

# AMERICAN HISTORY & CIVICS: 1860 ONWARD

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to American History & Civics at Oneness-Family High School! Over the course of the year, we will deepen our understanding of America's origins and the political systems that exist within the country. We will pay special attention to influential persons, movements, and events that provide some explanation for how we have arrived at the present. In tandem with history, we will be uncovering the origins of our political system, learning about the modern political landscape, and puzzling through how we can impact the world around us.

Along the journey, we will investigate some of the most pernicious myths about America, but also illuminate some of the overlooked figures whose voices have been silenced, giving them a voice to speak to and teach about where we find ourselves today. At every step, we will also learn and practice the necessary skills of a historian and actively engaged citizen that will empower you to take your newfound voice into the world.

The success of this course will depend entirely on your ability to prepare yourself for each class meeting. This course centers on you, the student, the ideas you come up with and want to discuss, and the lessons we can all learn from the past. To have this kind of course, we must agree to put in that small effort before each class, to prepare ourselves for what that day has to offer, and be ready to engage with our classmates. In short: **when you come to class prepared, school is about what you can do. When you do not come to class prepared, school is about what I can do.** If I have to do history for you, I promise that it will be boring. If we can all investigate the past together and engage with the tremendous wealth of knowledge it contains, I promise that you will find something interesting in it.

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is broken up into **eight units**, with two each cycle. Each unit consists of **three weeks**, in which examples, people, and time periods in history are used to explore a central theme. The schedule below illustrates the breakdown of each class:

| Semester 1 Semester 2 |                  |                             |                  |                                       |                     |                     |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Cycle 1               |                  | Cycle 2 Cycle 4             |                  | Cycle 5                               |                     |                     |
| Unit 1                | Unit 2           | Unit 3 Unit 4 Unit 5 Unit 6 |                  |                                       | Unit 7              | Unit 8              |
| Weeks 1,<br>2, 3      | Weeks 4,<br>5, 6 | Weeks 7, 8, 9               | Weeks 10, 11, 12 | Weeks 13, 14, 15<br>Weeks, 16, 17, 18 | Weeks 19,<br>20, 21 | Weeks 22,<br>23, 24 |

Each week will roughly follow the logic behind Montessori's "three period" lesson, where information is presented, engaged with as a group, and finally produced by the student themselves. All information, readings, and resources will be shared on Google Drive and through our Google Classroom,

along with clearly given deadlines and expectations for completion. Over the course of a unit, different skills will be emphasized and built upon, such as sentence structure, logical construction of a paragraph, and analysis of historical perspective within primary documents. Each unit will have its own “unit overview” sheet which will help organize information and track our progress through each week. The weekly topics are listed below by cycle:

| Cycle 1: Change & Backlash: From Reconstruction to White Redemption |  |
|---|--|
| Divisions of the Civil War  | The Task Ahead and Structural Change Reconstruction's Accomplishment s in the Region |
| <i>Field Experience:</i> Tolson's Chapel and Race at Antietam       | Redemption in the South Retaliation of White Terror                                  |

| Cycle 2: Independence & Dependence: The Immigrant Experience in America |   |
|---|---|
| Immigration and Pathways to Citizenship in the United States            | “The West” After the Civil War Quotas and America’s First Deportation                             |
| Conflict and Concentration: Mexicans and Japanese-Americans During WWII | Merit and Massacre: Refugees, Family, <i>The Undocumented Americans</i> and the Aftermath of 9/11 |

| Cycle 4: Systems of Government and International Relations |  |
|--|--|
| Functions of the Government, pt 1- Legislative Branch      | Functions of the Government, pt 2 - DC Statehood Executive and Judicial Branches                   |
| From Isolationism to Imperialism                           | <i>Field Experience:</i> Cold War and 20th Century Intelligence America’s Role in the Modern World |

| Cycle 5: Love, Care, and Nurture: The People and Movements Working to Better Our Nation |  |
|---|--|
| Labor and Workers Rights  | Gender Equality 20th Century Civil Rights  |
| Current Issues and Your Place in Democracy, pt. 1                                       | Current Issues and Your Place in Democracy, pt. 2<br>Current Issues and Your Place in Democracy, pt. 3 |

## COURSE STRUCTURE

Once placed in the appropriate course, students will have the opportunity to choose between either a "Standard" or "Advanced" track for their particular course. The Advanced track is for students who are seeking both a more rigorous workload and the opportunity to learn more about certain topics at the core of their interests in history. Students in this track will be undertaking a "**Guided Study Project**" for each semester, which will be an independent project supervised by me through weekly check-ins and evaluations at the end of every unit. Introductory Level students will also have the choice of undertaking a "**Family History Project**" if they find that more interesting or if they struggle to settle on a topic for the Guided Study Project.

