# *United States History ACP Course Syllabus*

Ms. Despo
[despoj@wellesleyps.org](mailto:despoj@wellesleyps.org)
Rm 321

Dear Students,

Hello and welcome to United States History.  I am very excited about the upcoming school year and look forward to getting to know each one of you personally. This course will ask you to think about your role in our community, your responsibilities in our society and the expectations of US citizens in their government as well as how that government has responded to the people.

As juniors and seniors you are becoming more independent in your learning and your approach to school. As a result I have created a class that reflects this growth. It is expected that you know how to use Canvas. It is also expected that you understand how to read feedback on Powerschool and your grades as well. It is your responsibility to ask questions if you are confused as we move forward in the year.  As Juniors and Seniors  it is your responsibility to advocate for yourself. Practice the skill of advocating for yourself now so that you feel confident post high school to do so. I am here to support and help you develop those skills and I need your willingness and trust in order for us to be successful.

Wherever you are in your journey as a scholar please know that I am here to support and guide you through your own learning process. The more you can engage in this process the better I can support you.

| Guiding Questions for the Year |
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| The Declaration of Independence states that "all men are created equal," yet the United States has often failed to achieve such equality. How have individuals and groups sought to make America live up to the founding ideal that all people are created equal? |

| Units of Study |
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| The history department has organized the United States curriculum with a thematic approach. As a result, the content will not always go in chronological order. |
| **The United States Constitution:** The first unit you will learn the structure, strengths, and weaknesses of the Founding documents ; The Declaration of Independence and The United States Constitution. This unit will introduce the foundational information that is necessary to analyze the complex history of the United States.<br>● *In what ways does the Constitution limit the power of the government to make change?*<br>● *What are the characteristics of the U.S. government set forth by the Constitution? How do these processes work?* |
| **Democracy and Authority:** This unit will look at the balance that existed (and still exists) between federal and state powers and the impact this balance has on those living in the United States.<br>● *How has the relationship between the national and state government evolved over time?* |
| **Foreign Policy:** We will view the role of the United States on the international stage through the lens of United States' immigration policies and trends over time.<br>● *Assess the costs and benefits of American foreign policy on the rest of the world.*<br>● *To what extent has the motivating factors of American foreign policy (i.e, isolationism, ideology and practical interests) sacrificed American ideals?* |
| **Equality and Hierarchy:** This theme will explore how marginalized groups in the United States have used their own activism in order to obtain equality. It will also explore the policies created that allowed for groups to become marginalized.<br>● *Through what mechanisms have marginalized groups gained greater de jure (legal) and de facto (practical) equality?* |

| Supplies |
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| As Juniors and Seniors you should begin to think critically about which organization style fits your learning style. In that realm, I ask that you have your course reader everyday in class as well as a **notebook** to write down notes (not your computer), so you will need a **pen or pencil** everyday as well. Many assignments will be hand written in class so it is imperative to have **lined paper** and a pen/pencil everyday in class. Also, we will be working on note taking skills so having several **different colored highlighters i**s helpful as well. A **folder or binder** to include any handouts I give you in addition to your course reader is essential as well. |

## Course Communications

| Canvas | Feedback (informal) | Powerschool |
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| -Only scholars have access to Canvas. You may use this to submit an assignment, however, all grades will be on powerschool. This is a change from last year for many of you.<br><br>- Assignments will be uploaded to Canvas but grades will be posted on Powerschool.<br><br>- You can see course materials as well as handouts on canvas | -The purpose of feedback loops are for the scholar to better understand the skill they need to improve. At times feedback loops will be informal and can occur in class through discussions or written on assignments.<br><br>It is imperative that you use the feedback in order to improve your skills.<br><br>Therefore it is your responsibility to check your rubrics and assignments to read the comments that I have provided. If you do not understand anything I wrote please ask!<br><br>Remember: Using feedback is not simply "fixing the few mistakes that I point out"<br><br>Revision policies around major and minor assignments is up to teacher discretion | -Powerschool will be updated once a month to reflect your current grade.<br><br>- I will also provide comments and feedback on assignments through this portal as well<br><br>- Unresolved 'Incompletes' at the end of a quarter will become a F when the school requires us to translate that 'Incomplete' to a fixed letter grade.<br><br>-I encourage students and parents to have open conversations about the best way for your family to use PowerSchool.  It can be a great tool that can also sometimes distract us from our larger learning goals. |

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| Makeup Work & Late Work Policies |
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| **Makeup work:** You will be allowed to make up major assessments using feedback I have given you within one cycle<br><br>**Late Work Policy:** Late work will be accepted only if you have had a conversation with me in person or email about your concerns and why you need an extension. |

