

Dear Student:

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 you should be *academically accomplished* (relatively high GPA) and possess some degree of *interest in American history*. Further, you should be adept at *self-directed study*, embrace sense of *personal accountability*, make *attendance a priority*, and be willing to *create and manage well whatever amount of time* needed for adequate consumption of knowledge. Major shortcomings in any of these areas, as well as a busy extra-curricular and/or work schedule, could become problematic for you. This class is very demanding of both time and effort. There are no viable shortcuts.

Your enrollment in APUSH makes you 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, *you should understand that this is a no-nonsense class* and that you will be expected to conduct yourself academically and socially at levels which might very well be advanced and unfamiliar to you.

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 your 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 you in optimum position to score well. However, *the ultimate responsibility for success or failure on the National Exam rests with you*, 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. *Your extensive use of the Website throughout the year is an absolute.* Therefore, you might want to take a moment now to create shortcuts on whatever home computers and personal devices you plan to use to access the Website.

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

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to visit me at school (until end of May). I can also be contacted through e-mail. However, keep in mind that e-mail is not checked on any sort of regular schedule during the summer months. Unless the matter is absolutely critical, I do not care for telephone interruptions of my personal life at home. *All summer preparatory work is due the first day of class* for the new school year. I am glad you will be an APUSHer. In the meantime, enjoy your summer!

Sincerely,



Scott Tubbs  
APUSH Instructor

P.S. Please have your parent(s) read the parental version of this letter. It is important that they, as well, receive this introductory information about the APUSH course that will be such a big part of your academic life starting next fall.

***Please remember these five important things about your commitment to 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 You must assume major **responsibility** for self.
- ❺ Irregular attendance is often inherently **detrimental**.