

Dear APUSH student,

You are about to embark upon an amazing learning journey. I cannot promise you this journey will be easy, but I can promise you that I will work as hard, if not harder than you to make this the best class possible. This is a college-level course, which means this class will consist of college-level reading and analysis of textbooks, documents, and historical articles, and historical writing and discussions revolving around different historical thinking skills. Do not let that scare you! In this class, you will receive skills and knowledge, and that is something that you cannot purchase, it is something that you can earn, you can take with you, and it is something I hope you will remember for years to come.

As your teacher, I promise you I will always come to class prepared and I will not let you down by not being prepared; I only ask that you do the same. It is my sincere desire that you learn history, but it is my hope that you learn to love it, and if you don't love it, I can settle with you liking it. Remember, you have the power to become whatever you desire, and the choices you make now, affect your future. Choose today, and every day, to be awesome. You only get one life to live, make it the best life!

Below are some tips to make you very successful in this course:

1. **Have a thirst for knowledge.** Notice my number one tip has nothing to do with earning a high grade, or completing all of your assignments. More than grades and GPA, having a thirst for knowledge will serve you well.
2. **Always do your readings.** (this course goes by too quickly for you to miss nightly readings) These are not optional. These are truly necessary for you to succeed in class. Reading quizzes and assignments will occur frequently, if not daily. Always be prepared!
3. **Take good notes.** One of the signs of a successful student is if he/she comes into class and is ready to learn. Taking notes can become a very valuable skill and is expected in a college course.
4. **Actively participate in class discussions/assignments.** I expect you to come to class prepared to evaluate the previous night's readings/ primary sources. What you have to say is important to me and this class will not simply be me dispensing all the information while you sit passively in your desk.
5. **Always turn in your assignments on time.** You will begin this journey by completing a summer assignment to help you understand a little of what I expect in the course. My late work policy is one day late for half credit, but always try to turn in assignments when they are due. There is little to no extra credit in the course, but there is plenty of credit that you will earn should you choose to do so.

6. **Be present.** Missing school, especially when you are in AP classes, can be devastating. Missing even just a couple of days can put you very behind. If you miss school frequently, you might reconsider this course.
7. **Be willing.** Come into class with the attitude that you are ready to learn and willing to do whatever it takes to be successful.
8. **Study for your exams.** I am always shocked at the number of students who DO NOT study for class exams. If you do not study for your exams in APUSH, you will NOT pass them. Please do not underestimate the power of studying. This is a GOOD habit to develop now, as it is an essential in college.
9. **Learn to write, and write well.** Many students shudder at the thought of writing, but writing is an essential skill you need to master before you make way into the doors of your future university, take the time in high school to perfect your writing. The more you write, the better you will become.
10. **Care and communicate.** I am here to help you succeed; but it is a disservice to the course if I care more about your grades than you do. I would make the A for you; believe me, if I could. It takes diligence and discipline to do well in APUSH. If you start to struggle, come and see me. Teachers are very under-used these days. If you need encouragement, come and see me. I am more than willing to help you in this course, it's my job, but more importantly, it's my passion.

Once again, this is not an easy course. However, if you come in to this course willing to work and willing to learn from your mistakes, you will leave this course with much more than a grade on your transcripts. If you are willing then so am I!

Please re-read this letter often. I am excited to be on this journey with you and if you have questions, please come see me.

Dan Hinkin  
AP US History: Discovery Canyon HS  
[daniel.hinkin@asd20.org](mailto:daniel.hinkin@asd20.org)

“Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.” –

Robert Frost

“Even if you fall on your face, you are still moving forward” Victor Kiam

“By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail” Benjamin Franklin