



**Social Studies Department
Recommended Course Sequences**

Plan A: Preparation for Highly-Selective Colleges in Social Studies.

All of Gunderson’s successful applicants to highly selective colleges, take a rigorous social studies curriculum in high school. The combination of non-fiction reading and analytical skills students encounter in their Social Studies courses in Gunderson’s best preparation for college level work.

- World Geography
- AP World History or Acc. World History
- AP US History
- AP American Government/Honors Econ

Plan B: Preparation for 4-year University

The majority of our Gunderson’s successful applicants to four-year colleges take at least one advanced Social Studies course in high school, most often during the sophomore year and/or junior year.

- World Geography
- Accelerated World History or World History
- AP US History or United States History
- AP American Government/Honors Econ OR

**Plan C: San Jose Unified School District
Minimal Graduation Requirements:**

Students not planning to enter college immediately are still required to take three and a half years of Social Studies, including:

- World Geography
- World History
- United States History
- American Government/Economics

Department Faculty 2017-2018

Mr. Ben Ravey (Department Chair)

- World History
- US History

Mr. Gerson Castro

- AP US History
- US History
- World Geography

Ms. Sonia Rebelo

- World History
- AP Government
- Honors Economics
- Mock Trial

Mr. Adam Stickles

- Economics
- Government
- US History

Ms. Genice Weathers

- World Geography
- AP World History

Mr. Joseph Mickette

- World Geography
- Ethnic Studies (Sociology)

Mr. Ron Gibbons

- Government
- Economics

Course Description

World Geography 1-2

A course designed to give students an understanding of the interrelationship between physical and human geography. Emphasis is placed on map reading skills, geographic definitions, current environmental issues, the analysis of and the comparison among the world's basic cultural realms.

World History/Cultures 3-4

This course for tenth graders focuses on the study of major turning points in the shaping of the modern world from the late eighteenth century to the present. Activities in this course are skill - oriented and help the student to understand the growing interdependence of people and cultures throughout the world.

AP World

The AP World History course focuses on developing students' understanding of world history from approximately 8000 B.C.E. to the present. The course has students investigate the content of world history for significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in six historical periods, and develop and use the same thinking skills and methods (analyzing primary and secondary sources, making historical comparisons, chronological reasoning, and argumentation) employed by historians when they study the past. The course also provides five themes (interaction between humans and the environment; development and interaction of cultures; state building, expansion, and conflict; creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems; development and transformation of social structures) that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places encompassing the five major geographical regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

US History 1-2

This course offers a study of political, institutional, social, economic, and cultural development of the United States with primary emphasis on ideas, movements, and cultural pluralism. In this course, students examine major turning points in American history in the twentieth century. The course stresses American institutions, ideals, and critical thinking.

AP United States History

This US History Advanced Placement course begins with the colonial period of American history and continues chronologically through the present. This course focuses on research, analysis, and writing with the aim of preparing student for the College Board's Advanced Placement Exam in American History.

Economics 1

In this one semester course, students deepen their understanding of the economics problems and institutions of the nations and the world. They learn to make reasoned decisions on economic issues as citizens, workers, consumers, business owners, and members of civic groups. Throughout this course, measurement concepts and methods such as tables, charts, graphs, ratios, and index numbers are used. Topics covered include the basic concepts of scarcity, choices, economic efficiency, comparative economic systems, microeconomics, macroeconomics, and international economics.

Economics Honors

Through this course, students learn the basic concepts of production, distribution, and consumption as they study the relationships between scarcity, choice, and costs. With that foundation, students investigate and exam the nature and functions of product and factor markets as well as government intervention in a competitive market. Lastly, students become familiar with economic performance measures, economic growth, fiscal and monetary policies, and international economics.

American Government

This one semester course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the American governmental system. Basic philosophic principles and ideals of democracy, representative government, civil liberties, and civil rights are studied and analyzed. The United States federal government, California state government, Santa Clara county government, and San Jose city government are studied with special attention directed to the structure, powers, and problems of each.

AP United States Government and Politics

This semester course is a study of the basic beliefs and ideals which underlie American democracy; its historical roots; and how its legal, governmental, and economic institutions affect public policy at the local, state, national, and international levels. Special emphasis is given to preparing the student for the College Board's Advanced Placement Test in American Government.

AP World History

The AP World History course focuses on developing students' understanding of world history from approximately 8000 B.C.E. to the present. The course has students investigate the content of world history for significant events, individuals, developments, and processes in six historical periods, and develop and use the same thinking skills and methods (analyzing primary and secondary sources, making historical comparisons, chronological reasoning, and argumentation) employed by historians when they study the past. The course also provides five themes (interaction between humans and the environment; development and interaction of cultures; state building, expansion, and conflict; creation, expansion, and interaction of economic systems; and development and transformation of social structures) that students explore throughout the course in order to make connections among historical developments in different times and places encompassing the five major geographical regions of the globe: Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, and Oceania.

Psychology

Psychology is the study of individual human behavior and experience through the lens of science. The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the content, terminology, methodology, and application of the discipline both in college and in real world applications. This course will contain an introduction followed by ancillary units based on the physiological, cognitive, behavioral, and affective domains of psychology as they relate to human behavior. Students will look at the effects and causes of various psychological disorders, mind altering drugs, or developmental disabilities and their effect on the person or society as a whole. This elective course stresses the application of academic content to the student's life, critical thinking skills, as well as interpretation of scientific data and survey results

Ethnic Studies

The primary aim of this class is to actively implement a vision of social justice focusing on eliminating social inequalities that exist on the basis of race/ethnicity, sexuality, socio-economics, immigration status and gender. Therefore, our teaching, encouragement, and mentoring of students has the goal of developing long-term leadership skills, knowledge of self, and collaborative activist abilities for those working within and between communities of color and indigenous peoples.

Students will also participate in a long-term group research assignment covering a portion of Semester 1 and all of Semester 2, which includes a variety of research methods culminating in a panel presentation and research paper.

