

United States History
Valencia High School
Frequently Asked Questions/Course Orientation
Fall 2009
Mr. Bristol

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1. What is the FAQ (read: course orientation)?

This FAQ sheet/course orientation has been prepared to communicate the expectations, course content, requirements, policies, and other information that will give you the opportunity to achieve and have a positive learning experience. Please read it carefully and share it with your parents. If you have a question about any part of this reference guide, then please ask me.

2. What is this class about?

Students in grade eleven study the major turning points in American history in the twentieth century. Following a review of the nation's beginnings and the impact of the Enlightenment on U.S. democratic ideals, students build upon the tenth grade study of global industrialization to understand the emergence and impact of new technology and a corporate economy, including the social and cultural effects. They learn that the United States has served as a model for other nations and that the rights and freedoms we enjoy are not accidents, but the results of a defined set of political principles that are not always basic to citizens of other countries. Students will understand that our rights under the U.S. Constitution are a precious inheritance that depends on an educated citizenry for their preservation and protection. They also learn that the political, economic, and social causes and effects of the United States becoming a world power.

3. What materials do I need to get?

Students are responsible in caring for their books. Lost or damaged books must be replaced or paid for by the student to whom the book was issued. Loaning books to others is not an excuse for non-culpability.

Textbook: *United States History: Modern America*
Replacement cost: \$90.00

Workbook: *United States History: Modern America; Reading and Note Taking Study Guide*
Replacement cost: \$30.00

Other Materials: -Spiral – bound, perforated, 70-page notebook.

-3 x 5 flash cards on firm card stock. (200 will do, accounting for mistakes)

Students are expected to bring the appropriate materials to class each day including:

- pens of at least two different colors
- pencil
- EXTRA NOTEBOOK PAPER TO ADD TO EXTRA LONG NOTEBOOK ASSIGNMENTS
- assignment materials

4. How do I EARN my grade?

All grades have a point value within weighted categories. The student's grade will be calculated at the end of each five-week period, and a progress report or report card will be issued.

The categories are weighted as follows:		The following scale is used to determine student grades:	
Home Assignments:	20%	A (Advanced)	= 90-100%
Quizzes:	20%	B (Proficient)	= 80-89%
Class Assignments:	25%	C (Basic)	= 70-79%
Tests:	25%	D (Below Basic)	= 60-69%
Final Exam:	10%	F (Far Below Basic)	= 00-59%

***DO NOT THROW OUT ANY ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL AFTER RECEIVING YOUR SEMESTER GRADE
*UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, WRITE ALL ASSIGNMENTS IN YOUR OWN HANDWRITING**

a. Class Participation:

A "class participation" grade will be recorded at the beginning of the semester reflecting student conduct in the class room. This grade is an automatic positive credit. Any infractions in class room rules, tardies, excessive bath room breaks (two freebies each quarter), etc. will be reflected negatively in the class participation grade throughout the semester. If any of the "two freebies" remain at the end of each quarter, they will be cashed in as extra credit.

b. Home Assignments (20%) - Identification Term flash cards...mostly:

HOLD ON TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER

Homework assignments are usually unit identification term flash cards. They are assigned the first day of the semester for the first unit and then assigned at the end of each unit test for the next unit of study. Occasionally, a homework assignment will be assigned to enhance understanding of class lessons. For late id term flash cards, ½ credit will be given within 2 days of the due date for any type of mishap; quiz must still be taken on the given day. Missing assignments due to an unexcused absence will still earn a zero.

c. Quizzes (20%) - Based on the understanding of the Identification Terms:

HOLD ON TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER

Upon the turning - in of a Unit Identification Term home assignment, a short quiz of five written response questions will be administered based on *all* of the assigned terms. The first four questions will each ask for a separate identification term and the fifth question will ask for specific information about one of the remaining identification terms. **Please *KNOW* all of your terms when they are turned-in.** The first quiz will be scaled to 50% of the other quizzes. By the end of the semester, two of the most damaging quiz scores will be "dropped" (not counted in the grade). There will be one geography quiz. **Any student present on the quiz day will take the quiz or receive a "0", even if absent any of the days immediately before the quiz day.**

d. Class Assignments (25%) - Identification Terms in context:

