**VA & U.S. History Advanced Syllabus**

**Coach Paxton Fort Defiance High School**

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**Virginia Standards of Learning for VA & U.S. History**

The standards for Virginia and United States History include the historical development of American ideas and institutions from the Age of Exploration to the present. While focusing on political and economic history, the standards provide students with a basic knowledge of American culture through a chronological survey of major issues, movements, people, and events in United States and Virginia history. Students should use historical and geographical analysis skills to explore in depth the events, people, and ideas that fostered our national identity and led to our country’s prominence in world affairs.

The study of history must emphasize the intellectual skills required for responsible citizenship. Students practice these skills as they extend their understanding of the essential knowledge defined by the standards for history and social science.

# Skills

VUS.1 The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to

A ) identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary source documents, records, and data, including artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, journals, newspapers, historical accounts, and art, to increase understanding of events and life in the United States;

B) evaluate the authenticity, authority, and credibility of sources;

C) formulate historical questions and defend findings, based on inquiry and interpretation;

D) develop perspectives of time and place, including the construction of maps and various timelines of events, periods, and personalities in American history;

E) communicate findings orally and in analytical essays or comprehensive papers;

F) develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing with respect to enduring issues and determine how divergent viewpoints have been addressed and reconciled;

G) apply geographic skills and reference sources to understand how relationships between humans and their environment have changed over time;

H) interpret the significance of excerpts from famous speeches and other documents;

I) identify the costs and benefits of specific choices made, including the consequences, both intended and unintended, of the decisions and how people and nations responded to positive and negative incentives.

# Early America: Early Claims, Early Conflicts

VUS.2 The student will describe how early European exploration and colonization resulted in cultural interactions among Europeans, Africans, and American Indians.

VUS.3 The student will describe how the values and institutions of European economic and political life took root in the colonies and how slavery reshaped European and African life in the Americas.

# Revolution and the New Nation

VUS.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of events and issues of the Revolutionary Period by

a) analyzing how the political ideas of John Locke and those expressed in *Common Sense* helped shape the Declaration of Independence;

b) evaluating how key principles in the Declaration of Independence grew in importance to become unifying ideas of American democracy;

c) describing the political differences among the colonists concerning separation from Great Britain;

d) analyzing reasons for colonial victory in the Revolutionary War.

VUS.5 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the issues involved in the creation and ratification of the Constitution of the United States and how the principles of limited government, consent of the governed, and the social contract are embodied in it by

a) explaining the origins of the Constitution, including the Articles of Confederation;

b) identifying the major compromises necessary to produce the Constitution, and the roles of James Madison and George Washington;

c) examining the significance of the Virginia Declaration of Rights and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom in the framing of the Bill of Rights;

d) assessing the arguments of Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification debates and their relevance to political debate today;

e) appraising how John Marshall’s precedent-setting decisions established the Supreme Court as an independent and equal branch of the national government.

# Expansion and Reform: 1788 to 1860

VUS.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the major events from the last decade of the eighteenth century through the first half of the nineteenth century by

a) explaining the principles and issues that prompted Thomas Jefferson to organize the first opposition political party;

b) identifying the economic, political, and geographic factors that led to territorial expansion and its impact on the American Indians;

c) examining the reasons why James Madison asked Congress to declare war on Great Britain in 1812 and how this divided the nation;

d) relating the changing character of American political life in “the age of the common man” (Jacksonian Era) to increasing popular participation in state and national politics;

e) describing the cultural, economic, and political issues that divided the nation, including tariffs, slavery, the abolitionist and women’s suffrage movements, and the role of the states in the Union.

# Civil War and Reconstruction: 1860 to 1877

VUS.7 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil War and Reconstruction Era and their importance as major turning points in American history by

a) evaluating the multiple causes of the Civil War, including the role of the institution of slavery as a principal cause of the conflict;

b) identifying the major events and the roles of key leaders of the Civil War Era, with emphasis on Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Ulysses S. Grant, Robert E. Lee, and Frederick Douglass;

c) analyzing the significance of the Emancipation Proclamation and the principles outlined in Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address;

d) examining the political and economic impact of the war and Reconstruction, including the adoption of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the Constitution of the United States;

e) examining the social impact of the war on African Americans, the common soldier, and the home front, with emphasis on Virginia;

f) explaining postwar contributions of key leaders of the Civil War.

