# **Honors United States History**

Instructor: Mr. Kevin Comtois Email Address: [kcomtois@ndatyngsboro.org](mailto:kcomtois@ndatyngsboro.org)

***Description:*** Honors United States History - Grade: 11 / Full Year

While the honors class will cover the same topics as those outlined in the College Prep course, it will involve a rigorous reading and writing program with extensive use of primary and secondary documents. Students will hone their writing skills with argumentative essays and document based questions. In addition, students will prepare four quarterly research papers

***Required Texts:***

1) American History: A Survey 13th Edition

Hardcover: 1056 pages /

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Humanities/Social Sciences/Languages; 13 edition (November 26, 2008)

ISBN-10: 0073385492 / ISBN-13: 978-0073385495

1. Great Issues in American History, Vol. II: From the Revolution to the Civil War, 1765-1865

Richard Hofstadter

Paperback: 448 pages / Publisher: Vintage; Reprint edition (December 12, 1969)

ISBN-10: 0394705416 / ISBN-13: 978-0394705415

1. Great Issues in American History, Vol. III: From Reconstruction to the Present Day, 1864-1981

Richard Hofstadter, Beatrice K. Hofstadter

Paperback: 624 pages

Publisher: Vintage; Rev Sub edition (September 12, 1982)

ISBN-10: 0394708423 / ISBN-13: 978-0394708423

***Additional Materials***:

1. The American Revolution (new edition) by Edward Countryman ISBN 978-0-8090-2562-6

2) Three ringed binder for notes, tests and class materials

3) Blank lined paper for binder

Please Note: Class notes and discussions will be an integral part of all exams.

Other articles and information may be added to the curriculum and will be available on the website: www.kevincomtois.com

***Course Learning Outcomes:***

Students successfully completing this course will be able to think conceptually about U.S. history from approximately 1491 to the present and apply critical thinking skills as they learn about the past. Ten themes of equal importance — colonization, immigration, expansion, politics, industry, economics, international relations, geography, ideology, and culture — provide areas of historical inquiry for investigation throughout the course. These require students to reason historically about continuity and change over time and make comparisons among various historical developments and different historical interpretations.

***Skill Objectives:***

Critical Thinking Skills

The critical thinking skills provide opportunities for students to learn to think like historians, most notably to analyze evidence about the past and to create persuasive historical arguments. Focusing on these practices enables teachers to create learning opportunities for students that emphasize the conceptual and interpretive nature of history. Skill types and examples for each are listed below.

1. Chronological Reasoning: Compare causes and/or effects, including between short-term and long-term effects • Analyze and evaluate historical patterns of continuity and change over time • Connect patterns of continuity and change over time to larger historical processes or themes • Analyze and evaluate competing models of periodization of American history
2. Comparison and Contextualization: Compare related historical developments and processes across place, time, and/or different societies, or within one society • Explain and evaluate multiple and differing perspectives on a given historical phenomenon • Explain and evaluate ways in which specific historical phenomena, events, or processes connect to broader regional, national, or global processes occurring at the same time
3. Crafting Historical Arguments from Historical Evidence: Analyze commonly accepted historical arguments and explain how an argument has been constructed from historical evidence • Construct convincing interpretations through analysis of disparate, relevant historical evidence • Evaluate and synthesize conflicting historical evidence to construct persuasive historical arguments • Analyze features of historical evidence such as audience, purpose, point of view, format, argument, limitations, and context germane to the evidence considered • Based on analysis and evaluation of historical evidence, make supportable inferences and draw appropriate conclusions
4. Historical Interpretation and Synthesis: Analyze diverse historical interpretations • Evaluate how historians’ perspectives influence their interpretations and how models of historical interpretation change over time • Draw appropriately on ideas and methods from different fields of inquiry or disciplines • Apply insights about the past to other historical contexts or circumstances, including the present

***Teaching Procedures:***

This course is structured around a complete examination of United States history. Because participation is an essential element of the American experiment with democracy, participation in every class is also essential to your success as a student. Before each class, students should have read each chapter and/or any other material assigned for that day. Each class will begin with a number of terms and questions that are available on kevincomtois.com that directly relate to the assigned readings. The class will together discuss the meaning of the terms and answer the questions. Students will be expected to participate in the class discussions by asking questions and expressing observations about the material at hand (and in the text). The instructor will make sure the discussion stays focused on the subject of the day. Students are required to take detailed notes.

*Questions from students are encouraged* in order to stimulate independent thinking about how this material relates to current American government and politics.

***Grading Policy:***

**Exams:** 40%

Multiple choice, matching and essay questions based on the text, readings, lectures, and discussions

**Quizzes:** 30%

Weekly quizzes based on the reading assignments

**Homework**: 20%

Home work will be checked periodically through the course. Examples of home work will include paragraph long answers to questions regarding historical documents, writing case briefs, and other assignments.

**Quarterly Essays:** 10%

Four research essays using historical documents and secondary sources are required at the end of each quarter.

**Final Exam**

A cumulative exam is required at the end of the year

**Late Policy:** An assignment that is late loses 10 points (out of a hundred) for each class day that the assignment is late. If an assignment is turned at the end of the day (instead of in class) the assignment will lose 5 points.

**Class Participation:**  Class notes and discussions will be an integral part of the exams. Students must attend class. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain any missed notes due to an absence.

**Make- Up Policy:**A missed test is to be replaced by a make-up exam or a 10 - 12 page paper (method of make-up and subject of paper to be determined by instructor). It is each student’s responsibility to contact the instructor to schedule the makeup exam or to receive the essay topic and due dates.

**Student Accountability***:* Cheating on tests or plagiarism on essays will not be tolerated. If any student is caught cheating they will immediately fail the exam or quiz and may be reported to the proper school authorities.