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| **Cell Phones and Laptops: Please be  mindful of how you use your technology in the classroom and always be respectful and courteous of others.** |
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| Cell phones and laptops are integral tools in our teaching and learning. As the year progresses you will find what works, and what does not work, for you as a student. If I feel as if you are not participating properly in class and technology is becoming a distraction I will speak with you and your adult supporters directly. We will work with you, as a team, to find what best works for your learning. Often, I will ask you to put away the technology or print out a hard copy of your work/notes in order to facilitate community building by not having technology in front of us. I encourage you to think about how you can best manage your use of technology. |

| **Extra Time on Assessments** |
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| If you are allowed extra time on assessments per an IEP or 504 it is your responsibility to reach out to me (and the Learning Center teacher) to set up extra time 48 hours prior to said assessment. |

## United States History ACP 2025-2026 School Year Grading

| **Major Assignments** (50-100 pt) will account for 65% of a scholar's grade. Q1 will be 50%/50% These are intended to be an assessment of your learning after completing a unit or multiple larger topics. . These assignments can range from, and are not limited to: | **Minor Assignments** (25-50 pt) will account for 35% of a scholar's grade. These are intended to be a brief assessment of your learning on an individual skill or topic. Types of assignments may include . These assignments can range from, and are not limited to: | **Student Skills** will be a category that is meant to be informative and therefore will not count towards a scholar's final grade. It will be documented as either Pass/Fail in order to inform the scholar and their support team where they are with their student skills. These skills can range from, and are not limited to: |
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| <ul><li>Essays</li><li>Discussions</li><li>Visual Metaphors</li><li>Narrative writing</li><li>Unit exams</li></ul> | <ul><li>Quizzes</li><li>Shorter writing prompts</li><li>Classwork assignments</li><li>Reflections</li><li>Open Response Questions</li><li>Creative challenges</li></ul> | <ul><li>Showing to class on time</li><li>Consistently completing homework</li><li>Be prepared for class (having notebook, notes, any necessary handouts)</li><li>Consistently participates in different ways(small groups, larger groups, one on one)</li><li>Seeks support when necessary from multiple places</li><li>Consistently takes notes and uses them to inform the work they are doing.</li></ul> |

## Late Work Policy

Students have up to 3 days past the original due date to hand in an assignment and choosing to take these days results in a student accepting that the highest grade they can receive is a B+.

- In that "grace period", students cannot get extra help from their teacher. However they are encouraged to access the Social Studies lab.

If an assignment comes in after the grace period, it is up to teacher discretion on whether or not to accept the assignment at all. If a student needs an extension beyond the 72 hour grace period, it must be requested 48 hours prior to the original due date. Due to the fact that our late policy has been abused, this may also require confirmation from adult supporters.

**Cell Phones and Personal Computers**

Although cell phones and electronic devices are an integral part of our lives inside and outside of the classroom, they will not be allowed to be used during our class time. You are expected to "park" your cell phones in the cubby when you arrive at class and leave it there for the duration of class. You may not take it with you if you leave for the bathroom and if you arrive late you will be reminded to park it as well. If there continues to be an issue with following this policy I will communicate with home and your House Office.

**Plagiarism and using AI**

As AI becomes increasingly integrated into education and daily life, it's essential for parents and guardians to understand the ethical implications and guide their children towards responsible use. Here are some key points to consider:

Understand the Potential Misuse:

- **Academic Dishonesty:** Students might use AI to generate essays, assignments, or code without understanding the underlying concepts.
- **Misinformation:** AI tools can produce inaccurate or biased information, potentially leading to harmful consequences.
- **Privacy Concerns:** Some AI tools collect and analyze personal data, raising questions about data privacy and security.

Encourage Critical Thinking:

- **Fact-Checking:** Teach your child to verify information from multiple sources, especially when using AI-generated content.
- **Evaluating Sources:** Help them understand the importance of evaluating the credibility of information sources.

Set Clear Expectations:

- **School Policies:** Discuss your child's school's policies on AI usage and academic integrity.
- **Personal Boundaries:** Establish guidelines for when and how to use AI, ensuring it's used as a tool rather than a replacement for learning.

Educate on Ethical Implications:

- **Bias:** Explain how AI can perpetuate biases present in the data it's trained on.
- **Privacy:** Discuss the importance of protecting personal information and the risks associated with sharing data with AI systems.

Monitor and Guide:

- **Open Communication:** Maintain an open dialogue with your child about their experiences with AI.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep up-to-date on AI advancements and their potential impacts.
- **Seek Help:** If you notice concerning patterns or behaviors related to AI use, don't hesitate to seek advice from educators or professionals.

By fostering a thoughtful and ethical approach to AI, parents and guardians can help their children navigate the complexities of this rapidly evolving technology and become responsible digital citizens.