

US HISTORY 2009-10

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MISSION OF NOTRE DAME DE SION

The Notre Dame de Sion School in Kansas City is an independent Roman Catholic school providing the highest quality college preparatory education from preschool through grade 12. Sion continues the tradition of the founding sisters, the Congregation of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Sion, inviting students to encounter God in a Catholic atmosphere that respects all faith traditions. The school partners with families and the community to prepare students for socially responsible, values based leadership in a culturally and religiously diverse world.

Educating Minds, Expanding Hearts

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this course, we will be studying American history from the Age of Exploration through dawn of the 21st Century. Emphasis will be placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills, essay writing, interpretation of primary and secondary documents, literature, and art connecting ideas and events from the past to current social issues. This course is intended to enlighten students about who they are as citizens of the United States by exploring past events that have shaped the world we live in today.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- identify and discuss the major political, social, economic, cultural and technological developments in United States history and the relation of those developments to later U.S. history and modern-day life.
- demonstrate an understanding of historical chronology of events and issues in United States history.
- understand the relevance of social history.
- identify contributions made by women in American society throughout history.
- apply practical map, chart and graph interpretation skills to enhance understanding.
- develop critical thinking skills through simulations, discussion, analysis of primary and secondary sources and the writing of analytical essays.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

“Consistent with the spirit of the Mission Statement, Notre Dame de Sion seeks to foster an atmosphere of mutual courtesy and respect among students, faculty, and staff. Further, Sion strives to develop in students a true sense of responsibility for their actions and the consequences of those actions. Students are, therefore, expected to observe the regulations of the school, to exhibit a respect for themselves and others in their words and all their actions.” Taken from the 2007-08 Notre Dame de Sion Student Handbook, p.5.

- **Respect:**
Treat others as you would like to be treated. We will speak one at a time, allowing everyone to express their opinion freely and in a respectable manner.
- **Responsibility:**
Arrive on time and well prepared for class. Actively listen and participate in every class. Stay on task until excused by the teacher.

- **Reciprocate:**

Do your best! Help keep this class pleasant, positive, supportive, and fair by doing your part and sharing in the process of learning.

COURSE MATERIALS

The Americans, Published by McDougal Littell

Supplemental materials such as short articles and readings drawn from books, newspapers, magazines, and journals will be provided by the instructor and are warmly welcomed if you should come across anything that would be of interest to the rest of the class.

CLASS STRUCTURE

This course will be facilitated with an emphasis on student-centered learning. There will be a variety of activities including: lecture, class discussion, individual and group work, student presentations, debates, role-playing simulations, research, games and use of audio-visual materials. Assessment of performance and achievement will be based on all of which were previously listed including class participation, behavior, projects, quizzes and tests.

HOMEWORK

It’s clearly important for a student to stay up to date and current on all reading and written work. Each student will be required to take notes, outline, or highlight the required reading and keep all notes in a specifically assigned reading notebook. There will be opportunities to provide “**proof of reading**” (POR) the day following a reading assignment. This will take the form of a quiz, writing assignment, or any other creative work to show that the student understands what she has read. Periodically students will be required to turn in their assigned reading notebooks.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading:

Your semester grade is determined by the following Sion standard formula: 40% Qtr. 1 or 3 grade; 40% Qtr. 2 or 4 grade; 20% Final Exam. Your quarter grades will be divided (roughly) between:

- “Major Work” (unit and chapter exams, timed in-class essays, and research projects) – approx. 60%
- Daily Work (all else) – approx. 40%.

Grade	Percentage	Regular
A	95-100%	4.00
A-	93-94%	3.70
B+	91-92%	3.35
B	87-90%	3.00
B-	85-86%	2.70
C+	83-84%	2.35
C	76-82%	2.00
C-	74-75%	1.70
D+	72-73%	1.35
D	67-71%	1.00
D-	65-66%	0.70
F	Below 65%	0.00

MISSED WORK POLICY

In order to master the course material, you must attend class regularly and keep up with the reading assignments. Thus, attendance is essential. If you must miss a class, it is your responsibility to arrange for missed class activities and assignments. It is your responsibility to locate assignment information on Ms. Brown's web page at <http://www.ndsion.com/faculty/brown/index.html>, in addition to inquiring with Ms. Brown about the missed class period once she returns.

The Notre Dame de Sion handbook is clear on the procedure for make-up exams and assignments (page 5):

- A student receives twice the number of days absent to make up all tests and assignments. Make-up tests should be scheduled during a study hall, after school, or on Thursdays after 2:05 p.m.
- Previously scheduled tests, quizzes, projects or homework missed due to absence should be made up on the day the student returns from absence.
- If a student is in school on the day of an assigned test, she is responsible for the test. Late arrival or early dismissal DOES NOT excuse her from the test. If a student is ill enough to be picked up by a parent and taken home, the test may be re-scheduled. (NDS Student Handbook, 2008-09)

Late work, which is any work handed in after the assignment is collected on or after the date it is due, will be subject to a **10% reduction** for every day it is late. To be accepted, the assignment must have the date due, the date you are turning in the assignment in, and must be given directly to the instructor. Do NOT just place the assignment on my desk.

TARDINESS

Being tardy is just as disruptive to your learning as an absence and is disruptive to both classmates and instructor. You must be in your seat and ready to participate by the time the bell rings. See page 6 of the NDS handbook regarding enforcement policies of rules.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

“Plagiarism refers to a form of cheating that has been defined as ‘the false assumption of authorship; the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind, and presenting it as one’s own.’ To use another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarize. **Plagiarism, then, constitutes intellectual theft**” (*MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Fifth Edition 30).

Sion’s handbook has clear prohibitions against cheating, lying, and plagiarism and will not be tolerated in this class. Should a situation arise, it will be dealt with on an individual basis.

INSTRUCTOR AVAILABILITY

Ms. Brown is available by appointment before and after school. Students are strongly encouraged to come in for extra help during these times if they are having difficulty in class or need clarification on assignments.

WEB SITE INFORMATION

Students may access Ms. Brown’s web page at <http://www.ndsion.com/faculty/brown/index.html> where they can locate assignment information, calendar of class events, project information, course syllabus, course grades, and Ms. Brown’s email contact information. If a student misses a class period, she is expected to locate the assignment information on the web page.

Feel free to ask for help at any time, my door is always open!