The Advanced Placement Program in United States History is offered to qualified high school students. Gateway High School and its social studies department recommend that students electing the AP course should have achieved at least a B in an advanced level World Studies course as a standard prerequisite or an advanced level American Studies course. Essentially the program prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by introductory survey courses. All students enrolled in this program are expected to take the national Advanced Placement Examination in United States History. If students pass the exam designed by the College Board in May of 2012, then they may apply for as much as one year of college credit within the institution of their choice. Other potential benefits include:

- improving chances of acceptance at a prestigious college or university
- saving money by graduating from college earlier
- acquisition of astute higher order thinking skills and research techniques

Students need to be fully motivated and committed to the course, which can at times be rigorous. One should expect to read one to two chapters per week from the main text in addition to tackling some supplementary primary sources and other outside readings. Furthermore, AP students ought to anticipate spending considerable amounts of time and effort completing projects, studying for tests, and writing essays.
AP U.S. History is a challenging course that is intended to be the equivalent of a freshman college course. It is a survey of American history from the beginnings to the present. Unquestionably solid reading and writing skills, along with a willingness to devote considerable time to homework and study, are absolutely necessary for success.

The course encourages students to investigate and discuss significant historical material with college-level maturity and depth. It allows students to read historical literature analytically, to weigh historical evidence and interpretations, and to arrive at conclusions on the basis of informed judgment. Emphasis in evaluation is placed on:

- critical thinking skills
- essay writing
- interpretation of primary and secondary sources
- historiography
- tests
- research
- role playing in simulations
- discussion and debate

Students should expect assignments such as formal debates, research projects, essays, papers, simulations, role plays, Socratic seminar discussions, mock trials, cooperative learning, and AP study sheets. As the instructor, I will lecture when introducing entirely new and significant material approximately once per week. Students ought to take notes dealing with both reading assignments and lectures.

Tests will, for the most part, adhere to the same format as the AP Exam in order to familiarize students with the same types of questions they will encounter in May. Students must become accustomed to multiple choice questions, regular essays, and document-based essays. All essays will be scored using the standard AP rubric for assessment.
STUDY TECHNIQUES

Quite frankly, the reading load, especially in the first 7-10 weeks, is considerable. In order to sufficiently cover the maximum amount of material with the least possible amount of stress, sharing is definitely encouraged. While each student is responsible for completing all reading and other everyday homework assignments, the class may share notes, work from the course study guide, and additional study sheets. Students, of course, must be held accountable for understanding and retaining the course material. The amount of time required for homework assignments will vary with each individual’s reading rate. Similarly assignments vary in length. Be certain to pay attention to each unit’s daily assignment sheet and plan ahead for long assignments, supplemental readings, projects, take-home essays, and so forth. Time management is a necessary skill for this class, and you need to take responsibility for budgeting your time wisely. Do not become discouraged! As you become familiar with the course format and texts, things will gradually become easier and fall into place.

THE KEY TO SUCCESS

Make sure you put forth consistent effort. The more you plug away and strive for success, the greater your achievement and improvement will be. As long as you give your very best effort and meet all assignment guidelines, you will do reasonably well in the course. Do not be discouraged if your grades seem low in the first quarter. Remember, the key is persistence and perseverance. If you knew the material and had obtained all the skills necessary for success already, you would not need this course. In grading, I will weigh heavily on overall effort and improvement. After completing the course, you will walk away with greatly improved writing, thinking, and study skills. In the end all of your hard work and learning will be well worth it.
GRADING

- Tests, major projects, simulations, and essays (60%)
- Class participation and homework (40%)

Keep in mind that the quality of your performance will be greatly enhanced if you attend class regularly and complete all reading and homework assignments regularly. Consult your Gateway Regional High School Student Handbook under “Marking System” for a listing of the grading scale.