## GRADING

Your grade will be composed of three different parts: productions, participation, and exit reviews. Each week will have 35 possible points to be earned with 20 for productions and 15 for participation. In addition, each three-week unit will end with an "exit review" worth 20 points. In total, this means there will be **500 points** per semester to be earned for standard track students. For advanced track students, Introductory Level and Upper Level students have different options, but students will have a total of **700 points** to earn every semester due to their independent projects.

### Standard Track:

1. Classroom Preparation, Engagement, and Participation **15 pts/wk** (180 total)
  2. Productions **20 pts/wk** (240 total)
  3. Unit Exit Reviews **20 pts/unit** (80 total)
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**500 pts/semester**

### Advanced Track:

1. Classroom Preparation, Engagement, and Participation **15 pts/wk** (180 total)
  2. Productions **20 pts/wk** (240 total)
  3. Unit Exit Reviews **20 pts/unit** (80 total)
  4. Advanced Track Project Evaluations (each Unit) **25 pts/unit** (100 total)
  5. Semester Final Advanced Track Project **100 points** (100 total)
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**700 pts/semester**

### Grading Scale:

- A: 90% -100%  
B: 80% - 89%  
C: 70% - 79%  
D: 60% - 69%  
F: 0% - 59%

### Late Policy:

Unless permission has been granted because of special circumstances, productions and projects handed in late will receive the following credit:

**1 day late:** 80% of total

**2 days late:** 60% of total

**3 days late:** 40% of total

**4 days late:** 20% of total

**5 or more days late:** 0%

**Note:** An assignment is considered late if not submitted **both** before the requested time and in the requested format

## MAKE-UP POLICY

If a student is absent and the absence is excused, they may hand in their work late by as many days as they were absent (to a maximum of five) without penalty. After this grace period, normal late policy applies. In the case of unexcused absences, students will be held accountable for all work due during absences and any readings/assignments for the day(s) following their absence.

## PLAGIARISM POLICY

Plagiarizing is taking and using ideas from a source without citing that source. By not citing your sources, you claim that what you have written down or made is of your own creation. \*If you plagiarise without making an effort to cite the source of the information, you will receive no credit for that piece of work. If your plagiarism is unintentional and resulting from poor citation form, the production or project will be returned to you and not accepted until the errors are corrected. Additionally, cheating of any kind, copying classmates' work, or exhibiting dishonesty in a production, project, or exam will result in receiving no credit for that work.

**Note:** This policy will **only** apply to assignments indicated by the instructor

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Being present is super important! This class would not be possible without you, and its success depends on your participation.

Any assignments, productions, projects, or exams are the responsibility of the student to complete and hand in on time. If a student misses class for an excused absence, all work due during that period must be made up per the Make-up Policy detailed above. If a student leaves for ANY excused absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact me and receive all work due during that period of absence PRIOR to leaving. If the student does not adhere to this expectation, any work submitted will be subject to the Late Policy detailed above. In order for me to appropriately prepare you for any prolonged excused absence, please give me at least one full week notice to gather your materials and explain the expectations. If a student is at school but will miss class for an excused absence, it is the responsibility of the student to hand in any assignments before leaving school.

Finally, if a student misses class and they are not excused, they will not only be held responsible for readings, sources, and productions for the following day, but their work will also be subject to the Late Policy detailed above.

## CLASSROOM CONDUCT & FINAL NOTE

One of the greatest skills you can learn in life is how to respectfully disagree and then engage with another person in meaningful conversation. This also happens to be one of the most challenging skills to learn as a student, and we are all at different points on this path to becoming more precise, effective, and

respectful members of the school. This course will likely challenge, and in turn teach you how to defend, closely-held personal beliefs in a logical and respectful way. In order to achieve this, I expect the following of you every time you step into the classroom:

Foster an atmosphere of respect within the classroom. Without the comfort of knowing that we can express our opinions openly, meaningful discussion cannot take place in the classroom. Your beliefs have value, and when expressed appropriately, they will help all of us engage with the material (and your perspective on it) more clearly.

Follow the guidelines from your student/family handbook as they relate to our class. Be responsible for your work and take pride in what you achieve as a student of history. Believe it or not, I cannot help you unless I know something is wrong. Please reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, or just want to talk. As your teacher, I am your resource to use.