WORLD GEOGRAPHY/CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL ISSUES

A College Board Approved Geography/Contemporary Global Issues class
2014-2015

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Geography is destiny.
-Abram Verghese

War is God’s way of teaching Americans geography.
-Ambrose Bierce

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as a survey of world geography and contemporary global issues. Anyone can pass this class provided they participate meaningfully, write critically and analytically, and make sure they complete all assignments with a passing grade or higher. Writing is a large part of this course, as it develops and maintains the essential skills of evaluation and critical thinking while communicating said skills clearly. Students will be expected to work at a high school tenth-grade level by the end of the semester. This course is required for graduation.

PEDAGOGY

There will be a mix of cooperative learning opportunities, direct lectures, document analysis, paper-writing, debates, position papers, and simulations. This is to ensure that students of all learning styles will be able to access the course material. There will be several essays due in the course of each semester. All will be explained in class.

REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to bring their own pens (blue or black ink only), papers, binders, and textbooks to class daily. Additionally, they will need to maintain their binders, and participate meaningfully in class.
In short, you’ve been in school for 9-10 years. Bring the items necessary to perform well. If you can remember to come to class wearing a shirt and some form of shoes, if you can remember to take your cell phone with you to the bathroom, then you can bring these things that matter to your grade and graduation.

All students in this course will be required to take notes, memorize countries and land formations, and above all, THINK.

The following requirements are non-negotiable:
- be nice
- work hard
- Write at least two papers in Chicago/Turabian style
- Take an essay quiz per week, typically on Fridays
- Access the internet to retrieve work for the class, typically maps, but sometimes essays
- work in groups successfully, changing as needed
- write up an evaluation of their group-mates
- discuss geography with the class and the instructor
- attempt everything we do, regardless of how discouraged they may feel
- above all, respect what we are trying to do here.

TARDY POLICY

Any time missed from class is unacceptable. You are allowed 5 tardies/bathroom passes per semester. You need to keep track of how many times you are tardy or use the restroom, because I will only tell you when you’ve gone over 5, by assigning a detention. Tardy means missing class, or not being ready when the bell rings. If you are late to class, you are missing class. If you go to the potty, you are missing class. If you do not have your materials out and ready, you are not ready for class. This is why I give you 5 tardies/bathroom passes for free. You should not need to go to the bathroom during class, or be late, more than once a month. If you need to do so more often, reschedule your day. Do not interrupt my lecture to ask if you can use the bathroom. I recommend that you go to the bathroom before or after class, so that you do not miss information critical to your success.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Do not have your cell phone out, or audible during class. The only exception to this is if I have allowed you to do so for a class activity. Never assume that such permission is granted. Your phone will be confiscated, and it will be turned in to the office upon the first offense. Please, save yourself the trouble, and me the paperwork. Just go without the danged phone for an hour while you’re with me. If your family or friends really need to get a hold of you, they will call the school, or you can get to it after this class. If you believe you have an exception to this rule, you must see me ahead of time.
EVALUATION

Quizzes. They will be given almost weekly. They will be a good way to keep you on track and accountable for the material we have learned. This will account for 20% of your grade.

Projects/Classwork. They will be assigned throughout the term, including position papers, policy papers, debates, and simulations. These will account for 20% of your grade.

Participation. This will be counted every day. You will participate, regardless of how much you know or think you know. If you don’t know something, we can fake it. The following phrase is forbidden and will not, under any circumstance, be allowed as final answer: “I don’t know.” This will account for 20% of your grade.

Term Papers You will be required to write at least one term paper requiring research and formal writing conventions. I recommend libraries and useful websites. I will teach you how to write a formal essay during class. You will write them outside of class. These will account for 20% of your grade.

Reading Notes. At the end of this syllabus you will find a reading list of all the pages you will be required to read and take notes on. Each unit is 3 weeks long, at the end of which I will check your notes. Most units are around 2-4 pages per night. This will account for 20% of your grade. I will teach you to outline your notes in class. You will do your reading and notes outside of class.

GRADING POLICY

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89.99%
C = 70-79.99%
R = Must redo by the following day up to a C, or it counts as an F.

