**Contemporary World Issues**

**2017 Fall/Spring 2018 Course Syllabus**

**Mr. Suwannakorn**

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**A102**

**Office Hours: Access or periods 1 & 5 1st sem, 1 & 4 2nd sem, by appointment**

**Philosophy:**

**I believe that all students are capable of finding success, even in a challenging course like this.  I have high expectations for all my students and I do not lower the “bar” so that it becomes easy.  I set the “bar” at the level where I know students, as individuals, will be able to reach higher achievement.  My classroom is a safe learning environment that is open to new opinions and viewpoints while respecting the opinions and viewpoints of others.  Together we will do our best to find new paths to knowledge.  Finally, because I do have high expectations, I also do not expect you to do anything that I would not be willing to do for you as well.  The key is, be accountable, be open minded, and give full effort and you will set yourself up for success in this course and in the future.**

**About the Course:**

For most, we all know where we currently are but how did we get here?  Not just physically but emotionally, economically, socially, theologically, sexually, politically, and ideologically.  Our dogmas are a result of our history and in this course we will peer into our past to better understand our present so that we can move forward into the future on solid ground.  As you are about to embark on a journey of your own, it is of utmost importance that you learn how to think like a social scientist.  Understanding information and how it shapes human society and individual thought gives us an opportunity to better chart our course.  Examining all aspects of your own life under a microscope will allow you to better understand yourself and thus understand the world in which you live.  It is through this challenge that this course was developed, to prepare you for the next critical steps on what will surely be a remarkable journey.

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE:

        Unit 1- Why we think the way we think

        Unit 2- Human Relations through time and culture

        Unit 3- Faith, Governance & Economics

        Unit 4- Conspiracy Theories

**Gradebook:**

Contemporary World Issues will be using a ***mixed scale*** grading system in *Infinite Campus*. What this means is that students will be graded upon a 1-5 scale (5=A, 4=B, 3=C, 2=D, 1=F)-*see scale below for additional details*.

Educational research has been found that this type of grading scale allows more transparent grading and scoring, as well as allowing students more room for success.  Lowest scores on a mixed scale are equivalent to 50%.  Thus, grading is not punitive to students.

***\*However, ¾ of the coursework in each section below must be completed for students to qualify for the mixed scale grading principle.***

YOUR GRADE:

We will be using a categorical grading system emphasizing skills and knowledge.  The categories in our grade book will consist of the following:

1.      Application & Analysis

2.      Research

3.      Participation/Discussion

4.      Individual Thought/Evaluation

**-Grading Policy-**

***-Mixed Grading Scale-***

The grading scale for this class will be as follows:

90-100%                  A/5   Advanced

80-89%                     B/4    Proficient

70-79%                     C/3    Partially Proficient

60-69%                     D/2   Unsatisfactory

59%-50%                F/1    Unsatisfactory

**When checking your grade on Infinite Campus, DO NOT LOOK AT THE PERCENTAGE, LOOK AT THE 1-5 SCORE AND THE LETTER GRADE.**

As an assignment is given, we will remind you which category the assignment falls under and how it will impact your grade.  Some of assignments of special note have been listed below in their accompanying category.

**Semester-at-a-Glance:**

1. Learning to think on your own
2. Human Relationships
3. Faith, Philosophy, and Economics
4. Conspiracy Theories

ASSIGNMENTS OF SPECIAL NOTE WITH SKILL EMPHASIS

**Community Service/Cultural Immersion- Application**

         During the course of this semester, it is asked of you to participate in 10 hours of community service or at least 5 hours of community service and up to 5 hours of cultural immersion.  To better understand the world we live in we must open up ourselves to be stewards of the community and the environment and to understand the communities that make up our country.  By reaching out to assist we make ourselves stronger through mind, body, and spirit.  This community service/cultural immersion must be documented and approved of by the 2nd week of school.  This is up to the student to make sure that their community service or cultural immersion is pre-approved or this may affect the final grade for this project.

**In-class Journals- Individual Thought**

        For each unit students are to turn in a journal of personal insights and thoughts as well as additional questions about the material being covered in class.  Journals are to touch on specific content that stood out to the student.

