



## 2022-2023 COURSE SYLLABUS

### US HISTORY

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“I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually.”

-James Baldwin

“Unless we know ourselves and our history, and other people and their history, there is really no way that we can really have positive kind of interaction where there is real understanding.”

-Yuri Kochiyama

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as a survey of US history from roughly 1877 forward. 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. Students will be expected to work at a high school eleventh-grade level by the end of the year. This course is required for graduation.

### PEDAGOGY

There will be a mix of cooperative learning opportunities, direct lectures, document analysis, essay-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.

### MATERIAL REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to bring the following to class daily:

- their own pens (blue or black ink only)
- papers & handouts
- binder
- charged chromebooks



## **BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS**

The following behavioral requirements are non-negotiable:

- be kind
- be honest
- work hard
- write essays
- bring their charged materials (listed above)
- work in groups in good faith
- write up an evaluation of their group-mates
- discuss history with the class and the instructor
- attempt everything we do
- respect what we are trying to do here

## **ESSENTIAL CLASS RULES**

- Be respectful at all times of the teacher, the classroom, your fellow students, yourself, and the safety of all.
- Have good phone discipline. Your cell phone must not be a distraction to you or those around you.
- Work while you're here.

## **PLAGIARISM POLICY**

Plagiarism is the deliberate use of another's work to pass off as one's own, be it copying from someone else's work or finding other people's work online. It is rarely difficult to spot. You need to do your own work.

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.



To copy/plagiarize/cheat is to disrespect the efforts we are making in here. If you are caught doing so, you and your plagiarism partner will receive a zero on that assignment. A second instance will result in possibly failing the entire course. Dishonesty is easy to engage in, and very difficult to come back from. Don't start.

## **TARDY POLICY**

Tardies are unacceptable. They mean you are missing valuable time for learning, creating a cascade effect of falling behind. The school has an active tardy policy, and you should familiarize yourself with it. Don't be tardy.

## **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Practice good phone discipline. Keep your phone on silent, and put away, so that you are not distracted. Learning takes enough energy without distractions. Having a phone as a distraction will only add to that difficulty. **Unless I specifically tell you to have your phone out, don't have it out.** While there are many things on your phone that will help you make short-cuts in your learning, this is a temptation that is best to avoid. Phones out without permission may be confiscated, bagged, and even sent to the office. This is a big hassle and takes away from everything we have to do in a day; and I'd rather just treat you respectfully like a person learning to be an adult. Exhibit good phone discipline, and I can do that.

## **EVALUATION**

Projects/Classwork. They will be assigned throughout the term, including but not limited to position papers, policy papers, debates, and simulations. These will account for 25% of your grade.

Essays. You will be required to write essays throughout the year. I will recommend libraries and useful websites. I will teach you how to write essays during class. We will work toward the proper structure and approach together. These will account for 75% of your grade. You can redo - for up to full credit - any essay that I've given feedback to, after discussing that feedback with me.



## GRADE SCALE

I will refer you to this section of your syllabus frequently to answer questions about your grades. It's probably best to highlight this section for yourself. The most equitable system of grading that I've found to work for students is what we'll be using.

A	80% - 100%	Excellence
B	60% - 79.99%	Proficiency
C	40% - 59.99%	Working Toward Proficiency
D	20% - 39.99%	Needs Improvement
F	00% - 19.99%	Not Turned-In/Inadequately Addresses the Subject Matter

Infinite Campus will be the only place to find your grades reliably - I cannot trust Google Classroom to do what we need them to do fully.

Look only at the percentages on Infinite Campus - do not look at the letter grade until I post grades for progress reports, quarterly report cards, and semester grades. Look only at the percentages, and then use the grade scale that I've just listed for you above.

## MAKE-UP WORK

I will allow make-up work only if the following conditions are met:

- You email or tell me ahead of time about a planned absence, and we arrange for you to make up the work
- You contact me after an unplanned absence, and we arrange for you to make up the work

## BINDER

Keep your binder in three sections, in this order (with the syllabus at the very beginning):

1. Lectures/Class Notes
2. Written work and assignments
3. Essays

I strongly recommend you put the date on anything I give back to you in the upper right hand corner, to keep things in order. If this needs to be part of another binder, that's fine. Make more dividers.

## FINAL INFORMATION

This syllabus, and all of the information contained therein, is subject to change at the teacher's discretion, and need to clarify/rectify.



## 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, as seen in the context of the history being explored. 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 US History 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
printed name

\_\_\_\_\_  
printed e-mail address



I have read and understood Mr. Harmony's syllabus for his US History class. My signature at the bottom of this page signifies my deliberate agreement to abide by Mr. Harmony's requirements. Failure to turn in this signature sheet signifies my tacit consent to abide by Mr. Harmony's requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_

student signature

\_\_\_\_\_

date

\_\_\_\_\_

printed name

I have read, and though my child may not want me to, I also agree to help hold my child to the high standards they deserve to be held to. I fully understand Mr. Harmony's intentions and policies, as laid out in his syllabus. Not signing is my tacit acceptance of these terms.

\_\_\_\_\_

parent/guardian signature

\_\_\_\_\_

date

\_\_\_\_\_

printed name

\_\_\_\_\_

printed e-mail address

\_\_\_\_\_

night-time phone number to contact

\_\_\_\_\_

daytime phone number to contact