

Dear Student and Parents:

We are pleased that you have chosen to challenge yourself by considering to enroll in AP courses at the Academy of Our Lady of Guam for school year 2016-2017. If you do not already know, AP courses provide excellent preparation for college-level work in addition to allowing you to earn college credit. We are extremely proud of the growth and success of our AP program over the last several years, and we know you will benefit from being a part of it. While we encourage anyone who has met the prerequisites and wants to be challenged to enroll in AP courses, we also want to be sure you and your family are aware of the expectations. In addition to rich, engaging material and high-level discussion, most AP courses come with some significant expectations that you should be prepared for. Please refer to the following course descriptions.

Also, a major emphasis of each of the courses will be preparation for the AP College Board examination in May. ALL students registered for AP class are required to take the AP exam at the end of the year.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS:**

#### **(Grade 10) Advanced Placement World History**

HOMEWORK EXPECTATION: 1-2 hours of homework per class period and additional work on weekends. Evaluation of student work is based on college level expectations.

Prerequisites: World Geography and Ancient History; 89% average in social science.

The AP World History course teaches students to engage with the dynamics of continuity and change across historical periods from approximately 600 C.E. to the present. This course highlights the nature of changes in global frameworks and their causes and consequences, as well as comparisons among major societies. Periodization forms an organizing principle to address the interaction between humans and the environment; the development and interaction of cultures; state building; expansion and conflict; the creation expansion, and interaction of economic systems; and the development and transformation of social structures.

As an AP course, APWH is designed to provide students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge to deal critically with the problems and material in the subject. The program prepares students for intermediate and advanced college courses by making demands upon them equivalent to those made by a full year introductory college course. Students will assess historical material, its relevance to a given interpretive problem, and its reliability and importance. They will also weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. This course develops the skills necessary to arrive at conclusions based on informed judgments and present reasons and evidence clearly and persuasively in essay format. Students will take the AP exam in May to determine whether they earn college credit.

By the end of the course, students should have a mastery of skills used in historical research and presentation, as well as the ability to develop and defend their own historical interpretations. They will also have an understanding of the major themes of World History, and a large amount of information of the specifics of various civilizations and their interactions throughout.

As students explore social science standards, they will have multiple opportunities to explore the content and intellectual skills of history and the social science disciplines.

**(Grade 11) Advanced Placement United States History (A-PUSH)**

HOMEWORK EXPECTATION: 1-2 hours of homework per class period and additional work on weekends. Evaluation of student work is based on college level expectations.

Prerequisite: Modern World History & Geography or AP World History; 89% average in Social Science

The AP U.S. History course provides students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge to deal critically with problems in U.S. History. Students learn to assess historical materials and their relevance to a given interpretive problem, reliability, and importance and to weigh the evidence and interpretations presented in historical scholarship. Students also develop the skills to present reasons and evidence clearly and persuasively in essay format. The following themes are addressed in AP U.S. History; American identity; people; politics and power; work, exchange, and technology; America in the world; environment and geography, and ideas, beliefs and culture. These require students to reason historically about continuity and change over time and make comparisons among various historical developments in different times and places. Students will also learn and practice historical thinking skills of chronological reasoning, comparison and contextualization, crafting historical arguments from historical evidence and historical interpretation and synthesis.

While there will be a variety of strategies utilized, the emphasis is on student-centered inquiry and discussion. Emphasis will be placed on the practice of analyzing primary sources, oral presentations, map and research skills, and especially writing and critical thinking skills, in an attempt to balance content with skill development. Students will also examine current events, as they seek to make connections between past, present, and future.

A major emphasis of the course will be preparation for the AP College Board examination in May. ALL students registered for this class are required to take the AP test at the end of the year.

As students explore social science standards, they will have multiple opportunities to explore the content and intellectual skills of history and the social science disciplines.

**(Grade 12) Advanced Placement American Government and Politics (APA-GOPO)**

HOMEWORK EXPECTATION: Students will conduct an in-depth study the formal structure of American Government, including constitutional principles, civil liberties, and the political processes and institutions that influence policymaking. The course combines lectures, case studies, discussions, debates, and simulations. Students will have nightly textbook readings and weekly homework assignments that will require 3 – 5 hours per week.

Prerequisites: United States History/ or APUSH; 89% average in Social Science.

This yearlong AP Government course is designed to prepare students to be active and informed citizens who can participate effectively in their own governance. Students will acquire the concepts and skills needed to interpret and analyze political issues and their implications from a variety of perspectives. Students will examine the constitutional basis of government, political beliefs and behaviors, political parties, interest groups, mass media, institutions of government, civil rights and liberties, and public policy.

