



# US History: American Perspectives

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February 9, 2021

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Public Schools





## Why American Perspectives?

- A response to requests for a multicultural class from the Shades club at North Central HS and a group of female students at Rogers HS.
- Brought to me in March 2019
- After discussion with HS Department Leaders and other people in Teaching and Learning, we decided it had to be a course that would count for a graduation credit rather than an elective, so that all students would have a chance to fit the class into their schedules.
- US History (11<sup>th</sup> grade) emerged as the best fit for the new class.

# Course Development Committee

## Committee Members

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Susie Gerard, Secondary Social Studies Coordinator

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David Egly, Social Studies Teacher/Dept. Leader, The Community School

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Maryanne Gaddy, Teacher, Lewis & Clark High School

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Scott Harmon, Social Studies Teacher, Shadle Park High School

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Jennifer Perrizo, Social Studies Teacher/Dept. Leader, OnTrack Academy

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Joel Soter, Social Studies Teacher, Rogers High School

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Scott Ward, Social Studies Teacher, Ferris High School

- This is a unique course for which there are not really curriculum outlines or textbooks available.
  - Beginning in April 2019, Susie Gerard started looking at publishers' websites, communicating with professors at Gonzaga University, Eastern Washington University, and Whitworth University to find out if there were multicultural US History books available.
  - Susie also contacted school districts across the country, checked out educational websites, and read journal articles about multicultural education, looking for ideas to incorporate into the new course.
  - The search turned up nothing that was suited to our course
    - Most US History textbooks are still relatively traditional
    - Many textbooks and readers used in college courses are specific to one group of individuals (ex. African-American History, Women's History, etc.)
    - A few available college textbooks appeared to be designed to teach about multicultural topics, but they were really sociology books and didn't contain enough history to be useable in this course.
  - It soon became apparent that we were going to have to create our own course curriculum outline and resource book for the class along with links to these and more resources in the teachers' program guide.

## Rationale for Unique Curriculum & Materials Creation





# Course & Materials Development Process

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The committee met six times between Nov. 6, 2019 and February 25, 2020 to brainstorm and design the content and structure of the course, keeping in mind the need to maintain an equivalency with the standard 11<sup>th</sup> grade US History course.



The committee solicited input from a wide variety of sources, including members of the community, professors at Eastern Washington University, and high school students.



As the committee outlined content for the various units, committee members and Susie searched for appropriate resources.

Many of the resources are primary sources which allows students to increase proficiency in document and contextual analysis and draw their own conclusions about historical events.



# American Perspectives Course Description

- US History American Perspectives explores the **history of our nation from 1491 to the present by including first-person stories of Americans from many backgrounds and experiences.** Students taking US History **consider multiple accounts** of events and issues in order to understand the politics, economics, geography, and history of this country from a variety of perspectives.
- Students will investigate different **historical accounts intentionally chosen to include experiences of groups often marginalized** in American society.
- Through a **balance of critically examining the realities of U.S. History and celebrating the courageous perseverance of individuals and movements,** students will take learning beyond the classroom using school knowledge and skills to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems. The course **encourages critical thinking, document analysis, and the development of writing skills.**



# American Perspectives Purpose Statement

**U.S. History – American Perspectives strives to help students learn the complete history of our country, encouraging all students to see themselves in the curriculum.**

By including the **first-person stories of Americans from many backgrounds and experiences, we can develop a complex perspective of the past**, which is sound historical practice.

Students will investigate different **historical accounts intentionally chosen to include experiences of groups often marginalized in American society**. Through a balance of critically examining the realities of U.S. History and celebrating the courageous perseverance of individuals and movements, students will take learning beyond the classroom using school knowledge and skills to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems.



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PUTTING THE  
"US"  
IN U.S. HISTORY

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February 2020



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# American Perspectives Curriculum Units

- Unit 1: Introduction to Am. Perspectives
- Unit 2: 1491 – 1787
- Unit 3: 1787 – 1848
- Unit 4: 1848 – 1920
- Unit 5: 1920 – 1945
- Unit 6: 1945 – 2000
- Unit 7: 2000 – the present
- Unit 8: Connections Project

[Syllabus](#)

[Unit Assessment Projects](#)

[Skills](#)





# Equivalency Proposal Request to CCA: May 2020

- US History: American Perspectives is a newly designed course that includes all standards covered in the standard 11<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History course.
- Since the American Perspectives course covers not only the standards and content of the standard US History course but also historical accounts intentionally chosen to include experiences of groups often marginalized in American society, we are **proposing to grant an 11th grade U.S. History credit for US History: American Perspectives.**

## US History



### World War II Section of Unit 3

- Causes of World War II
- US Entry into the War
- Pacific and European Fronts
- Major Campaigns, such as D-Day, etc.
- Manhattan Project
- **Briefer coverage of the Holocaust, Double V Campaign, Women, Japanese Internment**

## US History, American Perspectives

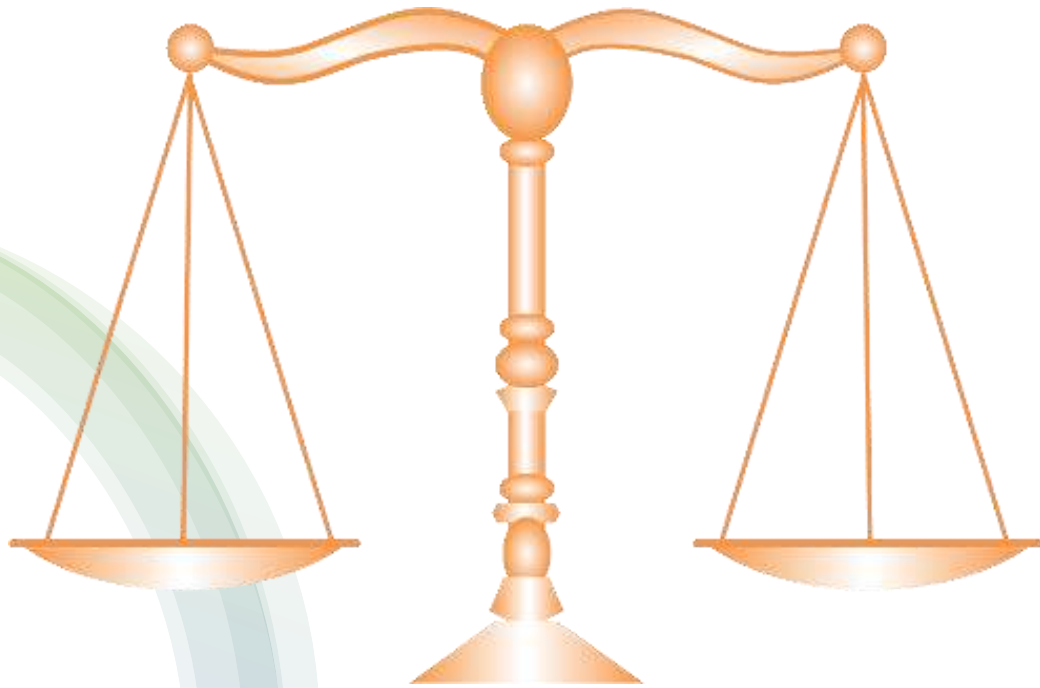
### World War II Section of Unit 5

- Causes of World War II
- US Entry into the War
- Bracero Program
- Navajo Code Talkers
- The Holocaust
- Anti-Lynching Proposal of Eleanor Roosevelt
- Double V Campaign, Tuskegee Airmen, Impact of the war on Civil Rights initiatives
- Women in the War and on the Homefront
- Japanese Internment in our region
- Redlining
- **Briefer coverage of Pacific and European Fronts, major campaigns, and the Manhattan Project**





# Rationale for Equivalency



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US History, American Perspectives **covers all Washington State and Common Core Standards** found in our standard US History course.

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US History, American Perspectives not only covers the content in our US History program guide but also **allows students to explore a greater diversity of topics over a longer timespan** than the standard course.

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**Both courses build literacy skills**, stressing document analysis and sourcing, oral and written argumentation, and contextualization.

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Granting a US History credit for US History, American Perspectives **may inspire an interest in history** among students who are passionate and curious about exploring many aspects of US History that are often given minor coverage in a standard US History course.

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Because of the **diversity of the content** in US History, American Perspectives, the course **should appeal to a diverse group of students**.

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Granting a US History credit for US History, American Perspectives will also allow interested students who have full schedules to take the course since **it will fulfill one of their graduation credits**.

# Course Materials

The final product that we created as a student resource for the course is a consumable collection of readings that go with each unit of the course and provide historical accounts intentionally chosen to include experiences of groups often marginalized in American society.

Readings, visuals, and documents chosen for the collection not only present factual information about negative experiences faced by many members of marginalized groups (ex. Slavery, Trail of Tears, redlining, etc.) but they will also celebrate the achievements of members of these same groups (ex. Fred Korematsu, Martin Luther King, Jr., Ida B. Wells, etc.)

By making the collection consumable, it allows students to write in the book, using AVID practices and other strategies to further develop their literacy skills.



# Content of Student Resource Collection & Teacher's Guide

See [book](#) chapters (chapter pdfs) to view the complete collection that students receive.

See [Teacher's guide](#) for course information and online resources.

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anywhere is a  
threat to  
justice  
everywhere.

MARTIN LUTHER KING



“  
Give  
light and  
people  
will find  
the way.”

Ella Baker

The Mother of the Civil Rights  
movement, credited with  
organizing and guiding countless  
leaders through her work at the  
Southern Christian  
Leadership Conference.

# QUESTIONS?



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**HOPE**  
WILL NEVER BE  
SILENT.

-HARVEY MILK