

2012-13 ADVANCED PLACEMENT U.S. HISTORY

**MR. CORNELIUS
ROOM 46**

Course Description

The AP U.S. History course is designed to provide students with the analytic skills and factual knowledge necessary to deal critically with the problems and materials in U.S. history. The program prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by full-year introductory college courses. Students should learn to access historical materials, their relevance to a given interpretive problem, reliability, and importance, and to weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. This course will develop these skills necessary to arrive at conclusions on the basis of an informed judgment and to present reasons and evidence clearly and persuasively in essay format.

Materials

1. *The American Pageant* (13th edition) by Kennedy, Cohen, and Bailey
2. *United States History: Preparing For The Advanced Placement Examination* by Newman and Schmalbach
3. Three-ring binder(s) to keep notes, handouts, assignments, etc. The binder should be brought to class daily.
4. Pens, paper, pencils

Course Objective

The objective of this course is to prepare students for the following:

1. The Advanced Placement Exam in United States History
2. A college-level curriculum in U.S. History
3. Promoting research and writing skills necessary for a college freshman.

The AP Exam

The United States History exam will be administered on Friday, May 11 at FHS. The cost of the test will be \$87. There are circumstances in which the price of the test can be reduced for students with financial needs. While the test is not mandatory for all students, it is conducive for those who wish to earn an "A" grade for the 6th marking period to take the exam. Students who score a 3, 4, or 5 on the test may receive college credit for one or more United States History courses at the college they attend.

Student Commitment

THIS IS A DEMANDING COURSE. The amount of reading and writing required of AP students is well above that of students taking regular courses. Students should expect at least one hour of preparation time outside of class each day. In order to succeed, students will have to manage their time in order to avoid becoming overwhelmed.

Student Work

Students will be expected to complete all assignments including: vocabulary and weekly multiple choice quizzes, online quizzes, reading notes, unit exams, essay outlines, and an end of the year project and presentation.

Grading

Grades will be compiled using the following weights:

Exams	40%
Quizzes	30%
Homework	30%

Exams will consist of AP-level multiple choice questions and essays. In the first semester exams will focus on writing free response questions (FRQ). During the second semester the exams will consist of both FRQs and Document-Based Questions (DBQs).

Quizzes will take many forms. Chapter reading quizzes will be given in order to assure that students have completed the reading from the night before. Geography and important people quizzes will be scheduled as needed.

Homework will include weekly essay outlines, short essays, and take-home Document Based Questions.

Grades can be monitored at home using the Skyward program. Please allow ample time for scores to be posted. Parents and students may request a grade report at anytime.

Makeup Work

As always, it is the student's responsibility to pick up any work they may have missed during an absence. There will not be any "makeup" reading quizzes. Makeup alternative exams will be given the day the student returns to class after an excused absence outside of normal class time.

Summer Reading Work

In order to complete the required curriculum in time to adequately review for the AP exam in May students will be required to complete summer reading assignments that will be due throughout the summer. Failure to complete the required reading and assignments will result in removal from the class.

Teacher Contact

If you would like to communicate with me please email at mcorneli@frankenmuth.k12.mi.us and I will respond as soon as I can.

Final Thoughts (Mostly borrowed from Mr. Eric Howe in Colorado)

By choosing to participate in an AP US History course a student instantly becomes a member of what could be called the "two percent club." Only a small percent of all high school students (395,187) last year in the United States took the AP US History examination, and for joining this small group of scholars, a student is to be commended. It is important to note, however, that the AP experience is designed to be a college-level, challenging course and that there are no guarantees with regard to grades. A student will not receive an A or a B in this course simply because he or she decided to take "the hardest history course." Taking AP US History simply to "bump up one's GPA" will backfire. A student must be dedicated to reading, note-taking, and writing throughout the course of the school year in order to achieve at an A or B level.

Focus on the course material, not the grade. Keep in mind, also, that the student who receives high grades in this course will not necessarily receive the top score on the AP exam, though the odds are good that they will pass. A good performance throughout the school year will translate into a sense of confidence that one has the skills necessary to conquer a rigorous one-day examination for which there is no adequate way to cram, but that doesn't guarantee that a student will receive a qualifying score on this one-time "mother of all tests." The only guarantee that comes with this course is that it will be the most rigorous American history course that students will have the opportunity to take at this school.

Reading is a necessity in the study of history. Reading should be done the day assigned to complement the activities in class. Do not expect to gain a firm foundation by reading the material the night before the test. One cannot rush through readings at the last minute and expect to grasp the more subtle aspects of the authors' arguments, and that is where some of the most important material is likely to reside. Therefore, have the readings from the text done by the date assigned. I urge you to take notes as you read. Your textbook is a well written secondary source that will help "fill in the gaps" of content that aren't covered during class time.

Ultimately, each student must put forth a college-level effort to earn high grades in this class. Nothing will be given to a student simply because of his/her enrollment in an AP-level course. Perhaps the greatest benefit in taking this course is that, being a high school student, one will still receive training and practice in the skills required for future academic success: time management and communication, both written and oral. You will also have available individualized instruction and assistance that one might need to succeed at such a demanding level, something most colleges can't offer. My goal is to provide each student with the best American history education that one could hope for, and in the process, give each student the confidence that will be needed to perform well on the AP Examination.