

# AP U.S. HISTORY COURSE SYLLABUS

Mr. Steven Mercado

2012-2013

The objective of this course is to increase the student's understanding of United States history and to have each student pass the AP Examination with a score of “3” or higher. The course is divided into two semesters, *Contact through Reconstruction* and *The Gilded Age to the present*. The areas of concentration include historical, political and economic history coupled with an intense study of cultural and intellectual institutions and their development. These areas will be studied from a variety of perspectives with the hope of providing a balanced view of history. **This course is taught at the college level.** The major difference between a high school and college history course is the amount of reading and depth of focus. Moreover, the AP curriculum stresses higher order thinking skills within a rigorous academic context. Thus, the student will be required frequently to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate primary and secondary historical sources in addition to memorizing, comprehending, and applying facts.

**Feel free to reach me if you have questions or concerns!**

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[www.HistorySage.com](http://www.HistorySage.com) or [www.homestead.com/chaffeyaphistory/menu.html](http://www.homestead.com/chaffeyaphistory/menu.html)

**Texts: The American Pageant** (13th Edition)

David M. Kennedy, Lizabeth Cohen, Thomas Bailey

**Supplementary Readings:** Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*

Various readings and handouts throughout the year

**Chaffey AP History Website:** [www.homestead.com/chaffeyaphistory/menu.html](http://www.homestead.com/chaffeyaphistory/menu.html)

**Grading Scale:**

A = 90 -100%

B = 80 - 89%

C = 70 - 79%

D = 60 - 69%

F = 0 - 59%

**Grade Categories:**

Essay Exams ..... 30%

Multiple Choice Exams..... 30%

Homework ..... 20%

Quizzes.....5%

Final Exam ..... 15%

**Exams:** Approximately ten multiple-choice/essay exams will be given during the first semester. The first semester final is cumulative. A cumulative midterm exam will be given at the end of the first and third quarters. The second semester calendar of assignments will be available after the Christmas holidays. Tests will be rigorous as they are intended to challenge the student at the Advanced Placement level. Moreover, tests are designed to give students frequent experience with the types of multiple-choice questions, free-response essays, and Document Based Questions (DBQ's) that will appear on the AP exam. Frequent exams also insure that students read the textbook and supplementary readings, consistently check for understanding, and take copious notes that are thorough and well organized.

**Lecture Notes:** Students are required to bring printed versions of the online lecture notes (at [www.historypage.com](http://www.historypage.com)) on the day that a new chapter is assigned in the textbook. Each student will receive a user name and password that will enable them to access the notes. There is no charge for Chaffey students! If a student is unable to print out the notes at home, other arrangements will need to be made. My suggestion is to print out the notes well in advance so that you're not scrambling to print them the day of the lecture.

**Homework Policy:** Assignments are due *on the date the reading assignment is shown* on the calendar. All *American Pageant* textbook assignments are located at <http://chaffeyaphistory.homestead.com/APUSHHistory.html>. **Students are required to print out the homework packets and complete them prior to the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after the 5<sup>th</sup> late allowance. All late work must be turned in the day after it is due.** For excused absences, assignments are due the day the student returns to class unless prior arrangements have been made for emergencies. All the required Zinn assignments are available online at [www.historypage.com](http://www.historypage.com).

**Organization:** Students are expected to keep a well-organized notebook of all course-related materials (e.g. syllabus, lecture notes, study guides, homework, quizzes, exams, handouts, etc.)

**Missed Exams:** Students who are absent legitimately on a day a test is given must make up the test on the day they return to class. An alternate exam will be given. If a student is absent for an extended period (e.g., more than five days), an appointment for making-up the test will be made. Complete loss of credit for an exam may result if the exam is not completed in a timely fashion.

**Participation:** Students are expected to contribute in class discussions and effectively participate in class activities. Many of the class sessions will be seminars. In order for seminars to work, student preparation and participation is critical. Students who are "on the border" between grades at the semester may be given the higher grade if their overall participation has been commendable.

**Most importantly, stay positive!** Although this course is extremely challenging, Chaffey students have succeeded far above the national average over the past nine years and have led the district in several of those years. You must believe in yourself and be willing to accept a few setbacks along the way in order to grow as a young scholar and as a person ("no pain, no gain"). Learn from your mistakes and setbacks, make adjustments, and try again. The prize at the end is worth it! You can do it!!