

## Advanced Placement United States History 2009-2010 Student Application

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ I. D. # \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Complete this form and return it to Mr. Schaefer in room 508 by Friday, April 3.

**Eligibility:** As of this year, ALL students who have completed this application and agreed that they understand the demands of the course, are eligible for admission. However, spots cannot be guaranteed in the event that there are not enough students to fill additional sections. In that case, the final spots are competitively filled.

**Academic History:** Please list the instructor and the grade that you earned for each course below.  
(\*List current grade for courses not yet complete.)

<u>Course</u>	<u>Honors/AP?</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Grade Earned</u>
World History A			
World History B			*
English 9 Fall			
English 9 Spring			
English 10 Fall			
English 10 Spring			*

\*current grade

**Teacher Recommendations:** The teachers listed above MAY BE given evaluation forms by Mr. Schaefer. **DO NOT** print recommendation forms for them. OHS AP policy gives you the right to decide whether these evaluations are confidential or non-confidential. Please indicate below whether or not you want to be able to have future access to your teacher recommendations. By selecting "confidential," teachers will complete the form with the understanding that you and/or your legal guardians will not have access to them. There may or may not be a benefit to either a confidential or non-confidential recommendation.

*Please check one and sign below*

*Confidential Teacher Recommendations*

*Non-confidential Teacher Recommendations*

**Verifying Signatures:** *By signing below, we are indicating that we have read and understand the demands of this course described in the information section on page 2.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Guardian's Signature

# *Advanced Placement United States History Application Olympia High School*

## Introduction to Prospective Students

As you near the end of tenth grade at Olympia High School, tough choices must be made regarding your Junior year that could affect you well beyond high school. One of those decisions is whether or not to apply for Advanced Placement classes. OHS has rapidly developed a reputation for extraordinary student success in the AP program and offers a good variety of courses that challenge and facilitate motivated learners. While not all students are attracted to the AP program, students should not dismiss the possibility of taking an advanced class before considering the potential benefits of such an opportunity.

## About the Course

*The following questions and answers have been constructed to anticipate and address the concerns you may have as a prospective student of AP U. S. History at Olympia High School.*

### **Q. What type of student should consider taking AP U. S. History?**

A. While this course is strongly recommended for all college-bound students, it is also encouraged for anyone who has a keen interest in learning about the complexities of our nation's history, government, institutions and people. The curriculum provides you with a more thorough understanding of the United States today.

### **Q. How is the course taught?**

A. The teaching and study techniques for this class have been chosen to prepare you to do college work; the examinations, papers, quizzes, and projects are similar to those given in most universities. The course has been planned to introduce you to such materials and techniques.

Since developing critical thinking skills is a primary objective of this course, a significant amount of class time is devoted to discussion. At times, you will be called upon in class to share your insights and analysis. When appropriate, projects, role-playing and a variety of other activities will be employed.

### **Q. I'm afraid that by emphasizing the AP Exam, I will simply memorize a bunch of facts in order to pass the test.**

A. This is a common concern - and myth! The great thing about the AP Exam is that it requires students to demonstrate both *depth and breadth* of understanding. In this class you will learn the facts in order to support your own critical understanding of America's past and present.

### **Q. I heard there is A LOT of homework! Is that true?**

A. Honestly, it all depends on you, the student. One of the most appealing aspects of this class is the flexibility of the workload. Certain topics and tasks may come easier to you than others. Therefore, some assignments are optional and are designed to be tools for you to use if you find them to be helpful. Much of the demand in this course is simply in reading and demonstration of comprehension.

A typical student will spend an average of 3 to 5 hours per week on out of class reading and preparation. *The key is in learning how to manage your study time!*

Additionally, you should be aware that you will be tested frequently to avoid being overwhelmed by too much information "all at once". Finally, you will develop analytical writing skills by completing (at least) 8 essays - 2 out of class and 6 in-class.

### **Q. Tell me about the AP U. S. History Exam. Why should I take it?**

A. The AP U. S. History Exam is a three-hour objective-multiple choice and essay test created and graded by the College Board (committees of high school and university educators). The fee for this test is about \$90 (financial aid is available).

If you pass this examination, the College Board will recommend to the college(s) of your choice that you be given credit (3-10 credits) for a college survey course in American History and placement into advanced history courses, (*which saves hundreds or thousands of dollars in tuition!*). Many, but not all, colleges give both placement and credit; some give only placement; others do not acknowledge the Advanced Placement program at all.

### **Q. What if I don't pass the exam? Will this effect my chances of getting into college?**

A. Colleges only see your scores if you submit them. Therefore, you can only benefit in terms of college application implications. If you fail to pass this examination you will still have earned your AP high school credits and will have had the interesting and challenging opportunity to develop your abilities far beyond the level you might have attained in a less demanding course.

### **Q. How have OHS students done in the past?**

A. The Exam is scored on a scale of 1 to 5 (lowest to highest). A score of "3" is considered passing by the College Board and most colleges give credit and/or placement for this score. Globally, just over 50% of exam takers "pass."

Olympia High School annually achieves one of the highest success rates in the nation in all of its AP offerings. Over **80%** of OHS students have "passed" the exam every year that AP U. S. History has been offered.

### **Q. I'm worried that by taking this class I will hurt my GPA and chances of getting into college.**

A. There are three points to consider if this is your reason for NOT taking AP:

1. Nearly all students enrolled this year are passing with an "A" or a "B".
2. Colleges reward applicants who attempt more challenging courses in high school. This practice is becoming increasingly more common as college spots become more limited.
3. This is essentially a college course and will therefore better prepare you for the "next level."

*\*However, it is also important to consider your work and stress load. If you are very involved and are attempting a difficult schedule, be sure not to "overload."*

### **Q. How do I find out more about the class and program?**

A. See Mr. Schaefer in room 508, visit his class website, or talk to Mrs. Riley (the AP coordinator) in the AP Office.