship, purpose, format, and audience of such sources
* Historical Interpretation and Synthesis
  + Interpretation: The ability to describe, analyze, evaluate, and construct diverse interpretations of the past, and being aware of how particular circumstances and contexts in which historians work also shape their interpretations
  + Synthesis: The ability to develop meaningful and persuasive new understandings of the past by drawing appropriately on ideas and methods from different fields of inquiry or disciplines and by creatively fusing disparate, relevant, and sometimes contradictory evidence.

**Major historical themes to be covered in this course:**

In order for students to make connections with the past and to understand the influence of the past to the present, seven historical themes or strands will be studied. These strands not only help develop an understanding of the ‘big picture’ as it unfolds over time, but will also will allow students to understand that the issues, questions, and forces that face the United States and its citizenry today are also the issues, questions, and forces in which Americans in the past of every generation have faced to one degree or another.

They are as follows:

* **Identity:** This theme emphasizes the formation of American identity, as well as group identities within the U.S. Students should be able to assess and explain how various identities, cultures, and values evolved in different contexts of U.S. history and how sub-identities have interacted with each other and with larger conceptions of American national identity.
* **Work, Exchange, and Technology:** This theme focuses on the development of American economies based on agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing. Students should examine ways that different economic and labor systems technological innovations, and government policies have shaped American society.
* **Peopling:** This theme highlights why and how various people who moved to, from, and within the U.S. adapted to their new social and physical environments. Students explore the ideas, beliefs, traditions, technologies, religions, and gender roles that migrants/ immigrants and annexed peoples brought with them.
* **Politics & Power:** This theme examines ongoing debates over the role of the state in society and its potential as an active agent for change. This includes mechanisms for creating, implementing, or limiting participation in the political process and the resulting social effects, as well as the changing relationships among the branches of the federal government and among national, state, and local governments.
* **America in the World:** This theme focuses on the global context in which the U.S. originated and developed, as well as the influence of the U.S. on world affairs. Students will examine actors competing for territory and resources, and investigate the international and domestic impact of American foreign policies and military actions.
* **Environment & Geography – Physical and Human:** This theme examines the role of environment, geography, and climate in both constraining and shaping human actions. Students will explore the efforts to interpret, preserve, manage, or exploit natural and man-made environments.
* **Ideas, Beliefs, and Culture:** This theme emphasizes the roles that ideas, beliefs, social mores, and creative expression have played in shaping the U.S. Students will analyze the interactions between beliefs and communities, economic values, and political movements, including attempts to change American society to align it with specific ideals.

**Course Structure:**

*1st semester* – Pre-Columbian Culture and European Arrival through 1877

Emphasis will be given to: The Colonial Experience and Establishment of the United States

Slavery

Western Expansion

The Civil War and Reconstruction

Industrialization

*2nd Semester* – 1877 – Present

Emphasis will be given to: Industrialization

The Progressive Era

World War I and II

The Great Depression

The Cold War

Expansion of Civil Rights

**Attendance/Tardy Policy:**

**Attendance and Performances:** Students must attend school on the day of and the day after major performances (i.e. theatre, dance, music, etc.). Students will not be allowed to perform if they do not attend school and this will impact their grade accordingly. Students who miss school after the day of a major performance will attend lunch detention to make up their missing work.

**Attendance and Illness/Medical Conditions:** Please keep your student home if they are sick. If they have a fever, do not send them back to school until they are fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medications) for at least 24 hours. If your child is unable to participate in classes for longer than one hour then we require parents to pick up their student so that they can recover at home. Students can return to school when they are able to participate in their classes.

**Tardiness:** Arriving after the beginning of each class period constitutes a tardy. Tardy students MUST sign in at the front office before going to their class. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment of the school. Any student tardy 3 times (unexcused) in one month (cumulative) will receive lunch detention. After a student reaches these limits each additional tardy will result in a lunch detention. Eight tardies (unexcused or excused) in any class will result in required attendance at the Student Success Program (after school) or lunch detention. Students will remain in one of these programs until their teachers confirm that all of their missing work is completed

**FALA Attendance and Tardy Policy**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Short-term consequences**  **(for each semester)** | **Long-term consequences**  **(for each semester)** |
| **FALA Excused Absences** | None | None |
| **Excused Absences** | No initial consequences | **5 absences** (excused or unexcused) in any class  = Student Success Program or lunch detention until missing work is completed |
| **Unexcused Absences** | Detention, in-school suspension | **10 absences** (excused or unexcused) in any class  = loss of credit |
| **FALA Excused Tardiness** | None | None |
| **Excused Tardiness** | No initial consequences | **8 tardies** (excused or unexcused) in any class each semester |
| **Unexcused Tardiness** | 3 cumulative tardies in a month  = lunch detention  Each additional tardy  = lunch detention | = Student Success Program or lunch detention until missing work is completed |