

AP World History 45.40
Fall Semester 2009
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Catholic High School

Overview:

The purpose of the Advanced Placement course in World History is to develop greater understanding of the evolution of global processes and contacts and their interactions with different types of human societies. This understanding shall be achieved through the pursuit of selective factual knowledge blended with appropriate usage of analytical skills. The course highlights the nature of changes in international frameworks and their causes and consequences. Further, comparisons will be made between major human civilizations. The year-long course, based on College Board curricular suggestions, is very much a true “world view” of human history. While Euro-Centrism is definitely not a core concept in this class, students will observe how human cultures and their numerous interactions have shaped the story of civilizations.

The World History AP (WHAP) course is a considerable challenge intended for the best and brightest of St. Pius X’s sophomore students. It is an intense examination of human patterns and actions, involving a significant volume of reading and analysis. Critical thinking and synthesis of ideas on the part of the student is a must. Of the five major eras that serve as chronological boundaries for this course, two and one-half of the eras will be developed each semester. Altogether, the course is designed to introduce students to the rigor of AP-level courses. Students shall be provided with many hands-on experiences emphasizing certain skill sets vital to the pursuit of a study in history-related social sciences.

Policies:

Expectations for Sophomore AP World History students are straightforward and not subject to compromise. WHAP students should exhibit a great deal of maturity and commitment from an academic standpoint. Students are to display only those behaviors that will reinforce their ability to learn the material in this course. Specifically, students are to arrive in class prior to the start bell, and they should be prepared to begin the day’s lesson once the bell sounds. Aspects of the SPX Student Handbook that apply to Academic Regulations should be understood and observed.

Students should bring a pen and a pencil to class along with an appropriate notebook and the textbook, Stearns’ *World Civilizations*. As many of the instructional methods in the course involve some form of a teacher-centered lecture format, students must be solid note-takers and sharp listeners to make the most out of in-class experiences. When discussions and/or cooperative activities take place, students should be well prepared to adjust their ability to absorb the key components of those particular lessons. If you are unable to attend class on a particular day, it is your responsibility (not your parents’ or the instructor’s duty) to be pro-active in making up assignments. I will help you as much as possible in getting back up to speed, but I hope that you appreciate that some experiences are difficult to make up – please attempt to minimize your missed class time.

AP World History Policies (continued):

Completing assigned readings, whether they come from the text or from auxiliary materials, is an essential element for World History students. Prescribed excerpts from this text are pretty much the basic homework load for this course, and they should be well paced out based on teacher directives and through use of the on-line course calendar. Thus, students should plan on traveling to and from school with their text.

Course Textbook

Stearns, Peter N., Michael Adas, Marc J. Gilbert, and Stuart B. Schwartz. *World Civilizations: The Global Experience (AP Edition DBQ Update)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2006.

OPTIONAL – you may wish to pursue the purchase of an AP World History review book. These can be found at your favorite local bookstore, and they are often a relatively reasonably-priced purchase considering how much you could utilize the review book as a confidence-building resource (taking practice quizzes and tests has this effect). If you are unable to commit to finding a perfect book, allow me to randomly choose between the many publishers who make solid AP review books (my way of saying “it doesn’t really matter WHAT you get, just use what you purchase/rent/borrow!). You might also be able to find a Junior at SPX who will sell you a pre-owned review book at a negotiable price.

The Grading Scale

40 % = Unit Tests

Unit tests (6 in total) will be predominantly multiple choice questions, although a combination of matching and true-false questions may intrude from time to time. **ALL SIX TEST SCORES COUNT!** Make up tests must be taken within three school days of a date of absence, and you must acquiesce to Mr. Cook’s schedule when it comes to finding a time to take the test. Students whose absences have a high incidence of matching test days may, upon a third missed test, find themselves awaiting an all-essay make-up exam.

20 % = Quizzes

The majority of quizzes given in this course are reading-check quizzes and are given with little or no notice; thus, students are highly encouraged to keep up with their assigned pacing of readings. Since quizzes are measurements of whether students are doing their “reading homework,” this may also be considered a homework-related grade.

20 % = Essays and Writing Activities

Learning to respond to the three major types of WHAP essay prompts will lead a student to a high degree of success on the national College Board exam in May. Developing competency on such Document-Based Questions (DBQ’s), Comparative Essays, and Change/Continuity-Over-Time (C/COT) Essays is, therefore, an enormous goal of ours. Graded evaluations of students in this area range from simple mechanical tasks to full-blown, in-class or take-home written essays. More details on this grade category will unfold as the semester progresses.

AP World History Grading Scale (continued):

10 % = Projects and Participation

There are no scheduled group or individual projects for the first semester in AP World History. However, students will be given small-scale opportunities to work on items that will be considered “projects” and collected for grading purposes. The instructor’s evaluation of student performance is also a component of this grading category, half of which will be posted at 9-week and 18-week intervals.

10 % = Final Exam

This is a mandatory and comprehensive 90-minute multiple choice/matching/essay format assessment of AP World History, given at 10:15a on Thursday, December 17th. This IS NOT the College Board National Examination.

Special Note Regarding the College Board AP National Examination:

-Please keep in mind that the College Board’s National Exam in May is a MANDATORY aspect of this course...while your performance on this test will not affect your grade, students who fail to take the National Exam are subject to forfeiture of their entire Course Final Examination grade!

There is normally no extra credit available in this class. Take advantage of your many opportunities during the 18-week semester to improve your grade. If you need extra help, come in and ask...I’m available every day before and after school (except Wednesday) and would love to help you if you’re willing to ask!

_____ (detach below) _____

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I have read Mr. Cook and Mr. Turner’s AP World History syllabus and agree to abide by its terms. Furthermore, I understand that Mr. Cook & Mr. Turner reserve the right to make adjustments to any detail as he sees fit in order to enhance the learning experience for his students. Finally, I agree to conduct myself according to the guidelines of the SPX Honor Code:

I pledge on my honor that the work I will do this school year will be my own. I further affirm that I will not give information to another student nor accept another person’s work as my own unless the instructor allows it.

Student _____ Parent _____
Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Printed Student Name: _____ Printed Parent Name: _____

Add any note you’d like to make to Mr. Cook/Mr. Turner in the space below: