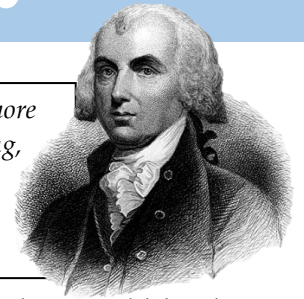
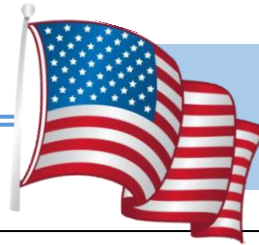


# United States Studies

# Syllabus

## Beginnings to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century



*“What spectacle can be more edifying or more seasonable, than that of liberty and learning, each leaning on each on the other for their mutual and surest support?”*

— James Madison, 4<sup>th</sup> U.S. President

**Instructor:** Mr. Erskine  
**Grade:** 10<sup>th</sup>  
**Room:** C101

### Course Description & Rationale:

10<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. Studies is an examination of the Pre-Columbian civilizations living in what would be the United States to its transformation as a dominant political and economic influence in the world at the beginning of the Twentieth Century.

In this course students will read, research, analyze, evaluate and discuss the causes and effects of many events and ideas across the first decades of America’s existence. Major overarching historical developments covered in this class include the geographical and political expansion of the country through diplomacy and war; the formation of and development of American political and legal systems; the roots of America’s cultural values and political ideology; the struggles of race, rights, women and Native Americans; the emergence and interaction of distinct cultural regions within the U.S.; the cultural changes and challenges brought by new technologies, immigrations, and ideas; and how all of these things help us understand our present values, customs, beliefs and challenges.

There will be reading, writing, and project based activities in this class to hone students’ content knowledge, critical thinking skills, note-taking skills, debate and communication skills, essay writing skills, interpretative skills, and geographical and historiographical understandings.

In all I hope this course will help students *see* the relevance of what has happened before them, *develop* the skills and knowledge necessary to become active members of society, *understand* how the past informs and shapes their present, and *become aware* that through learning history we can better understand the world around us and who we are as human beings.

### Textbook:

- ❖ Danzer, Gerald A., Larry S. Krieger, Luis E. Wilsion, Nancy Woloch, and Jorge J. Klor de Alva. Holt McDougal. *The Americans: Beginnings to 1914*. Student ed. N.p.: Holt McDougal, 2014

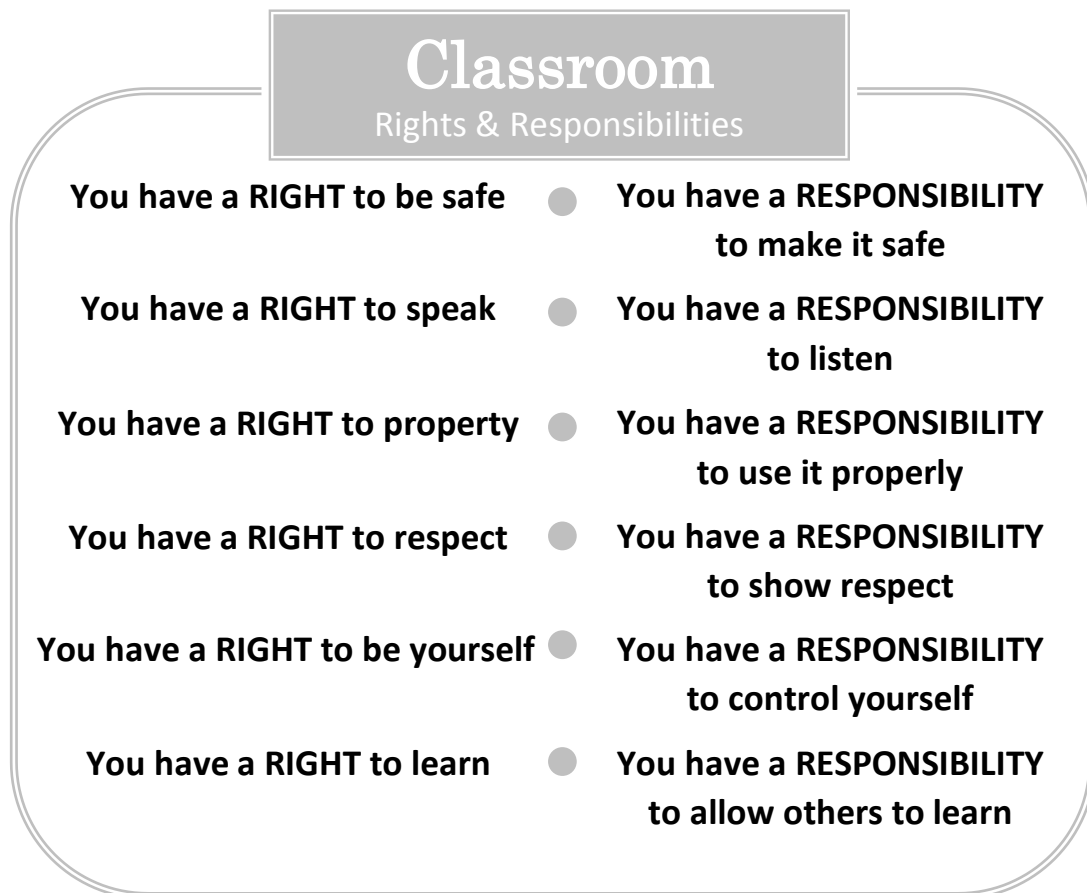
### Essential Materials:

