



HISTORY OVERVIEW



PLACEMENT IN HISTORY

Placement is determined by a combination of content knowledge, critical reasoning skills, close reading skills, and analytical writing skills. Maturity and discussion skills also play a role in placement. Some DAO students might end up sitting out of history for a year while their thinking, reading, and writing skills improve in their English courses. We encourage students to delay registration in History of the US until they are signed up for American Literature, but this alignment is no longer required as long as thinking and writing skills align with the class. Teachers will make recommendations during the diagnostic period.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- One credit US History
- One credit US Government
- One credit World History

EARLY CIVILIZATION

This survey course of ancient times will examine a variety of early civilizations across the globe, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, the Mongol Empire, Native America, Mesoamerica, Greece, Rome, and Medieval Europe. We begin by exploring the evolution of humans before moving into specific civilizations. During each unit, we research multiple aspects of the civilization of focus, including its geography & topography, innovations & contributions, politics & law, art & architecture, religion & philosophy, social structure, important figures, and relationships with other civilizations. By comparing and contrasting these civilizations, we will also shape our understanding of what it means to be human and how human nature shapes different societies around the world.

PATTERNS IN MODERN HISTORY

In this survey course of the four “big eras” of modern times, students will examine the overarching global themes, patterns, and connections found throughout history. The course is divided into five units that connect through major themes, including: the impact of economics and differing economic systems; types of government and power; and multicultural communication, cooperation, competition, and interdependence. Students will explore these themes via discussion, research, the examination of both primary and secondary sources, and various writing assignments and projects.

CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION IN THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES

This course invites students to explore and evaluate instances of conflict and attempts at resolutions in the contexts of politics, religion, human rights, environmental concerns, and terrorism. Students in Conflict and Resolution will develop research skills and share findings; demonstrate critical thinking skills in writing as well as in class discussions; analyze primary and secondary sources; and evaluate conflict resolution strategies used throughout history. Prior to beginning topical units, students will investigate the structure and function of the United Nations. While much of the course will focus on the 20th and 21st century, individual units will each begin with a look at the historical origins and early examples of the conflict of focus. Additionally, each unit will involve research into actual UN cases related to the topic. The course will culminate with a year-end model UN simulation activity.

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

History of the United States offers a dynamic overview of American history from the fifteenth to the late nineteenth centuries. It begins with the early contact between Native Americans, enslaved Africans, and Europeans and carries through the Civil War and Reconstruction Period. Along the way we will encounter bouts of religious fervor, practices of oppression as well as emancipation, cultural intermingling and innovation, and revolutionary and civil wars. Throughout, emphasis will be placed on diverging viewpoints, so as to stress that history is never settled, but constantly in a state of being revised. Rather than converge upon a single narrative, we will juggle and compare the competing histories of the United States. In addition to gaining a better understanding of America’s past, students will further develop the critical thinking, argumentative, reading, and writing skills necessary to thrive in our contemporary world.



PRINCIPLES IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

This interdisciplinary course offers an historical and political overview of modern America from the late 1800s until the present. This period saw the dramatic rise of America as a world power, along with the broadening of rights for US citizens. After an initial review of America's Constitutional Foundations, this course then proceeds with students' analysis of economic, political, and social dilemmas that affected the US. Topics covered include urban growth, the World Wars, the Civil Rights Movement, environmental concerns, and immigration. Next, the course looks at political participation by United States citizens and the influences of Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Freedom of Expression on the United States Government. The major focus of the second semester will be the negotiation, implementation, and ramifications of public policy. By the end of the year, students will have a clear understanding of the historical trajectory of modern America as a whole, as well as an appreciation for the cultures, ideas, and social structures that together make up this diverse country. They will also be equipped to be active citizens, ready to take part in the continuing project to create a better America.

ASIAN STUDIES

This course helps develop a sound understanding of East Asia in the contemporary context of globalization by exploring the cultural, social, and political history of the region. Readings on historical and sociocultural events of China, Japan, Vietnam, and Korea will be synchronized with study of artifacts, arts, literature, films, and the analysis of primary and secondary resources. Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to contextualize and discuss the geography, traditional worldviews, material cultures, and practices of customs and etiquette of East Asian cultural communities in relation to their own cultural experiences.

IMPERIALISM AND POST-COLONIALISM

In this course students will explore imperialism, colonialism, and decolonization, interlinked historical processes that have profoundly shaped the world we live in today. While the course covers a broad swath of time—the late fifteenth century to the present—we will focus especially on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as we look at how modern empires were created, negotiated, contested, and formally dismantled. As we examine our themes in a global context, we will also pay particular attention to how indigenous and local peoples experienced and responded to colonial rule.

HOW HISTORY IS TAUGHT AT DAO

Our history classes are designed to promote an understanding of the connections between historical events, eras, peoples, doctrines, wars, movements, religions, technologies, climates, values, and leaders. Rather than memorizing names and dates, students are asked to critically consider the past; to investigate a variety of documents (primary and secondary texts, art, film, speeches, archeological finds, letters, etc.); to assess perspective and bias; to connect past and present, pulling together information in a way that offers insights about and deeper understandings of our world; and to consider history and the present from a variety of humanities and social sciences perspectives (including anthropology, cultural studies, geography, media studies, political science, sociology, etc.).