HOLD ON TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER

Assignments in class will cover a variety of material from the textbook and extra materials introduced by the instructor or the students. Students are expected to stay on task and complete the class work in the allotted time. Most class work will be organized in a notebook. Identification terms discussed in historical context within the lesson will be noted by number on the front board. Periodically, on a "notebook check" day, a one - chunk paragraph will be given to check for understanding of the daily lessons/notes and an assignment from the notebook will be collected.

e. Tests (25%) - At least 90 % of test questions will be based on Identification Terms:

HOLD ON TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER

At the completion of a unit a test will be assigned. The test will assess mastery of the material from the current unit chapters. Students will study any materials and assignments covering the appropriate chapters. Beginning with the second unit test, questions will cover identified material from previous unit tests. **The only regularly assigned extra credit is offered on the assessments.** Make-up essays are offered to those who receive a C- (below 73%). Any assessment taken out of the classroom or not on the assigned day will receive the make-up essay in lieu of the actual test; students may use their identification term flash cards as a source to help answer the prompt. **Any student present on the test day will take the test or receive a "0", even if absent any of the days immediately before the test day.** The last unit's test will be "rolled into" the Final Exam. The US History work book is an excellent supplemental in studying for tests.

**4. f. Final Exam (10%) – EXHAUSTIVE (EVERY question from every unit test including the last unit):
STUDY ALL ASSIGNMENTS/HOLD ON TO ALL ASSIGNMENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER**

At the end of the semester a final exam will be administered. The exam will cover all materials assigned. Students are expected to study the work and materials given in class. Do not throw out any assignments until after receiving your semester grade. The US History work book is an excellent supplemental in studying for the final exam. The last unit's test will be "rolled into" the Final Exam. **Each and every question from the unit tests will be on the final exam, therefore, the word: exhaustive. Any student with an unexcused tardy on the final exam day will have 10% deducted from his/her final exam score.**

g. Extra Credit - The only regularly assigned extra credit is on the tests or for unused bathroom passes:

Extra credit has been made a standard part of tests along with extra little perks like rounding up to the nearest whole percent on the overall grade, make - ups on the tests, dropping the two most damaging quiz scores, etc. Pay attention and do your best on all of your assignments and you will not need to ask for extra credit. Extra credit for the student always means extra work and extra time from the teacher. Your grade should measure your understanding of the materials and extra credit corrupts that measure.

5. What do I do when I miss a class or an assignment?

If you miss a class, check Mr. B's website then see Mr. B for any missed work. Work turned in after the due date and time is **ONLY** allowed for **EXCUSED ABSENCES** on the due date as defined by the attendance office. The student will have two school nights for each excused absence. No late/absence work accepted unless for an excused absence as defined by the attendance office. General guideline for "excused" = beyond student's control. See 8th Absence and Excused/Unexcused sections below.

When absent, check the lesson plans posted on my website: <http://staff.hartdistrict.org/bbristo/USH.htm>

If you have any questions about the assignment, then see me immediately with a copy of the directions so I can all the more easily help you in a timely manner.

TURN IN ALL LATE (ABSENT) ASSIGNMENTS TO ME PERSONALLY

-OR-

HAVE THE OFFICE TIME, DATE, AND SIGN TO BE PLACED IN MY MAIL BOX

-OR-

IF I AM ABSENT, TURN IN TO THE SUBSTITUTE DIRECTLY

NEVER LEAVE IT ON MY DESK OR PLACE IT IN THE DAILY/ON - TIME CLASS WORK BIN

6. Why should I go to and be on time to class?

Attendance is important and directly related to success in this course. Students need to be on time to class each day. The school tardy and attendance policies will be followed, i.e. **when the bell rings (at the beginning of the sound of the bell)**, students should be seated in their assigned seats, with pen/pencil and paper, ready to learn. Mr. Bristol will not excuse any absences for the activities of another department or teacher; you must speak with the appropriate department/teacher to "clear" your absence.