MAKE-UP WORK

I will allow make-up work only if the following conditions are met:
• You provide me with a doctor’s note upon your return, or
• You email or tell me ahead of time about the planned absence, and we arrange for you to make up the work

The make-up work will often be the same as the assigned work – in terms of you missing packets. However, the quizzes will very often differ from the originally-given quiz. If you do not satisfy the above requirements for making up work, you will not be allowed to do so.
BINDER

Keep your binder in five sections, in this order (with the syllabus at the very beginning):
1. Reading Notes
2. Lecture/Class Notes
3. Written Work
4. Quizzes
5. Funny Quotes the teacher has said in class
(If you do not keep it in this order, you will fall behind)

SPECIAL BONUS

If every student scores a passing score (70-100%), then the class as a whole will get a 5% flat bonus to their score on that assignment. This does not apply to participation.

PLAGIARSIM

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. At John F. Kennedy High School, plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporation of another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgement. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of rightful credit and gives credit to someone who has not earned it. Acknowledgement is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge. Plagiarism at John F. Kennedy High School includes but is not limited to:

The act of incorporating into one's own work the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, or the specific substance of another's work without giving appropriate credit thereby representing the product as entirely one's own. Examples include not only word-for-word copying, but also the "mosaic" (i.e., interspersing a few of one's own words while, in essence, copying another's work), the paraphrase (i.e., rewriting another's work while still using the other's fundamental idea or theory); fabrication (i.e., inventing or counterfeiting sources), ghost-writing (i.e., submitting another's work as one's own) and failure to include quotation marks on material that is otherwise acknowledged.

FINAL INFORMATION

This syllabus, and all of the information contained therein, is subject to change at the teacher’s discretion. I want you to succeed. You just need to want to as well.
READING LIST

Below is the list of reading assignments through the year. Dates and pages are subject to change. It’s best that you get ahead of these, so you’ll have the information on quizzes.

Unit 1 – Intro to Geography (42 pages)
5-9, 10-11, 16-19, 20-23, 29-31, 34-35, 49-58, 60-63, 67, 71-77

Unit 2 – USA and Canada (54 pages)

Unit 3 – Latin America (41 pages)

Unit 4 – Europe (24 pages)
275-279, 288-293, 296-307, 310-315, 319-321, 84-86

Unit 5 – Russia and Northern Eurasia (18 pages)

Unit 6 – Africa (41 pages)

Unit 7 – Southwest Asia (37 pages)

Unit 8 – South Asia (41 pages)

Unit 9 – East Asia (40 pages)

Unit 10 – Southeast Asia, Oceania, Australia (28 pages)
683, 689-692, 694-695, 700-703, 706-709, 712-714, 727-729, 730-736

FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Write a one-page essay about yourself. Focus primarily on where you’ve lived, where you’d like to live, what you plan to do in the future, and where you plan to do it. On another sheet of paper, draw a map highlighting where you’ve lived and where you’d like to live and work. It’s ok if it’s imperfect; I just want you think spatially.
MOVIES AND MUSIC

At times, we will watch movies and listen to music in this class. Some words and images will be considered adult themes, including language, violence, and brief partial nudity. Your parents/guardians must sign this slip if they **DO NOT** want you to see these movies. If they do not have a problem with this, then this does not need to be signed. I assure you and your parents/guardians that the movies are picked with the utmost educational value in mind, not for entertainment value.

By signing here, I affirm that **I DO NOT** want my child to watch movies in Mr. Harmony’s Geography class. I understand that his choices are educationally-minded, but I do not find them acceptable for my child/ward to watch. I understand that my child will not suffer any scholastic pressure to watch these movies, and that a fair and alternate assignment will be given.

______________________________   ________________________
parent/guardian signature     date
I fully understand, and though I may not like them, I fully accept Mr. Harmony's terms and methods for my learning of Geography this year. My signature at the bottom of this page signifies my agreement to abide by Mr. Harmony's requirements.

________________________________________  ___________________
student signature      date

I have also read Mr. Harmony's syllabus. I agree to help hold my child to the high standards he/she deserves to be held to. I fully understand Mr. Harmony's intentions and policies.

_________________________________________  ___________________
parent signature      date

________________________   ________________________
night time contact phone number   day time contact phone number

____________________________
parent email - please print legibly