American History I Syllabus

Northwest School of the Arts

Instructor Mr. Vitale – MC 463

**Course Overview:** American History is a two part curriculum requiring comprehensive reading and writing skills and an ability to finish daily homework. This course divides United States history into two parts, (1500-1877) and (1877-present day). Course material is taught chronologically as set out by the NC standard course of study, available at the NC DPI website.

**Course Schedule: (Pacing includes testing)**

UNIT 1—European Exploration, Columbian Exchange (10 Days)

UNIT 1A--The settlement of the 13 English Colonies (10 Days)

UNIT 2—The American Revolution (10 Days)

UNIT 3—The Young Republic (Critical Period) (10 Days)

UNIT 4—Division, Expansion, and Reform (15 Days)

UNIT 5—Manifest Destiny (15 Days)

UNIT 6—A House Divided- The Civil War and its aftermath (20 Days)

**TEXTBOOK**: We will use a variety of sources including the following textbooks:

*The Americans*, McDougal Little

*Creating America, A History of the United States*, McDougal Little

 It is the student’s responsibility to complete the assigned readings. Seriously. Read the assignments.

**Required Materials:**

Materials: Students are required to have a (1-2 inch), **3-ring binder** exclusively for this class. “*Exclusively*” means you don’t cram you math and English assignments into your HISTORY notebook. To keep you honest, there will be spot notebook checks. Because of the fast pace of this curriculum, it is essential for students to keep it together. This means you shouldn’t leave your notebook under your desk when the bell rings and you race for the door.

**Formal and Informal Grading:**

**Formal – 70%** There will be a minimum of four formal grades every 9 weeks. Expect unannounced quizzes on required readings. These formal assessments will count for 70% of the final grade. Projects can be treated as a test grade depending on their complexity.

**Informal – 30%** That probably means informal grades count for 30% and will include homework, classwork, and student involvement. Class participation is assessed through student comments, helpfulness, behavior, preparation, on-task behavior and how much you have upset the teacher that day.

**Late Work Policy**:

1) Students are expected to turn in all work when due. Students will be allowed a maximum of (5) days for an EXCUSED absence and points may be deducted. It is the **student’s obligation** to approach the teacher immediately when they return. (CMS Policy).

2) Students with UNEXCUSED absences who do not turn in their assigned work will be penalized under CMS policy.

3) Students who miss a chapter/ unit test must make it up at a mutually acceptable time within a maximum of 5 days per CMS policy. That means you and I have to find a good time to do it. That’s not going to happen while you’re supposed to be in another teacher’s class.

4) Grading is final at the close of each grading period. **Do not wait** to discuss a questionable grade! Come to me early with concerns, requests, bribes, extra credit, etc.

**Cell Phone Policy**:

Except for approved activities, don’t pull out a cell phone in class. This is a BIG DEAL for me. It is especially true during tests or quizzes. While we encourage technology in the classroom at times, camera/texting/web is strictly forbidden. Please do not do something stupid. Common sense goes a long way. There was a reason George Washington didn’t have a cell phone.

**Lecture and Discussion**: Students will be responsible for taking notes of class discussion. Students will be expected to participate in class discussions and must come to class prepared to share what they know.

**Quizzes**: Quizzes can be given with advance notice or at random. Some quizzes may not be counted at the teacher’s discretion. Pre-quizzes will not be given because there is no such thing. Pop-quizzes cannot be eaten so don’t try.

**College Preparation Project**: It is our hope all our students will be able to pursue educational or advanced employment opportunities after leaving Northwest. With this goal in mind, students must complete a college application during the winter break, complete with essay. The application will be graded and returned to the student for use during their senior year. Students will also complete a scholarship application during the Spring Break. Scholarships are often easier to apply to then most families realize and having a finished copy may help pay for higher education.

**Final Exam**: At the completion of the course, all CMS students will take a state issued final exam given in June of 2016. The exam will include both multiple choice and essay questions. You will not be asked to write a novel about American History but if you paid attention in class, you could.

**Videos and DVD’s**: Permission below will be required to take full advantage of videos, including “Movie Nights” and special showings. . If you don’t want to sit by yourself in the rain while the rest of the class is watching one, a permission form will be required. Your guardian’s signature below signifies your consent to showing historical related content to your student. Some possible selections include, but are not limited to:

“The Century” with Peter Jennings. ABC News

“First Invasion- The War of 1812”. The History Channel

“The American Revolution” parts 1 and 6. A&E

“The Civil War” parts 1 and final episode. Ken Burns, PBS.

Saving Private Ryan, Last of the Mohicans, The Patriot, and other excerpts.

**Academic Honesty:** Any work you turn in must be your own. Any time you use another person’s words, answers or ideas, you must give proper credit to that person by citing their work. I assume that each of you is honest so resist the urge to copy your friend’s wrong answer, thereby tipping me off that you have both lost your minds.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**: Classes meet daily and follow the CMS schedule. Please arrive on time. A student more than 45 minutes late is marked absent. If a student misses more than 10 classes/academic year, he/she cannot pass under North Carolina law without remediation. My experience is that students who miss class are the ones most likely to fail, much like the antelope straggling behind the herd is most likely to wind up in a nature documentary. Going on vacation or waking up late are not excused absences unless you have an inside track with Dr. Lockhart.

By signing, student and parent agree to abide by the expectations set forth above.

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_