**Book write-up- Application**

        During the course of the semester, students are to choose a book from the book list and do a 3-4 page book review.  This is not a simple read and summarize book report, it must relate to themes discussed in class and the student must draw parallels and examples to back up their comparison.  If students have ideas for other books they must get approval ahead of time.

**Movie Write-up- Application**

        During the course of the semester, students are to choose a movie from the movie list and do a constructed review.  This is not a simple watch and summarize, this will require analysis and personal voice in relation to themes or subjects covered in class.  Movies must be pre-approved of as well.

**Class Participation- Discussion/Participation**

This class will be based so much on student participation.  This means attendance, asking questions, participating in activities, participation in discussions, and being “present.”

**Research Project- Research**

        Students will research a topic on conspiracy theories from a social scientist's point of view.

**Current Events- Research**

        Students will be expected to do 4-5 current events over the course of the semester.  Current events are to be 1 page typed.  The first paragraph is a summary of a global, national, or local event.  The second paragraph gives the history of the event, going to the root of the issue.  The third paragraph is an analysis of the article in terms of why it matters and what implication does this story have on the “bigger picture.”  Articles cannot be on sports or entertainment.  Weather is permitted only if it pertains to “bigger picture” ideas and not the daily weather.

**Random Assignments- Varies**

There may be times over the course of the semester where students will be asked to do some other random assignments depending upon what may be going on in the world.

**Final Assessment- Individual Thought/Evaluation**

        This will be due on the day of finals.  Make sure to keep all notes and papers as the semester goes along.

**\*Busy Work**

        I don’t’ give “busy work”!  All papers, notes and articles I give you are to assist you for a future assignment, quiz and/or assessment. The course is designed to prepare you for the collegiate academic structure thus busy work will not be part of your final grade.  There may be handouts that will help reinforce learning but they will be optional.  With that said, you are still responsible for being able to comprehend and complete the assignments.  Information on optional handouts is fair game for future assessments, discussions, or papers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

**-Homework-**

All assignments are expected to be turned in on time.  Time management is a major component of senior year as well as preparing you for a collegiate atmosphere.  I accept all work up until **three o’clock** of the day it is due.

**-Attendance-**

***Absences:***The first three absences of the semester are treated as any other according to school policy.  If there are any absences after the third absence, even if excused, parents must contact Mr. Suwannakorn by phone (303)982-3607 **or** in person only or the absence count dramatically against the participation grade which **will be calculated at the end of the semester from the participation grade.**  The **only** types of absences that are automatically excused is if the student is at a school sanctioned function or has arranged a college visit and has checked in with me ahead of time. It is the student’s responsibility to check his/her absence on Infinite Campus through the parent portal.  Unexcused absences must be made up within **two weeks** of the missed day or will remain unexcused.

***Tardies:***There is a penalty to your participation grade for all tardies.  To remove a tardy from your attendance record 15 minutes of make-up time must be completed with me by appointment only **within three days** of the tardy.  It is hard to participate if you are not present or are tardy.  **PARTICIPATION IS CALCULATED AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER.**

**Technology-**

        The Social Studies Department has established that any student in possession of unauthorized technology including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, etc. in an established testing environment will be subject to school policy regarding academic dishonesty.  It is best to keep all technology out of the classroom or in your bags/purses/pockets until otherwise instructed.

**Phone/Device Ettiquette:**

**Acceptable times to use your phone-**

* For an assignment, when needed.
* In an emergency.

**Unacceptable times to use your phone-**

* When I’m speaking.
* During a test or quiz.
* During a lab or involved in group work.

**\*Using your phone during unacceptable times will affect your ability to  participate and may prompt me to take your phone for the period.**

**Parents and students are responsible for tracking their own grades and attendance regularly**.

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I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_have fully read and understand the class expectations for Mr. Suwannakorn’s social studies class. I also understand that it is his right to deal with each situation on an individual basis and that he will to his best ability treat each situation in a manner that he deems to be professional, fair, and just.

Student\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACH THIS SHEET TO THE COURSE PERMISSION SLIP**