Advanced Placement United States History

Thank you for taking an application for AP US History. The Lake Oswego Social Studies department is excited to have the opportunity to meet, teach, and learn about US History and contemporary America with you. Keeping in line with the values and culture of the Lake Oswego School District, the social studies department wants to welcome, encourage, and support you in your efforts to find and succeed in the best social sciences classes for YOU! With that in mind, you should expect an AP US history to be different than, perhaps, some of your other classes. Below is an attempt to help you understand the expectations and challenges that AP US History will entail.

Course Description: In AP U.S. History, students investigate significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in nine historical periods from approximately 1491 to the present. Students develop and use the same skills and methods employed by historians.

Analyzing primary and secondary sources: developing historical arguments; making historical connections; and utilizing reasoning about comparison, causation, and continuity and change. In A.P. US History students seek not only to know the content of American History, but to understand its trends and be able to interpret history with the intention to make an educated, fair, and balanced historical argument.

College Course Equivalent: AP U.S. History is equivalent to a two-semester introductory college course in U.S. history.

The Text: Students in an AP US History will use “By the People,” by James Fraser. The Text is 950 pages long. We will make every attempt to read every page in the 32 weeks we have class.

Summer HW: You can expect to have summer reading that covers the first part of American History (1607-1763). There will also be a test over this material when we return from the summer break.

Weekly Reading: Due to the scope of the class students should expect to read between 20-25 pages a week. Reading is a skill that at a premium in this class.

Primary and Secondary documents: Class units and tests will be built around primary and secondary documents. Students should expect to do supplemental reading in addition to their weekly textbook study.

Grade/Tests: An overwhelming majority of your graded work will be through Testing. Tests will be comprised by a combination of stimulus based responses, essay questions, and document based questions.

Grades/other: A smaller percentage, but just as important part of your grade will be based on weekly hw assignments that will accompany your reading, presentations and document analysis, map making, and drawing are also assignments.

Attendance/oral participation: 100% attendance (or very close to it) is absolutely necessary in this class. Students who have missed class in the past have had extreme difficulty catching up. Oral participation is not required but is strongly recommended as a way to process information and engage with the material.

Success: It has been my experience that students who have extremely strong organization, note taking and time-management skills OR students who have a very high level of interest in US history have done really well in AP US history. If you possess 1 or both of these attributes I would strongly recommend you take this course.

I understand that AP US history is a challenging class which requires on average 4-6 hours a week, dedicated attendance, and high levels of notetaking and oral participation in class on a daily basis.

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Printed name                                 Signature                                         Parent Signature