

TAMALPAIS UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
Larkspur, California

Course of Study

Honors World History

I. INTRODUCTION

Honors World History is a rigorous version of World History, designed to follow the same content areas and address the same enduring understandings and essential questions of the standard course offering. The honors component, however, would demand higher standards and expectations and would provide students with enhanced learning experiences. Greater emphasis will be placed on developing advanced reading, writing, analytical, and communication skills. A few key distinguishing factors between honors and the standard course would be a difference in the quality of work expected rather than merely an increase in quantity as well as a difference in the depth of the learning experiences.

This course addresses all aspects of the Tamalpais Union High School District's **Mission Statement** to:

- develop creative, passionate, and self-motivated learners;
- prepare students for engaged citizenship;
- contribute individually and collaborative in order to address the challenges of a dynamic and diverse world;
- master core competencies;
- to offer meaningful learning experiences;
- to enable students to critically analyze information, pose substantive questions, and communicate effectively

This course also addresses all of the following Tamalpais Union High School District **Student Learning Outcomes**:

- Outcome 1: Communicate articulately, effectively, and persuasively when speaking and writing
- Outcome 2: Read/view and analyze material in a variety of disciplines
- Outcome 3: Use technology to access information, analyze/solve problems, and communicate ideas
- Outcome 4: Demonstrate knowledge of individual rights and responsibilities in a democratic society
- Outcome 7: Demonstrate knowledge of the global environment and its resources
- Outcome 9: Apply the principles of economics
- Outcome 10: Analyze current issues from historical, political, economic, geographic, scientific and multicultural perspectives

- Outcome 11: Appreciate, interpret, experience, create, and/or perform artistic work

World History builds on skills, concepts, and content from the World Cultures and Geography curriculum. The course also complements and reinforces the material presented in English 3-4, allowing students to benefit from a holistic approach that fosters critical thinking across the disciplines.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- A. Major Units of Study: Students in Honors World History will follow the same course of study as the standard course offering. The major units of study include:
- The Rise & Development of Democratic Ideals
 - Revolutions
 - Industrialization
 - Imperialism
 - World War I
 - Totalitarianism
 - World War II & the Holocaust
 - Nation Building & the Cold War
 - Contemporary World Problems

- B. Students will be held accountable to the California content standards for World History, the enduring understandings of the World History course as established by the District teachers as well as to the California standards for Historical and Social Science Analysis. These include:

Chronological and Spatial Thinking:

- Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.
- Students analyze how change happens at different rates at different times; understand that some aspects can change while others remain the same; and understand that change is complicated and affects not only technology and politics but also values and beliefs.
- Students use a variety of maps and documents to interpret human movement, including major patterns of domestic and international migration, changing environmental preferences and settlement patterns, the frictions that develop between population groups, and the diffusion of ideas, technological innovations, and goods.
- Students relate current events to the physical and human characteristics of places and regions.

Historical Research, Evidence, & Point of View

- Students distinguish valid arguments from fallacious arguments in historical interpretations.
- Students identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations.
- Students evaluate major debates among historians concerning alternative interpretations of the past, including an analysis of authors' use of evidence and the distinctions between sound generalizations and misleading oversimplifications.
- Students construct and test hypotheses; collect, evaluate, and employ information from multiple primary and secondary sources; and apply it in oral and written presentations.

Historical Interpretation

- Students show the connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.
- Students recognize the complexity of historical causes and effects, including the limitations on determining cause and effect.
- Students interpret past events and issues within the context in which an event unfolded rather than solely in terms of present-day norms and values.
- Students understand the meaning, implication, and impact of historical events and recognize that events could have taken other directions.

