

Mount Saint Joseph High School
Social Studies Department
2006-2007

Mr. Gibbons
Rooms 315, 312, 310
410 644 3300 x268
sgibbons@admin.msjnet.edu
<http://facweb.msjnet.edu/sgibbons>
www.msjnet.edu

United States History – Honors

Course Description:

The course explores the social, political, military, and economic history of the United States, and its relationship to the rest of the world since the colonization of the New World, and places contemporary issues within their historical context. The course also contributes to the department's goals of understanding the origins and development of the ideas, institutions, systems, and people of the United States, and developing students' analytical, problem-solving, critical thinking, and communication skills. This knowledge and these skills will help students to become educated, ethical, and productive citizens.

Course Objectives:

HISTORICAL CONTENT: Through reading primary and secondary sources and classroom discussions, students will investigate the social, political, military, and economic history of the United States since colonization. Students will develop a basic understanding of major themes in modern American history, such as liberalism vs. conservatism, foreign policy and diplomacy, economic and cultural change, racial and gender issues, as well as the basic chronology of the period and geography of the nation.

HISTORICAL SKILLS: Students will gain a sense of the chronology of United States history, explore cause and effect, continuity and change, and learn the basic skills of historical analysis, such as critical analysis of primary and secondary sources to answer historical questions and the use of historical data to better understand the contemporary world.

PROFESSIONAL: This course enhances students' professional development by guiding students in professional communication through written assignments and class discussions, the use of the internet and computers to find information and create professional standard work, and the use of critical thinking and analytical skills to solve problems.

PERSONAL: Students understanding the history of their country will help them to appreciate the foundations of their group and individual identity. Enhanced understanding of themselves and other peoples will help students to appreciate contemporary issues in our nation and their own lives, as well as provide the knowledge and skills to be an informed and contributing citizen of the national and global community.

Requirements:

Participation: Because participation in class discussions demonstrates and enhances student comprehension of the reading materials, and oral expression is a valuable skill, students are required to participate in class.

Reading: In addition to the required text, students will be given additional reading materials through class and use of the internet. Readings will generally be given three to four times per week depending on the class schedule.

Quizzes: To ensure that students are keeping up with the assigned readings and have a grasp of the material, quizzes will be given in class and as assignments outside of class generally one to two times per week.

Research Paper: To meet the historical skills objective for this class, one to two research papers will be assigned during the year. Students will learn how to use and analyze both primary and secondary sources for the assignment. Details on paper will be given in class.

Tests: Tests will be given periodically throughout the year to measure students' progress, and grasp of material covered in the course. Tests may cover one or more sections/chapters of the book depending on the theme currently under study and the time frame of the class.

Miscellaneous Assignments: These may include maps (for our geography component), in class writings, note-taking and outline homework.

Required Materials:

Pens/Pencils/Colored Pencils

Three-ring binder

Notebook or loose-leaf paper

Text

Required Texts:

Liberty, Equality, and Power: A History of the American People. John M. Murrin, Paul E. Johnson, James M. McPherson, Gary Gerstle, Emily S. Rosenberg, Norman L. Rosenberg
4th Edition

Recommended Texts:

The Bedford Handbook. Diana Hacker

Understanding International Conflicts: An introduction to theory and history. Joseph S. Nye Jr.,
Sixth Edition.

Grading:

All grades are assigned a specific point value. Normally through the course of the quarter there will be 500 possible points with half of the points coming from tests and/or research papers. The other half of the point total comes from remaining assignments such as quizzes, readings, etc.

Absence policy/Missed assignments/tests

Students with a valid excused absence will be given full credit for assignment turned in late and time to make up assignments/tests. Students that have unexcused absences and/or turn in work late will not be given credit

Plagiarism/Cheating

Academic plagiarism is the use of the words, information, insights, or ideas of others without crediting them through proper citation. Unintentional plagiarism, or sloppy scholarship, is academically unacceptable; intentional plagiarism is dishonorable. You can avoid plagiarism by fully and openly crediting all sources used. (*USNA statement on plagiarism, May 2004*)

Plagiarism will be covered more in depth when the research paper is assigned.

Academic dishonesty (cheating) is unacceptable. Any student found receiving or giving help to other students when not permissible will receive zero credit for the assignment and brought to Director of Studies office for any additional penalty.