ORGANIZATION

Assignment sheets will be provided for every unit of study. Daily reading and homework assignments, tests, essays, research projects, major papers, debates, and so forth will be itemized on each appropriate assignment sheet. Once again, students are required to stay abreast of and ready for all assignments and activities.
OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- acquire a broad body of historical knowledge
- demonstrate an understanding of historical chronology and cause
- use historical material, both primary and secondary, to support an argument or position
- differentiate between historiographical schools of thought or interpretations
- interpret and utilize information from primary sources and documents, including literature, cartoons, graphs, charts, articles, etc.
- develop effective analytical skills, such as critical thinking, evaluation, synthesis, understanding cause and effect relationships, comparison and contrast
- work efficiently and cooperatively with others to solve problems and create final products
- develop reading, writing, and public-speaking skills necessary for success in higher education
- prepare for and score well on the Advanced Placement Exam
COURSE MATERIALS

Core Texts


Readers


Note: Various AP-level readings and handouts will be distributed as well.

**STUDENT MATERIALS**

1. Students should **obtain and maintain a three-ring binder and/or a file system of folders on the computer**. Maintaining a three-ring binder is advisable because students should keep handouts, readings, study sheets, tests, essays, notes, and a host of other course materials in a convenient, organized place for future study and reference as they prepare for the AP Exam and other major assignments. Students might arrange their binders in the following manner:
   - **Section 1** (notes, same as item number two below)
   - **Section 2** (tests, essays, papers, study sheets, handouts, etc.)
   - **Section 3** (articles, primary source materials, miscellaneous)
   - **Section 4** (maps, cartoons, graphs, charts, etc.)

2. Students should utilize some sort of **notebook** to record notes on lectures, readings they encounter, and homework assignments from the study guide that accompanies the main text. Students may share notes with each other. But every student is responsible for all information covered in the course. So, it would be wise to maintain a notebook meticulously for purposes of study and easy reference. If this course is offered in a distance-learning format, students should be prepared to submit homework assignments, some classwork assignments, and some projects via e-mail. **Students may decide to maintain their notebooks on the computer.**
BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE AND ANTICIPATED MAJOR ASSESSMENTS (Tests not included)

UNIT 1: Colonial America
Major Assessments:
• Anne Hutchinson mock trial
• document-based essay (New England and the Chesapeake)

UNIT 2: The American Revolution & New Nation
Major Assessments:
• document-based essay (American Revolution)
• Constitutional Convention simulation project

UNIT 3: Age of Jefferson
Major Assessments:
• Missouri Compromise simulation project
• document-based essay (nationalism and sectionalism)

UNIT 4: Age of Jackson
Major Assessments:
• abolitionist convention
• reform movement presentations

UNIT 5: Crisis & Civil War
Major Assessments:
• mock trial of John Brown
• abolitionist convention
• document-based essay (causes of the Civil War)

UNIT 6: Reconstruction & The Last West
Major Assessments:
• comic book project
• mock trial of Andrew Johnson

UNIT 7: Gilded Age & Progressive Era
Major Assessments:
• mock trial (In re Debs)
• document-based essay (Gilded Age politics)
• political cartoon project
• simulation of the Congressional debate on the Philippine question

UNIT 8: World War I & The New Era
Major Assessments:
• simulation (Wilson and the League of Nations)
• mock trial (Scopes trial)
• document-based essay (1920s)

UNIT 9: Great Depression, New Deal, & World War II
Major Assessments:
• simulation (neutrality debate)
• document-based essay (Truman, the atomic bomb, and the Cold War)
• mock trial (Korematsu v. U.S.)
• simulation (Truman’s decision to use the atomic bomb)

UNIT 10: Postwar America and the Cold War
Major Assessments:
• simulation (JFK and the Cuban missile crisis)
• simulation (black leadership conference)
• mock trial of Lt. William Calley
• document-based essays (civil rights movement and/or Vietnam)

UNIT 11: Recent History and Review for the AP Exam
Major Assessments:
• decade project
• Final Project/Exam

Note: Please be advised that this is a fairly new course design and a work in progress. Consequently, I must reserve the right to revise the syllabus if it becomes necessary so that this course covers all of the content areas that may appear on the AP U.S. History Exam. Because it was decided that the course be taught in one semester, the course is somewhat more intensive.

My Lai Massacre