As students explore social science standards, they will have multiple opportunities to explore the content and intellectual skills of history and the social science disciplines.

**(Elective Grade 11/12) Advanced Placement Psychology:**

HOMEWORK EXPECTATION: The course combines lectures, case studies, discussions, debates, and simulations. Students will have nightly textbook readings and weekly homework assignments that will require 3 – 5 hours per week.

Prerequisites: Modern World History & Geography; 89% average in Social Science.

The AP Psychology course is designed to introduce students to the systematic and scientific study of the behavior and mental processes of human beings and other animals. Students are exposed to the psychological facts, principles, and phenomena associated with each of the major subfields within psychology. They also learn about the ethics and methods psychologists use in their science and practice.

As students explore social science standards, they will have multiple opportunities to explore the content and intellectual skills of history and the social science disciplines.

**(Elective Grade 11/12) Advanced Placement European History:**

HOMEWORK EXPECTATION: 1-2 hours of homework per class period and additional work on weekends. Access to Edmodo is a MUST. Evaluation of student work is based on college level expectations.

Prerequisites: Modern World History & Geography; 89% average in Social Science.

In addition to providing basic exposure to the historical narrative the course goals include development of (1) an understanding of the principal themes of modern European history, (2) the ability to analyze historical evidence, and (3) the ability to express that understanding and analysis effectively in writing.

AP Euro includes history both as content and as methodology. Emphasis is placed on students developing intellectual and academic skills, including (1) effective analysis of such primary sources as documents, maps, statistics, and pictorial and graphic evidence; (2) effective note taking and annotating; (3) clear and precise written / oral expression; and (4) the ability to weigh evidence and reach conclusions on the basis of facts. AP Euro students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of basic chronology and major events and trends from the High Renaissance of approximately 1450 to the present. The broad themes of intellectual-cultural, political-diplomatic, and social-economic history form the basis of the course within that chronology. These themes are studied from a variety of perspectives with the intent of providing a balanced view of history. This yearlong course is divided into two semesters that investigate the course themes and key concepts in four chronological periods, with the instructional importance of each period being equal.

As students explore social science standards, they will have multiple opportunities to explore the content and intellectual skills of history and the social science disciplines.

Please complete all sections and submit to your Homeroom Teacher during the pre-registration 8<sup>th</sup> block on Wednesday, April 20, 2016.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_AP World History (10)

\_\_\_\_\_AP American Government and Politics (12) \_\_\_\_\_AP Psychology (11/12 elective)

\_\_\_\_\_AP US History (11)

\_\_\_\_\_AP European History (11/12 elective)

I am aware that my participation in Advanced Placement courses requires self-motivation and a willingness to learn. As such to meet the daily demands of AP courses I should be:

- **Committed to work at: reading and writing at a college-level.** All AP courses here at the Academy of Our Lady of Guam, use a college-level textbook and students are taught to write accordingly.
- **Interested in ideas and relationships**-AP is more than just memorizing bits and pieces of information, it requires ability to build on knowledge and collaboration.
- **Willing to risk being wrong & able to ask insightful and clarifying questions** -“Not to know what has been transacted in former times is to be always a child. If no use is made of the labors of past ages, the world must remain always in the infancy of knowledge.” –Cicero. A person’s way of thinking is the same, it is okay to have working knowledge, but if students do not ask questions to further this knowledge, and possibly be proven wrong, then there will be no learning.
- **Competent in individual research skills**-students will be asked to use actual reference material and to go beyond Wikipedia, and to take notes either using Cornell or Harvard note-taking styles.
- Committed to homework required for each AP Class (see course descriptions)
- **Able to organize materials and work under pressure to meet deadlines.**-Unfortunately, even grown-ups have to meet “*deadlines*”, but your AP teachers promise that deadlines will be manageable if students are willing to avoid procrastination.
- **Able to make independent decisions.** –“Believing everybody is dangerous; believing nobody is very dangerous...” –Abraham Lincoln. Don’t be afraid to have a voice in class, you never know, the whole class may be waiting on YOU.
- **Able to work productively with my peers on collaborative projects.** -Sometimes, working with other people can get us to higher-level thinking because...well, it is science. Just ask Bill Nye “the science guy” –“Everyone you will ever meet knows something you don’t.” –Bill Nye

\_\_\_\_We, the undersigned, have read the AP Student Letter and understand the AP course commitments as outlined above.

\_\_\_\_I, the student, will actively prepare to take the Advanced Placement examination in May 2017. I will actively read and engage with the text of any Summer/ Pre-Course materials assigned by my AP Teacher.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please feel free to contact your child’s counselor or the Principal at any time if you have questions.