JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL
COURSE SYLLABUS
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

GEOGRAPHY (SGS110) CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL ISSUES (SGS115)

These courses meet the intent and philosophy of the History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools.

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Course Description:
Geography is a one-semester social science course designed for 9th grade students. As an interdisciplinary introduction to social science, the course provides the foundation for the later study of World and United States History, Economics, and United States Government. The course recognizes that the contemporary reality of the 21st century is the increasing influence of other nations on daily life. Geography uses the five themes of social science as a springboard to understanding the characteristics of the world’s major cultures, countries, and economies. The domains of place-name geography, human movement, environmental issues and landform study are addressed in this course.

This course also blends in Contemporary Global Issues with every unit of study. As an in-depth look at current world problems and issues, the course includes concepts from the study of World and American History, Economics, and Government. The course recognizes that the contemporary reality of the 21st century is the increasing influence of other nations on daily life. The Contemporary Global Issues course uses seven strands as a springboard to understanding the characteristics of the world’s major cultures, countries, and issues. The domains of place-name geography, human movement, environmental issues, conflict and cooperation, civic participation, and technology and science are addressed in this course. Both courses satisfy the A section of the A-G graduation requirements.

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TEXTBOOKS AND/OR RECOMMENDED OR REQUIRED READINGS

Primary Text:  *World Geography* (McDougal Littell) c. 2003, Arreola, Daniel; Smith-Deal, Marci; Petersen, James F.; and Sanders, Rickie.

Suggested: *The Geography Tutor Series* – A detailed comprehensive course on geographic concepts often misunderstood by students on 13 different tapes.

Course Objectives

In addition to the geographic skills and concepts described in the above course description, students in Geography will learn the following communication, language, and research skills throughout the year:

- Writing in defense of an argument using the Jane Schaffer Chunk Paragraph Model
- Thesis statement development
- Supporting a thesis with evidence
- Utilizing the library and internet for research
- Evaluate information and make judgments between conflicting interpretations
- Citing Sources using MLA Format
- Public Speaking

These critical thinking skills will be built upon each year in subsequent social sciences courses and coincide with the Common Core Standards. Our goal is to have each student capable of writing a college level research paper by the time they graduate.

Academic Requirements

- **Class Participation** -- is important! Each of you will be expected to take part in discussions on your own and/or when called upon.
- **Homework** – expect it! Both short-term assignments and long-term projects and research will require your attention at home most afternoons or evenings. Work should be completed prior to the start of class on its given due date. *Late work is unacceptable.*
- **Writing for Understanding** – writing assignments, which ask you to synthesize information from more than one source, write persuasively in defense of a perspective, or respond to and analyze contemporary and historic events, will be assigned regularly.
- **Quizzes** – The countries within each region of study will be broken down into smaller sections and memorized. **Tests** -- will be announced one week in advance so that you will have a chance to prepare.
- **Time Management** is an essential skill for academic success. Students are required to record daily agendas and homework assignments in their planner.
- **Group Work** -- earns both a group and individual grades. Groups will be assigned
by the teacher and will change frequently. Your cooperative skills and contributions to group work will also impact your participation grade.

- **Attendance** is vital. Should you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you've missed by seeing me or copying a classmate’s planner. You have the same number of days to turn in work as the number of days for which you had excused absences. *Many activities and experiences cannot be recreated for an individual who misses class. Poor attendance will negatively affect your grade.*

- **Lying, cheating, plagiarism** or any form of dishonesty will not be tolerated.

**Grading Policy**

Grades will be based on the total points earned in the following grade categories and then weighted according to the following percentages.

- Exams & Quizzes: 40%
- Classwork & Homework: 30%
- Research Papers/Projects: 20%
- Participation: 10%

*Your points in all four categories will be weighted to determine your overall grade. Keep all papers pertaining to your grade.* It is your responsibility to prove any discrepancies with the grade sheet. Reports detailing your individual progress will be provided regularly. *Parents you can monitor your student’s progress through Zangle. Contact the front office for a password and instructions.*

- 90-100% = A
- 80-89% = B
- 70-79% = C
- 60-69% = D
- 0-59% = F

**Supplies**

- 8.5 x 11 inch line paper
- Pencils
- Binder
- Colored pencils or markers
- Recommended: Glue sticks and scissors
- Email Account
Class Rules/Behavior Expectations

- Be on time, prepared to learn and work. This includes being in compliance with our school’s dress code. You may not enter my classroom wearing a non-JFK ball cap, headphones, talking on a phone, texting on a phone, or listening to music without headphones.
- Everyone will be treated with respect.
- No one will be allowed to disrupt the learning process of anyone else.
- No food, beverages, or gum are allowed at anytime.
- Attendance is critical. Any student with an unexcused absence won’t be allowed to make up missed assignments. Any student with 3 unexcused absences in a semester will be required to attend a parent/teacher conference.
- You may not make up assignments if you have been suspended from school.
- Students are allowed to have cell phones in their possession but they are not allowed out in class. If I don’t see it or hear it, there will be no issues. If I see it or hear it, it will be confiscated and a parent/guardian will have to pick it up in the office. Refusal to hand over a cell phone when asked will result in a referral to the discipline office.
- Bathroom passes will be given if Mr. Messineo feels it is an appropriate time unless policy is being abused.
- Let the positive vibes flow. Negativity will not be allowed.

Keep this syllabus in your binder.

I have read and understand what is expected of me in World Geography.

Student name (please print): ________________________________________________
Student signature: ___________________________________________ date: _________

I have read and understand what is expected of my student in World Geography.

Parent/Guardian name (please print): ________________________________
Parent/Guardian signature: ___________________________________________
daytime phone: ___________________ evening phone: ________________