

Dear Parent(s):

The purpose of this letter is to share some information and establish a foundation to move forward regarding next year's Advanced Placement United States History class. Standards are extremely high. APUSH is essentially a college-level course and is therefore taught in that spirit. Reading assignments are extensive. Tests consist primarily of multiple-choice questions and various types of essay-response items in accordance with the College Board National Examination format. Our journey through United States history starts with discovery of the Americas and continues into the new millennium.

Study is very comprehensive. We go beyond mere fact recall (otherwise known as memorization) to the higher levels of knowledge (synthesis, analysis, and evaluation). This is accomplished by creating a solid reservoir of data, and then linking one event to another, and to another, and to yet another. Our ultimate goal is to make sense of history by recognizing the often obscure ingredients and interlocking mechanisms which link the vast array of dates and people and events to create a gigantic chronological collage.

Although there are no absolute prerequisites for this course, simple logic dictates that a student should be *academically accomplished* (relatively high GPA) and possess some degree of *interest in American history*. Further, the APUSH student should be adept at *self-directed study*, exercise strong sense of *personal accountability*, make *attendance a priority*, and be willing to *create and manage well whatever amount of time* necessary for adequate consumption of knowledge. Major shortcomings in any of these areas, as well as an overzealous extra-curricular and/or work schedule, could become problematic. This class is very demanding of both time and effort. There are no viable shortcuts.

Students enrolled in APUSH are eligible to take the National Exam in early May. Based on the score, factored with the university selected to attend upon graduation from Stevens High School, students may receive college credit. The cost of the National Exam is less than \$100.

Stevens High School APUSH students have a record of performing well on the National Exam. Roughly 90 percent of students who completed APUSH with a high letter grade have passed the exam with a score of 3 or better (the equivalent of a B grade in a college-level course). This does not happen by simply enlisting in the class. It comes through constant and consistent effort, starting with day one (summer preparatory work, actually). Above all, parents and students should understand that this is a no-nonsense class and that students will be expected to conduct themselves academically and socially at levels which might very well be advanced and unfamiliar to them.

Once February, March, and April are upon us, we hold plenty of after-hours review sessions (mornings, lunchtime, evenings, and weekends) in preparation for the National Exam. Although attendance at these meetings is completely optional, it is highly recommended. It has been my experience that the students who perform well on the National Exam take advantage of every opportunity offered, including these extra study sessions.

Over the 20-plus years this course has been taught at Stevens High School, the majority of students have met with success. I know what it takes to prepare students for the National Exam, and it is my professional responsibility to proceed accordingly. Attention to my recommendations will put students in optimum position to score well. However, the ultimate responsibility for success or failure on the National Exam rests with each individual student, of course.

The other huge culminating event in APUSH is our Tri-State Excursion, which has become somewhat of a tradition. We journey to the Little Bighorn Battlefield in southeastern Montana, some historical sites in and near Sheridan, Wyoming, and Devils Tower National Monument. It is a wonderful three-day affair and occurs in late April.

I invite you to visit the course Website (preferred browser is Microsoft Edge/Internet Explorer) to acquaint yourself with all that APUSH entails. It is full of helpful material and crucial information, although it naturally needs to be updated in spots for the upcoming year—appearance at the start of summer compared to the following fall will differ in spots. Its extensive use throughout the year by students is an absolute. Therefore, students might want to take a moment soon to create shortcuts on whatever home computers and personal devices will be used to access the Website.

**[www.APUSH-XL.com](http://www.APUSH-XL.com)**

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at school until dismissal for summer. After that, my replies to e-mails become understandably slower. Unless the matter is absolutely critical, I do not care for telephone interruptions of my personal life at home. All APUSH summer preparatory work is due the first day of class for the new school year. I look forward to meeting parents next fall.

Sincerely,



Scott Tubbs  
APUSH Instructor

P.S. Students who bring this letter—with parent signature in the blank area immediately above this sentence—to class the first school day will receive 10 bonus points to start the year!

***Please remember these five important things about student enrollment in APUSH for next school year:***

- ❶ This is a **college-level** course.
- ❷ The work load is **enormous**.
- ❸ High levels of academic and social behavior are **expected**.
- ❹ Students must assume major **responsibility** for self.
- ❺ Irregular attendance is often inherently **detrimental**.