- ❖ **Writing Utensils & Paper:** You should always have a pen or pencil (or both) and paper on hand each day you arrive to class. Don’t expect to get a free handouts from the teacher every day!
- ❖ **Composition Book:** You will need to get a composition book specific for this class. You will be having daily writings known as “Quick Writes” to open up class discussion. It may be a question or topic about history or something other than history. These will be graded periodically.
- ❖ **Class Binder:** You need to have a binder specifically for this class. Why? **First**, you will be doing assignments that will be graded regularly. Rather than lose track keep all work in one place and then there is no problem in finding it! **Second**, you will be building a portfolio of select classwork and projects throughout the year that will be graded cumulatively. **Third**, the binder can serve as a reference source for tests, exams and personal growth.
- ❖ **Netbooks:** You will be using your netbooks in this class to do group work, unit projects, research, online activities, and to download assignments onto for homework use.

## Important Policies:

- ❖ **Grading Scale:** This class' grading scale is in alignment with the grading scale of Greenbrier County Schools: A (100%-93%), B (92%-85%), C (84%-75%), D (74%-65%), F (64%-0%). The grades in this class however are point based, laid out as follows:
  - **Assignments/Activities:** Daily or every other day readings, writings, discussions. Range from 10-40 points on average depending upon the difficulty and extent of the activity.
  - **Quizzes:** Range around 60+ points depending upon content and time. Quizzes will be more numerous than tests because they will cover smaller chunks of information – most usually covering material over the course of a week or two of instruction.
  - **Tests:** Range from 100+ points depending upon content and timeframe. There will be UNIT TESTS in this class that will cover an entire breadth of material over weeks. You will be given ample time to study and prepare for these by the teacher. Highly recommended you study several days!
  - **Projects:** Vary in points depending upon content, complexity, and timeframe. Group & individual.
  - **Extra Credit:** Will not be given upon request but *only by the teacher's discretion* and will *never be given out to individual students!* Only given to ALL students!
- ❖ **Attendance:** A key to doing well in school is to be there! Be present at all costs unless you have a reasonable excuse. Consider the following:
  - **Skipping:** There is no excuse to *not* be where you are supposed to be at the set time. If found out you will be written up in compliance with school policy.
  - **Tardy:** Sometimes we can forget or have legitimate excuses. A single tardy will not garner discipline but you will need to have a legitimate explanation for why you were late. Consistent tardies will result in written up discipline in compliance with school policy.
  - **Excused Absence:** If you are sick, out for a personal or family issue, or involved in a school extracurricular activity then you are responsible to inform the teacher and get any assignments necessary ASAP when you have returned.
- ❖ **Homework:** Homework will not be routinely given out every night. However this does not mean “no homework.” Readings, assignments, notes, projects and alike *can and will* be given out occasionally and can increase or decrease depending on the material covered!
- ❖ **Makeup Work:** Sometimes we have to miss school. If we do, make sure it is a legitimate reason. If you miss class-time then consider the following about make-up work:
  - **Absent After Assignment Given:** If you are absent *after* an assignment has been given with a due date (i.e. notes, papers, projects, quizzes, tests) then you are responsible to turn that assignment in (or complete it) *the first day returning to class!*
    - (EX: Assignment given on Monday, due on Friday. You are absent Tuesday-Thursday come back on Friday. You are still required to turn in Monday's assignment on Friday!). The same goes for quizzes & tests!
  - \*NOTE: The teacher may choose, in conjunction with the student, to schedule the make-up work for a time outside of class or before or after class (i.e. quiz, test, or project)\*
  - **Absent During Assignment Given:** If you are absent *during* the time that assignments are given, then upon the first school day of your return YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE to see the teacher for all assignments missed. You will be given *enough time in accordance with school policy* (2 days per 1 day absent) to complete and turn in all missing work!
  - **Online Assignments & Submissions:** It is important for you to make use of *Engrade* in this class. Occasionally when you have missed assignments check your *Engrade* account for messages from the teacher. When you are absent you may also submit assignments to the teacher via email.