**Reshaping the Nation and the Emergence of Modern America: 1877 to 1930s**

VUS.8 The student will demonstrate knowledge of how the nation grew and changed from the end of Reconstruction through the early twentieth century by

a) explaining the relationship among territorial expansion, westward movement of the population, new immigration, growth of cities, the role of the railroads, and the admission of new states to the United States;

b) describing the transformation of the American economy from a primarily agrarian to a modern industrial economy and identifying major inventions that improved life in the United States;

c) analyzing prejudice and discrimination during this time period, with emphasis on “Jim Crow” and the responses of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois;

d) identifying the causes and impact of the Progressive Movement, including the excesses of the Gilded Age, child labor and antitrust laws, the rise of labor unions, and the success of the women’s suffrage movement.

VUS.9 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the emerging role of the United States in world affairs by

a) explaining the changing policies of the United States toward Latin America and Asia and the growing influence of the United States in foreign markets;

b) evaluating United States involvement in World War I, including Wilson’s Fourteen Points, the Treaty of Versailles, and the national debate over treaty ratification and the League of Nations.

VUS.10 The student will demonstrate knowledge of key domestic events of the 1920s and 1930s by

a) analyzing how radio, movies, newspapers, and magazines created popular culture and challenged traditional values;

b) assessing the causes and consequences of the stock market crash of 1929;

c) explaining the causes of the Great Depression and its impact on the American people;

d) describing how Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal relief, recovery, and reform measures addressed the Great Depression and expanded the government’s role in the economy.

# Conflict: The World at War: 1939 to 1945

VUS.11 The student will demonstrate knowledge of World War II by

a) analyzing the causes and events that led to American involvement in the war, including military assistance to the United Kingdom and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor;

b) describing and locating the major battles and turning points of the war in North Africa, Europe, and the Pacific, including Midway, Stalingrad, the Normandy landing (D-Day), and Truman’s decision to use the atomic bomb to force the surrender of Japan;

c) describing the role of all-minority military units, including the Tuskegee Airmen and Nisei regiments;

d) examining the Geneva Convention and the treatment of prisoners of war during World War II;

e) analyzing the Holocaust (Hitler’s “final solution”), its impact on Jews and other groups, and the postwar trials of war criminals.

VUS.12 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the effects of World War II on the home front by

a) explaining how the United States mobilized its economic, human, and military resources;

b) describing the contributions of women and minorities to the war effort;

c) explaining the internment of Japanese Americans during the war;

d) describing the role of media and communications in the war effort.

# The United States since World War II

VUS.13 The student will demonstrate knowledge of United States foreign policy since World War II by

a) describing outcomes of World War II, including political boundary changes, the formation of the United Nations, and the Marshall Plan;

b) explaining the origins of the Cold War, and describing the Truman Doctrine and the policy of containment of communism, the American role in wars in Korea and Vietnam, and the role of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Europe;

c) explaining the role of America’s military and veterans in defending freedom during the Cold War;

d) explaining the collapse of communism and the end of the Cold War, including the role of Ronald Reagan in making foreign policy;

e) explaining the impact of presidents of the United States since 1988 on foreign policy.

VUS.14 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s by

a) identifying the importance of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the roles of Thurgood Marshall and Oliver Hill, and how Virginia responded;

b) describing the importance of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the 1963 March on Washington, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

VUS.15 The student will demonstrate knowledge of economic, social, cultural, and political developments in recent decades and today by

a) examining the role the United States Supreme Court has played in defining a constitutional right to privacy, affirming equal rights, and upholding the rule of law;

b) analyzing the changing patterns of immigration, the reasons new immigrants choose to come to this country, their contributions to contemporary America, and the debates over immigration policy;

c) explaining the media influence on contemporary American culture and how scientific and technological advances affect the workplace, health care, and education;

d) examining the impact of the “Reagan Revolution” on federalism, the role of government, and state and national elections since 1988;

e) assessing the role of government actions that impact the economy;

f) assessing the role of the United States in a world confronted by international terrorism.

