

Important Dates and Information  
Advanced Placement United States History  
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Information:

- Over 670,000 students around the world took the APUS Exam last year. Less than fifteen percent taking it are sophomores. Most are juniors in high school. The average age is 16 years 9 months (international students boost the average). **A student's cognitive abilities mature tremendously between the ages 12-24, and at different rates.**
- **Trinity is an IB school, so to fulfill state requirements we offer students APUS as sophomores. This is a very challenging class that will increase in the level of difficulty as the school year progresses.** My expectations grow as the students are introduced to the variety of skills needed to do well on the exam. If a student maintains the same grade throughout the year, then they are matching my expected learning curve. If their grade improves, they are expanding their skill and knowledge base at a better rate than expected. **If their grade is growing worse, they are falling behind the learning curve. If grades are falling encourage your child to attend tutorial. I offered focused tutorials on specific skills that many students are struggling with as well as individual tutorials for better understanding of content.** Tutorial is on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the first 15 minutes of our Discovery period and by appointment after school.
- Remember that Trinity awards a full letter grade boost to those taking this class and thus recognizes the difficulty.
- **Multiple choice tests are difficult. The questions are not to test memorization skills but to test analytical, synthesis and application skills.** Seven out of the fifty-five multiple choice questions on the national test in May will see fewer than ten percent of test-takers getting them right. My test will also reflect this difficulty. **I throw out questions that over half miss and use them to reteach/explain the material and "approach" needed to get the question right. Also, the test is designed so one is to pick the best answer, so often two choices appear correct-but only one is the best.**
- **Essay and DBQ writing also use new skills and a reliance on reasoning/critical thinking. Writing is no longer just informational in nature.** A well-written thesis that is defended with both correct historical information and analysis provided by the writer is essential to do well. This writing must be clear, cogent, persuasive and different from others. The average grader is reading well over 100 essays and DBQ's a day during the grading week. The student's work must stand out to score well.

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**Possible Dates for Saturday Schools: Generally two weeks advance notice is given and I only schedule them when at least 70% can make the class.** I follow Saturday class with an immediate makeup opportunity-usually the following Monday after school. Saturday classes generally start a new unit or are very early in a new unit so that the students have plenty of time to attend tutorial and get notes etc from either members of class or me. **Our first Saturday school is tentatively set for Sept. 14 from 9am-12 noon.**

The College Board keeps adding material to the course outline and deletes nothing. The agrarian school calendar has remained at 180 days. I desire to keep homework at acceptable levels, so I need more face time. Also, the fact they are sophomores means that they have more trouble understanding and analyzing large chunks of history on their own.

**Test Days are announced at least a week in advance with the new eight day rotational schedule. I poll students and try to avoid days with multiple big assignments due, and let students take it during a study hall period if that suits better.**

Tentative field trips this year include the Williamsburg /Yorktown Revolutionary War Museum, the National Tredegar Civil War Foundation exhibit, and the VMFA/VHS exhibit on the four hundred years of the African-American experience in Virginia.

**During the first week of February documentation for extra time, and any accommodations is due to Ms. Crewes in the ARC for APUS exam.** If you think this applies to your child, please email her in the Academic Resource Center of Trinity as soon as possible. She will tell you what is needed. **Trinity's accommodation for test taking does not necessarily satisfy the College Board or the International Baccalaureate Office regarding the ability to have accommodations for those tests.**

**First Saturday of May or first Saturday of June -SAT II History Achievement Test-Registration information is received in class. Students register on line and will receive information from me in APUS class the week before or after Spring Break.** This test is recommended since the students usually do well and it is a great ice breaker for the SAT I and future subject tests since it is only one hour long.

**Friday, May 9-8am in the morning- National Advanced Placement United States History Exam**-registration done in school and families billed-location is the Estes Center-cost \$90 or so.