

American History
Course Profile: 2021-2022
Email Address: xxxxxxxx@oprfs.org

THE APPROACH:

Welcome to American History! This course will involve more than simply a memorization of history. The purpose of the class will be to develop a sense of where one stands in our current society and the power that the individual and the masses have in political, social, economic, and cultural change through a series of intellectual activities, debates, mock trials, challenging readings, and written arguments. This class will continuously relate the past to the present and potential future conflicts that will arise in our changing world.

Throughout this course, we will analyze documents, texts and narratives to further our quest of understanding how our history affects our present. This approach will rely on the class to investigate, research, and interpret the writings of our texts and historical documents. The text and the supplementary readings are strictly guides in your journey throughout American History. This class relies on your active engagement. We will have many discussions, simulations, and debates throughout the year. The more effort you put in, the more fun you will have!

THE TEXT:

Give Me Liberty: An American History 6th Edition

Please note that while there is a text assigned for the American History class, we will not rely solely upon it. Supplementary readings will be given often to help add richness and validity to the text.

EXPECTATIONS:

1. Choose to be positive.
2. Come prepared to be part of the discussion and learn something new.
3. **Be respectful** of one another and our individual experiences.
4. Communicate your needs and advocate for yourself.
5. Have high expectations for yourself and the work you complete.

The class will focus upon your ability to analyze and extract important evidence from the text and the documents. Writing, discussion, and presentations will play a major role in the class. Please be respectful of others' interpretations of the text and events during these discussions.

Read all assignments before class. Any homework assignment, essay, or project will be due on the date stated on the weekly schedule, unless modified due to student need. The student has until the end of the unit to turn in any missing work for that unit.

ACADEMIC HONESTY & BEHAVIOR:

The *Oak Park-River Forest High School Code of Conduct* will be followed to ensure a quality-learning environment. Any students caught cheating on an exam, copying homework, or plagiarizing a paper will have an immediate student-teacher conference scheduled along with the potential of a grade reduction, a zero on the assignment, and/or a parent or guardian-teacher conference. A second offense will result in an automatic zero on the assignment and a conference with a parent or guardian and academic dean.

CELL PHONE POLICY:

Cell phones are NOT permitted in the classroom during instructional time except when given permission to use for instructional purposes. Cell phones are NOT permitted during formal assessments. A student may receive a zero for the assessment if caught using a cell phone or electronic device without permission. **At the beginning of each class period, students will put their phones in the "phone home" at the front of the room where it will stay for the duration of the period.**

GRADING:

Your grade will be determined through my evaluation of your evidence of learning. The opportunity for you to showcase your learning and growth will be afforded and you will have considerable freedom in determining your final grade. Your work this semester will fall into four categories, *Summative* (80% of total) and *Formative* (20% of total). This work grade will be 90% of your final semester grade with the final culminating project contributing the remaining 10%. Completion of the final is required. Failure to do so will result in a semester letter grade reduction.

Assignments will be posted in Google Classroom with instructions on how those assignments are to be submitted. *Assignments are only acceptable in the indicated format, unless previously discussed alternatives have been established.*

Summative: (Including but not limited to: formal writing, formal debates, projects)- 80%

It is important, in order to receive full credit for the course, that students complete ALL assessments for each quarter and semester throughout the year. Assessments will come in many forms including discussions, presentations, tests, and projects. Some work will be completed individually and some in small groups. All students will be afforded the privilege to improve her/his score in some cases this will require remediation or alternative products. Any score that indicates a student did not meet expectations will have the opportunity for revision.

Summative Revision Policy:

- Students may complete revisions if he/she receives a C or lower on a summative assessment. Revisions are optional and must be initiated by the student. If a student chooses to revise an assessment, that student must inform Mr. Stephen. The student will have one week to complete the revision.

Formative: (Including but not limited to: homework, in-class activities, entrance/exit slips)- 20%

It is important that all coursework be completed, as it serves an important purpose in preparing students for assessments and activities in class. Homework assignments will **sometimes** be collected, given feedback, and returned. **Homework is practice** and is assessed based on how well it serves as evidence of your learning.