**Course Structure**

UNIT 1 - Colonies

UNIT 2 - Revolution

UNIT 3 - Constitution & Early Government

UNIT 4 - Expansion to Civil War (1789-1860)

UNIT 5 - Civil War & Reconstruction

UNIT 6 - The Making of Modern America (1877-1914)

UNIT 7 - Imperialism & World War I

UNIT 8 - The Depression and New Deal

UNIT 9 - World War II

UNIT 10 - The Cold War

UNIT 11 - Civil Rights Movements

UNIT 12 - Contemporary America

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| **Category** | **Percentage of student’s grade each 6 weeks** |
| Major Grades | 50% |
| Minor Grades | 40% |
| Practice & Participation | 10% |
| Total Grade | Minor + Major + P&P (100%) |
| **Final Exam** | **20% of final course grade** |
| **Final Course Grade** | **Total Grade (80%) + Final Exam (20%)** |

**Late and Make-up Work**

Work missed due to an absence is considered "I" incomplete. The student is responsible for contacting the teacher to obtain make-up assignments. If an assignment is turned in late, the highest grade the student can earn on that assignment is a 75%. All homework and in-class assignments must be completed before the test for that unit takes place. Failure to make up daily work before the unit test will result in a grade of "F" or zero “0” for those specific assignments. Teachers should expect students to make up a test on the first day back from an absence if the test was assigned prior to the absence and no material on the test was covered during the absence. If the student fails to make up major work, such as a term paper or research project, the teacher may choose not to remove the "I". This situation would be referred to the Principal for further action. In the case of extended absences, the make-up time may be extended.

**Plagiarism**

**Any work that is plagiarized will be given a grade of zero.** Plagiarism is a serious issue in current academics. Examples of plagiarism include cutting and pasting from the internet with citing the source of the information, copying the work of another student, or work that has not been completed solely by the student. Given the availability of information on the internet, if you are using information that you have researched online you must include a proper citation, and this is something that we will discuss in the classroom.

**Message to the Parents**

I am very excited and happy to be teaching your child at Fort Defiance High School this semester. I am a native of Virginia and while I love traveling around, I always enjoy coming back home to this state and look forward to teaching about the state and country in which we live. This course is named VA & U.S. History, and follows the standards set forth by the state department of education.

This course will utilize the Virtual VA – VA & US History framework that Augusta County Public School has chosen to follow this year, and I will then supplement this framework with some of my own material and assignments. This year will provide us with new challenges, but I know if we are flexible, we can persevere through them. All content this year will be handled through Canvas, and will also downloadable so that if internet access is difficult outside of the class, students may download the materials on days they are able to be in the building, in the school parking lot, or somewhere else that they may have access to the internet.

Your child’s grades in VA & U.S. History will be determined through a variety of assessments. Students will have the opportunity to select an American for the final project throughout the course as they learn more about the history of the state and nation that they live in. While my main goal is to prepare the students for their life after school, it would be irresponsible of me to not prepare them for the required VA SOLs, therefore these assignments are designed to expose them to the types of questions they will see there and prepare them. Graded assignments include readings, study guides, group as well as individual projects, tests, and quizzes.

Our mission at Fort Defiance High School is to prepare our students to be lifelong learners and contributing citizens, and that is what I aim to do with this class. I am looking forward to teaching your child this year, and hope that I can help prepare him or her to be a thoughtful and participating citizen, and to make the most of themselves in whatever their chosen profession will be. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. Please make sure that you and your child read over and understand this syllabus and feel free to contact me at the e-mail address provided at the top of page with any questions or concerns you may have, and I will try and respond as quickly as possible.

Sincerely,

William R. Paxton