III. ASSESSMENT

As Honors World History would be embedded in the heterogeneous classes, honors students will be responsible for meeting the same learning outcomes and enduring understandings as those students in the standard course. Assessments, however, will be appropriately differentiated for honors students through a variety of means including, but not limited to:

- Oral and written quizzes and tests. These written exams may combine multiple choice questions, short answer responses, identifications, and essays. They may frequently include document-based questions similar to those on Advanced Placement history exams.
- Research papers
- Outside reading book projects
- Primary source analysis journals
- Oral presentations, debates, simulations, and role-playing exercises
- Problem-solving exercises and projects
- Socratic Seminars, Harkness Table discussions.
- In addition to participating in discussions, students will learn to facilitate a small-group and whole-class seminar under the guidance and supervision of the teacher.

IV. METHODS & MATERIALS

A. Methods

Honors World History students will strive for depth of knowledge and higher levels of critical thinking while being held accountable for the same learning outcomes and enduring understandings as other students in standard World History. To that end, a variety of strategies will be used to allow students to engage with the course content and meet those learning outcomes. These include:

- Strategies that allow students to “*do as historians do*”, including close reading and analysis of a rich array of primary sources for a deeper understanding of historical questions and problems; exposure to *historiographical work* through secondary sources such as historical articles and excerpts from book-length monographs that emphasize the interpretation and significance of historical events.
- Project-based and problem-based learning exercises including the *Choices Curriculum* from Brown University, which provides rigorous, content-rich exercises emphasizing critical thinking, depth of knowledge, and the application of knowledge in authentic settings and scenarios.
- Online learning and communication. Honors students will use Moodle forums to discuss and debate issues raised in course readings; class discussions; respond to prompts from teachers; and view, reflect, and provide feedback on student work. Students will be able to construct knowledge in a dynamic, engaging, and collaborative way that extends the learning beyond the classroom.
- College lectures. Honors students will supplement their reading of the text by listening to and/or viewing college lectures available online, allowing them to deepen their understanding and interpretation of historical events.
- Advanced reading, literacy, and critical thinking skills. Moving towards depth of knowledge requires students to learn higher levels of reading and critical thinking. To that end, honors students will learn strategies for close reading of text with attention to context and perspective, focused techniques of summary such as the *précis*, as well as standards of argumentation, logic, and rhetorical techniques necessary for understanding various forms of discourse.

B. Materials

1. The core text will be the same for all students. The current textbook for use in World History across the District is *Modern World History: Patterns of Interaction*.
2. Honors World History students will be exposed to excerpts from various texts.
3. Primary sources will be drawn from various online and published collections.
4. *The Choices Program* Curriculum Resources, Brown University

5. Online college lectures from iTunes U, UC Berkeley Webcasts, Yale Open Courses, Annenberg Media, and other sources.
6. Historical programs from The History Channel, BBC, and PBS. Documentary series including Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Simon Schama's *The Power of Art*, Basil Davidson's *Africa: A Voyage of Discovery*, *China: A Century of Revolution*. Where appropriate, excerpts from historical feature films and made for television films will be shown.
7. Excerpts from literature, short stories, historical fiction.
8. Excerpts from historical monographs and other scholarly articles from publications including *BBC History Magazine*, *History Today*, *Learning through History*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, and *The Journal of World History*.

C. Suggested Instructional Time Allocation

Beyond standard instruction time, students will be asked to participate in three seminars per semester. These discussions will take place during tutorial period under the supervision of the World History teachers, who will collaborate on the content and focus of the seminar and then rotate responsibility for facilitating the discussion.

Additionally, honors students will be asked to use Moodle forums for on-going communication and engagement with the classroom material. World History teachers will collaborate on the content and focus of the forum prompts and will rotate responsibility for monitoring facilitating the online discussions.

V. GENERAL INFORMATION

Honors World History is a ten credit course open to students in World History.

- A. Prerequisites. Enrollment will be open to all students who are willing to take on the challenge of the honors curriculum. Students will be able to “opt in” to take the honors option at the beginning of each semester.
- B. The course satisfies the graduation requirement for World History.
- C. Students taking the course will receive a weighted grade towards high school credit.