- ❖ **Late Work:** When an assignment is due it is to be turned in upon that specified due date! If you are late in turning in work there will be a reduction in grade letter for each day the assignment is late. After the 3<sup>rd</sup> day the assignment is a ZERO.
  - \*\**Extracurricular Activities:* If you are in band, choir, cheerleading, football, basketball, baseball, field-days, FFA or anything else extra-curricular YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE to make up assignments ON TIME! If you miss class you must check with the teacher to receive work. You will need to complete the work within the allotted timeframe of the schools absent policy.
  - \*\**Life Issue:* I understand that “life happens”! If there is a death in the family, an extended sickness, or some physical or natural disaster the teacher will work one-on-one with the student to get their assignments caught up or give alternate yet equivalent activities to be completed.
- ❖ **Cheating/Plagiarism:** There is literally no legitimate excuse for cheating or plagiarizing on any assignment. As a life lesson always do your own work and do not parasite off the work of others. Show the world what YOU can do, not what you can regurgitate or copy and paste from others. There is a zero tolerance policy for cheating on any assignment (especially quizzes and tests) or plagiarizing any assignment. *If you are caught you will receive an automatic ZERO.*
- ❖ **Cellphones/Electronics:** Any and all cellphones and/or electronic devices (i.e. iPods, iPads, MP3’s, Tablets, Gameboys) WILL NOT be permitted out during instructional time. There is a time and place for everything, but Social Studies is not the time to text or tweet to your buddies. Just for once take time and unplug! There will be an *Electronic Station* where you will be required to hang your electronic device until the teacher gives permission for pickup. If you are caught with an electronic there will be disciplinary action taken at teacher’s discretion in compliance with school policy (confiscation of cellphone/electronic devices is an option).



# Syllabus

Signature Page

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class:**  U.S. History  World Studies

**Period:** \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the syllabus and understand the course rationale, needed materials, important policies (grading scale, attendance, make-up work, late-work, home-work, cheating/plagiarism, cellphones/electronics) and class rights & responsibilities. This signature form is in effect the entire 2015 - 2016 school year. Parent/Guardian and student will be notified of any updates to the course syllabus.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Student Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Parent/Guardian Name (second if applicable)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

Does your child have the ability to access the internet at home/close to a library?  YES  NO

The best way to contact parent/guardian is:  email  cell phone  home phone

The best time to contact parent/guardian is: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Email (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Home #: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Parent(s) or Guardian(s),

I want to take a moment tell you that I am honored to be working with your child this year. I have high expectations for all my students and strive to show care, commitment and excitement for the subjects and students I teach. I do not take education lightly and hopefully neither do you. It is a solemn responsibility and privilege to instill the essential knowledge and skills in students necessary for them to becoming lifelong learners and better human beings - people who can think critically and understand the world rationally. With that I ask you to help me in maintaining within your child the high expectations, care, responsibility, and commitment necessary for them to succeed and grow in their educational life. As the old adage goes, "It takes a village to raise a child." I am honored I can be part of that process with your child. Please do not hesitate to contact me at the school (304) 647-6464 or via email at [merskine@k12.wv.us](mailto:merskine@k12.wv.us) if you have any questions or concerns during the year.

Sincerely,

Michael H. Erskine