

Kathleen A. Williams
Advanced Placement United States History Syllabus:

This workshop is designed to provide teachers with the skills necessary to create and maintain a successful A.P. United States History program for their students. Among the topics that will be included in the various sessions are:

- How to create an effective A.P. program and recruit students

This segment of the workshop will be spent dealing with information necessary to setting up a successful program. Achieving equity and review of the audit process will be covered. Additionally, before the teaching begins, communication with administration, counseling, other related departments, parents, and students is a must. Tips for doing this will be covered. Furthermore, suggestions for textbook selection, outside readings, and online resources will also be discussed.

- Suggested tips on how to cover the content

During this time, information concerning tips on how to pace the material will be covered. Sample calendars and suggestions on how to focus on what is important to help prep students to comprehend the volumes of material necessary to be successful will be reviewed. This will include work outside the regular class time, creative teaching strategies, and ways in which to increase comprehension levels. A strong emphasis on the use of primary source information will also be included.

- Provide an overview of the structure of the exam

Geared not only for the teacher new to teaching APUSH but also to experienced teachers, this session will discuss details of the exam itself. Based on published information, teachers will be given the opportunity to see what areas of the curriculum are emphasized on the exam. Testing tips for taking the multiple choice section will be covered. Outlines and review tips will also be part of this session.

- Improving student essay writing

A huge challenge to teachers in the social sciences is how to prepare their students for the rigors of writing successfully for the A.P. exam. The basic structure of essay writing will be discussed along with tips on what constitutes a solid history essay. This will cover suggestions for not only the free choice essays but for the DBQ's as well.

- Best Practices

Threaded throughout the workshop, examples of best practices will be exhibited. Engaging the participants in lessons of high interest to their students will be a focus throughout this seminar. Teacher participants will be asked to contribute their “best practices” throughout the week along with numerous examples from the presenter. Participants will leave with a variety of ‘best practices’ to be used, with few variations, in their classroom.

- Provide a hands-on approach to grading the exam

Participants will be given numerous opportunities to simulate what the readers go through and look for when grading the A.P. exams. Sample papers and rubrics will be covered in detail and opportunities to grade sample free choice essays as well as the “dreaded DBQ” will be part of this session.

- Exchange of ideas and teaching techniques with fellow participants

A key to successful teaching is the continuous exchange of ideas and pedagogy from others in the same field. Unfortunately, these opportunities are rare. Throughout this workshop, opportunities for this type of dialogue will be encouraged and practiced.