Writing: (Including but not limited to: major papers and the research paper)- Included in the *Summative* category

Writing is an important part of this course and there is emphasis placed on developing argumentative thought through the written word. **Any essay or major written assignments may be revised for a new grade.** These revisions are not simply grammatical changes; however, each student must analyze his/her work and provide a more substantial and thorough argumentative piece. If you choose to revise your written assignment, please note the following:

- You **MUST** schedule a time to meet with me outside of class to discuss your work (you have a week to meet with me from when you get your original grade). This is important so we can collaborate to make your writing stronger. After we meet you will have one week to complete the revision.

Important information regarding grading practices in this course:

- **Individual assessments and coursework will reflect a letter grade.**
- The following apply to assessments:
 - **A** – Exceptional: Demonstrates work that shows critical and in-depth understanding of the material. You have demonstrated mastery of the standard(s) being assessed in the work you have completed. This is not a grade received for simply following instructions. Instructions are the minimum expectations for the assignment. Work that receives this grade, exceeds those minimum expectations.

- **B** – Exceeds expectations: Indicates work that has gone beyond the minimum expectations. You have shown that you understand the material at a level beyond the minimum expectation, but not with the depth that is demonstrated in achieving an A. You have followed instructions and demonstrated an acceptable level of understanding. There is room for some improvement.
- **C** – Meets expectations: You have followed instructions and demonstrated an acceptable level of understanding. There is room for some improvement, because you have not demonstrated that you understand the material and how it connects to other topics and/or how to apply various concepts within the assessed topic to synthesize a product.
- **D** - Your work does not meet the minimum expectations of the assignment and demonstrates that you still need some more time to develop your understanding of the standard in question. You have the option to redo/correct the work and re-submit it to improve your score.
- **F** – Developing: You are still developing a basic understanding of the standard being assessed. Your work must be redone/corrected and resubmitted to demonstrate that you have taken action to build your understanding of the course content.
- **INC** – Incomplete: The work you submitted is incomplete or illegible. In its current form it cannot be used to assess your level of understanding.
- **Missing**: The work has not been submitted whether due to an illness or some other outside factor and still needs to be submitted.
- **Zero** - A zero in Skyward is recoverable, meaning that if a zero is entered for an assignment because it is missing, once the assignment is submitted and graded the zero will change to the grade given.
- Communication is essential to your success in this course. We all have lives outside of school and I understand that sometimes the American History party will not be your first priority. If you communicate clearly and in advance that you are going to have difficulty meeting a deadline we will work together to achieve a positive outcome that will not have an impact on your grade. If communication is missing, comes after-the-fact, or is a consistent problem, your parents and counselor will be notified.
- Your quarter/semester grade will be determined by examining your overall growth and learning in the course. *Behavioral issues will not impact your grade on assessments, but will be communicated to those concerned through other means.*
- **Late work for the quarter will be accepted through the end of the unit of study. After that time, no late work for that unit will be accepted.**
 - **If late work is submitted late through Google Classroom, you MUST tell me in person that the assignment has been turned in. Google does not always let me know that an assignment has been submitted, so please tell me directly.**

Grading Scale:

A: 100-80%

B: 79-60%

C: 59-40%

D: 39-20%

F: 19%-0

Because Skyward mandates that I enter a number into the gradebook, all assessments will be based on a 4-point scale (e.g., 4 = A, 3 = B, etc.). Therefore, in Skyward no grade will be higher than a 4. I recommend looking at the letter grade rather than the number.

Semester grade percentages:

90% = Quarter 1 and Quarter 2

10% = Final Examination/Project

My wish is that students will be more concerned with the knowledge they acquire and the experience that the course offers rather than solely a grade.

MY SCHEDULE:

My room number is xxxx during school hours. My free periods during the school day are 4th (Lunch), 7th (Study Hall) and 8th (Planning period in room xxxx).

If there is ever a time when you would like to discuss an aspect of the course, receive help on the readings, essays, debates or would like to discuss a concern with your grade, set an appointment with me and we will sit down and resolve the issue together. Before school, I will attempt to be here at 7:45 a.m. every morning. After school, however, is the best time to meet. I am usually here until 4:45 p.m. daily. Feel free to email me at any time with a general comment, question or concern. Please note: depending on when the email is sent to me, I might not be able to reply immediately.

Also, please feel free to stop in and talk about concerns that do not involve American History, whenever the need arises. Remember, my door is always open. I look forward to a fantastic year of American History!