

LASS7 – Mr. Elliott Rodgers, Room 601

Syllabus – Social Studies 8 (SS8) 2013 - 14

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Social Studies – areas of focus throughout the year:

Content sequence – The world around 1500 – Native Americans and European review; Early Settlement and Colonies; The 1700s and the American Revolution; The Constitution and Early Republic; Westward Expansion; North and South and Slavery; Civil War and Reconstruction; Immigration, Industrial Revolution, and Progressivism.

Processes - mapping, primary sources, research methods, critical thinking, current events, historical issues and the modern world, historical analysis - cultural universals, meaning of history over time

Focus on Historical Inquiry, Project Based Learning, Arts Integration, Differentiated assignments, Group Process

Assignment modalities – Written, Literary response (to primary sources, essays, poetry), Public Speaking, Visual Arts, Theater, Research, Debate, Simulation

Projects and Simulations–

Topics: Amendments Project, Historical Topics Group Project, Modern Parallels to History.

Students will choose from a Project menu for the year, completing a different format for each project – research required for each – written, presentation, film, website, performance.

Projects will be supported in class as part of the daily assignments and are not considered additional work beyond content.

Simulations: The Paris Treaty, 1783; Electioneering in America; Constitutions of the Past and Future

Grading policy

90 - 80 - 70 percentage standard scale

All assignments earn points (not letter grades) toward the total class grade

Grades are based on rubrics or clearly elaborated assignment expectations

Extra Credit (XC) is built into specific assignments throughout the year. There are no XC assignments.

Late work penalties –

10% one day, 20% five days, 30% up to twenty days.

Work later than that will only be accepted after a parent-student-teacher conference.

Check off work grades (have a point value of 1 – 3) are based on timelines alone, thus check off grades can only be made up for very specific assignments.

No assignments will be accepted after the last official day of the grading period.

The grade books are closed one week before the official reporting date so that students have a one week time period to complete any late assignments before grades are due.

Standard assignment values

50 points: projects

40 points: tests, Final Draft - longer written assignments

30 points: larger graphic assignments

20 points: smaller graphic assignments, Final Draft or Final Performance of shorter process assignments

15 points: longer quiz, simple graphic assignments, longer single draft writing assignments

10 points: graded journal, shorter quiz, most daily assignments and homework assignments (20 - 30 min of work for most students)

5 points: pop quizzes, reading check quizzes, quick in class activities, non-graded (read) journals, written drafts and graphic sketches

Class participation grade - Check off assignments (cumulative effect on final trimester grade up to 25 percent):

drafts for multiple draft assignments including sketch plans for graphics, outlines, notes, completed journal drafts

necessary materials - paper, pen or pencil, colored pencils, ruler, including required materials for specific assignments on time in class at the beginning of class

on time to class

assignments on time at the beginning of class ready to be used - printed, shared with teacher, not in locker, not left at home, etc.

working well with others

being proactive when needing help (lacking understanding, low performance, missing work, making up work due to absence in a timely manner)

participating in class activities

Class processes

Personal Management - time management, homework, personal success, dealing with strengths and weaknesses

Working with others - partners, groups, teachers, leadership, citizenship and working with personal boundaries, body language

Critical thinking and debate - argumentation, debate, persuasion, analysis of arguments and concepts,

Project orientation - smaller assignments are coupled together into larger individual and group projects

Writing process - utilize edit and revision strategies individually, in group and with adults to improve written assignments

Parent homework - encourages regular discussions about personal experiences, history and current events

Writing Portfolio - collection of poetry, journals, short story process, and personal essays (many assignments built on earlier sketches, or other forms of writing (journals or a poem may evolve into a story or personal essay)

Internet, Email and Contact

Reading each post of the class blog is essential to succeed in the class, since it parallels most of the directions given in class. Most handouts will be available on the blog.

Please “follow” the class daily blog. Directions, schedules and changes to assignments will be posted here. (Following the blog will send each post to the email you provide).

Use the blog when you are absent or are missing assignments to find directions and handouts in order to complete what you are able before returning to class

Checking PowerSchool regularly is essential for both students and parents, especially a week before progress reports (due at end of sixth week) and a week before the end of the trimester, to ensure that all missing work is completed.

Emails will be responded to within 24 hours. I check my emails twice a day – around 2:00 pm and around 8 pm so that I may respond to student and parent concerns. I am not standing by my computer waiting for emails all day long (sorry).

Sending an email: in subject include the student’s first and last name – and a 3-5 word summary of the issue or name of assignment in question

Please explain the issue or problem at the beginning of the text, and suggest a solution that you feel is reasonable

If you would like me to call you, then please leave the best phone number(s) to reach you and a 3 hour window that I can reach you. I usually can talk from about 3 – 8 pm most nights, before or after meetings or a writing class. I will call on weekends rarely.

If the issue is complex, please be brief in email. I would prefer to speak directly with you so we can find a positive solution that works for all parties.