7. Why should I show up to class on time (read: should I be concerned about tardies)?

IF you are not in class when the tardy bell rings (**at the beginning of the sound of the bell**), then you must acquire a tardy slip for that day, that period, and in your name. IF you do not acquire a tardy slip when you are tardy (e.g. the tardy table is down), then you will receive the consequences for a class room infraction affecting your class participation grade. IF you have a valid excuse for being tardy then acquire an excused tardy slip/note from the appropriate department/teacher. Mr. Bristol will not excuse any tardies for the activities/actions of another department or teacher.

8. How many excused bathroom breaks can I have?

Due to the amount of course work and the depth of study required in the short time offered in class periods and that the disruption of students leaving and returning to class disrupts the lesson for the whole class, only **TWO** emergency bathroom passes will be allowed per student, per quarter. Any more than two bath passes will result in points lost to the student's class participation grade. Any tardies due to bath room breaks will count as one of the two allowed emergency bath breaks; beyond the two allowed emergency bath breaks, any tardy will be counted as an unexcused tardy with OR detention as an eventual possibility. **EXTRA CREDIT** will be offered for any unused passes at the end of each quarter. Passes **DO NOT** "roll over" to the next quarter; they are automatically "cashed in" for extra credit.

9. What happens after I am absent from my US history class 8 times?

The district requires teachers to inform any student missing 8 days or more *for that class period* that the student is in danger of failing the course. **Whether for school or personal reasons, excused or unexcused reasons, each period's absence is reflected in the total absence count.** The point is that the student has missed nearly two school weeks (like being on vacation when everyone else is at work) and needs to be reminded to stay on top of missing assignments.

10. What are excused and unexcused absences?

Missing work is allowed to be turned in not more than two school nights for each *excused absence*. The following non-definitive list in as small a font as legible should help clarify the meaning of excused/unexcused absences:

- Excused** (w/attendance code) = short – term independent study (STI); DAPEC program (DAP); Health Office (NUR); Excused Tardy (ETD); Home Study (HMS); In School Suspension (ISS); Work Experience (WEX); Warranted (WAR); Opportunity Room (OPR); Unexcused Tardy (TDY); Off Campus Activity (ACT); Excused (EXC); On Campus Activity (ONC).
- Unexcused** (w/attendance code) = Unverified (UNV); Suspension (SUS); Unexcused (UNX); Truant (TRU)
- Unverified** (UNV) means the reason for absence has not been verified or “cleared” and will be treated as “unexcused”. Once the absence has been “cleared” the coding will change to either an excused or unexcused absence and will be treated accordingly.
- Cleared** A *working* definition of “cleared”
 1. the reason for absence has been verified
 2. “cleared” is a neutral term that does not imply an excused or unexcused absence but does describe *the process* to determine an excused or unexcused absence.

It is the responsibility of the student to "clear" absences with the attendance office (find the adult responsible for your absence and have that person write a note).

11. How should I behave in class/what are the big "no-no's" and consequences for misbehavior?

One major theme in United States history is tolerance to the many different cultures present in the United States. Therefore, the most important rule of behavior is courtesy to each individual. This is the first and most important expectation. Further, high school students, as emerging adults, have attained a level of maturity that requires them to accept full responsibility for their conduct and treatment/interactions with peers and instructors. To maximize the learning opportunities for all students, we have the following expectations:

1. **Absolutely NO CELL PHONE USE, electronic games, or "i-pods" in the classroom.**
2. No head coverings (hats, hoods, caps, "do - rags" etc. may be worn.
3. Treat classmates and all school personnel with respect. No offensive language, “put-downs” or derogatory remarks will be acceptable.
4. Come to class prepared and on time.
5. **Absolutely NO CELL PHONE USE, electronic games, or "i-pods" in the classroom.**
6. Do not eat or drink in class (water excepted)
7. Follow directions the first time.
8. Do not distract others from learning; no class room disruptions.
9. **Absolutely NO CELL PHONE USE, electronic games, or "i-pods" in the classroom.**

If a student is unable to follow the rules stated above, the following steps and Opportunity Room procedures will be taken *in addition to the automatic deduction from class participation points*:

1. verbal reminder
2. parent contact
3. parent/teacher/counselor conference
4. one/two-day suspension from class (Opportunity Room)
5. withdrawal from the class with NM grade/loss of credit with placement in Opportunity Room.

****12. Why must I keep my academic integrity/honesty?**

Integrity is an increasingly important value in our modern society. In the ever shifting political, economic, and cultural climate it is important that each person has the integrity to make sense of this world and steer a course of success no matter where and in what type of careers through which he happens to travel. Integrity is one important value to learn early in life. Here at Valencia High School we inculcate integrity in the students through academic honesty. Therefore it is of paramount importance that any work, grade, project, achievement, or feeling of success to which a student has be that student's own. Any student found to have been academically dishonest will be held responsible for their actions.

Any student involved in **academic dishonesty** – or – **aiding academic dishonesty** on *any* assigned work, including quizzes, tests, projects, homework, class work, and essays, **even if only one line of work is copied**, will be subject to one or more of the following:

1. An automatic zero on the assignment.
2. A one day suspension from the class.
3. A referral to an Assistant Principal.
4. A conference with an Assistant Principal, the parent(s), and the instructor.

Academic dishonesty includes any, but not limited to, the following:

1. Copying anyone else's work such as text book, internet, fellow students, friends, parents, teachers, etc. **JUST ONE LINE OF COPIED WORK IS CONSIDERED AS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.**
2. Allowing anyone else to do your work. **JUST ONE LINE OF COPIED WORK IS CONSIDERED AS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.**
3. Allowing anyone else to copy your work. **JUST ONE LINE OF COPIED WORK IS CONSIDERED AS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.**

13. How do I contact Mr. Bristol?

I am available during my conference period and a half hour after my workday: period 5 and 3:00 to 3:30.

If you wish to make an appointment I can be reached at
bbristo@hartdistrict.org

And check out my staff web page for weekly information...
<http://staff.hartdistrict.org/bbristo/>

If you don't want an immediate, and have the patience to wait a week or two, call to leave a message at (661) 294-1188 ext. 514.

For research information links through the library:
<http://www.hart.k12.ca.us/valencia/library/>

Following this document you will find a matrix of the units of study matched to the California Curriculum Content standards for grade eleven United States History. Major standardized tests are aligned with these standards (such as STAR). These standards may be accessed in the school office or at: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/hstgrade11.asp>

14. What are the basic guidelines?

TOP 10 *Rules of Thumb*

1. If it's within your power/ability, then you're responsible for it.
2. Attend class daily, on time, with all necessary materials.
3. Do all of the assigned work, try your hardest to get it right/pay attention to it, and you should be able to get a "C".
4. Do all of the assigned work, try your hardest to get it right/pay attention to it, and you won't need extra credit.
5. Keep ALL of your work, especially the flash cards, until after you receive your semester grade in the mail.
6. Do all of your assigned work yourself...do not cheat/copy/plagiarize. Violators will be punished.
7. Keep ALL non-essential electronic devices in your pocket/backpack/purse, etc. They will be *confiscated*.
8. DO NOT disrupt class; this will affect your class participation grade and in most cases will result in "steps".
9. Unless otherwise specified, write all assignments in your own handwriting.
10. Enjoy the learning process in history while it's free, you're still in 11th grade and it's *not* vacation time==>)

United States History
Valencia High School
Frequently Asked Questions/Course Orientation
Mr. Bristol

Period 2 3 4 5 6 7 (circle your period)

I have read and do understand the contents of this course orientation.

Student's Name (printed): _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Name (printed): _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent E-Mail Contact (s):

(You could help the process of data entry into my e-mail group account by e-mailing me at bbristo@hartdistrict.org)

Note: Data entry is case sensitive. Please write AS CLEARLY and AS CLOSE TO POSSIBLE as you would in an actual e-mail. I sometimes make mistakes in deciphering some hand writing styles, especially differences in numbers and letters.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

****I have read and do understand the Academic Integrity section (#12) written on page five above.**

Initialed: Student _____ Parent _____