

Syllabus and Course Outline

Course: IB History of the Americas

Instructor: Joseph Chambers

School Year: 2024-2025

Course Description: History of the Americas is a two year curriculum that is part of the International Baccalaureate program. The senior year component will cover developments the United States, Canada, Latin America, and the world, with special attention to the I.B. prescribed subject matter. It is an advanced course requiring a high level of reading, writing, and analysis.

The two-year program of History of the Americas will culminate in the I.B. “external assessment” exams at the end of the senior year. Additionally, students will complete the major research paper known as the “internal assessment.”

Course Objectives: In accordance with the Missouri Learning Standards, the students will center on the following themes over the two-year course:

1. Tools of Social Science Inquiry
2. Re-emerging America
3. Emerging globally
4. Great Depression and WWII
5. The American Stage
6. Contemporary America

Each of these themes will develop around strands of: History: Continuity and Change, Government Systems and Principles, Geographic Study, Economic Concepts, and People, Groups and Cultures

Topics: During the senior year, History of the Americas will cover the following I.B. topics:

Prescribed subject for exam paper 1:

The move to global war

Case study 1: Japanese expansion in East Asia (1931–1941)

Causes of expansion

- The impact of Japanese nationalism and militarism on foreign policy
- Japanese domestic issues: political and economic issues, and their impact on foreign relations
- Political instability in China

Events

- Japanese invasion of Manchuria and northern China (1931)
- Sino-Japanese War (1937–1941)
- The Three Power/Tripartite Pact; the outbreak of war; Pearl Harbor (1941)

Responses

- League of Nations and the Lytton report
- Political developments within China—the Second United Front
- International response, including US initiatives and increasing tensions between the US and Japan

Case study 2: German and Italian expansion (1933–1940)

Causes of expansion

- Impact of fascism and Nazism on the foreign policies of Italy and Germany
- Impact of domestic economic issues on the foreign policies of Italy and Germany

- Changing diplomatic alignments in Europe; the end of collective security; appeasement
- Events
- German challenges to the post-war settlements (1933–1938)
 - Italian expansion: Abyssinia (1935–1936); Albania; entry into the Second World War
 - German expansion (1938–1939); Pact of Steel, Nazi–Soviet Pact and the outbreak of war
- Responses
- International response to German aggression (1933–1938)
 - International response to Italian aggression (1935–1936)
 - International response to German and Italian aggression (1940)

World history topics for exam paper 2:

Authoritarian states (20th century)

Emergence of authoritarian states

- Conditions in which authoritarian states emerged: economic factors; social division; impact of war; weakness of political system
- Methods used to establish authoritarian states: persuasion and coercion; the role of leaders; ideology; the use of force; propaganda

Consolidation and maintenance of power

- Use of legal methods; use of force; charismatic leadership; dissemination of propaganda
- Nature, extent and treatment of opposition
- The impact of the success and/or failure of foreign policy on the maintenance of power

Aims and results of policies

- Aims and impact of domestic economic, political, cultural and social policies
- The impact of policies on women and minorities
- Authoritarian control and the extent to which it was achieved

Causes and effects of 20th century wars

Causes of war

- Economic, ideological, political, territorial and other causes
- Short- and long-term causes

Practices of war and their impact on the outcome

- Types of war: civil wars; wars between states; guerrilla wars
- Technological developments; theatres of war—air, land and sea
- The extent of the mobilization of human and economic resources
- The influence and/or involvement of foreign powers

Effects of war

- The successes and failures of peacemaking
- Territorial changes
- Political repercussions
- Economic, social and demographic impact; changes in the role and status of women

The Cold War: Superpower tensions and rivalries (20th century)

Rivalry, mistrust and accord

- The breakdown of the grand alliance and the emergence of superpower rivalry in Europe and Asia (1943–1949): role of ideology; fear and aggression; economic interests; a comparison of the roles of the US and the USSR
- The US, USSR and China—superpower relations (1947–1979): containment; peaceful co-existence; Sino-Soviet and Sino-US relations; détente
- Confrontation and reconciliation; reasons for the end of the Cold War (1980–1991): ideological challenges and dissent; economic problems; arms race

Leaders and nations

- The impact of two leaders, each chosen from a different region, on the course and development of the

Cold War

- The impact of Cold War tensions on two countries (excluding the USSR and the US)

Cold War crises

- Cold War crises case studies: detailed study of any two Cold War crises from different regions: examination and comparison of the causes, impact and significance of the two crises

Regional study topics for exam paper 3:

- Independence movements (1763-1830)
- Nation-building and challenges (c1780-1870)
- United States' Civil War: Causes, course, and effects (1840-1877)
- The development of modern nations (1865-1929)
- Emergence of the Americas in global affairs (1880-1929)
- The Mexican Revolution (1884-1940)
- The Great Depression and the Americas (mid 1920s–1939)
- The Second World War and the Americas (1933–1945)
- Political developments in Latin America (1945–1980)
- Political developments in the United States (1945–1980) and Canada (1945–1982)
- The Cold War and the Americas (1945–1981)
- Civil rights and social movements in the Americas post-1945
- The Americas (1980–2005)

Assessment: All of the work in History of the Americas will be assigned a point value. The number of points earned over the course of the semester will be divided by the total number of points possible to give a percentage grade. As per Metro policy, letter grades will be given as follows:

90%-100%	= A
80%-89%	= B
70%-79%	= C
69% ↓	= F

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and in any other projects as they occur and will be assessed on their knowledge of the historical subject matter as well as the quality and clarity of their writing.

Resources: The primary text for the course will be *History of the Americas, 1880-1981* by Mamaux, et al. This text will be supplemented with frequent readings from other books and articles as well as primary sources.

Classroom Procedures:

Attendance and tardiness: All students are expected to be in class and on time every day. Any work missed due to tardiness can only be made up if the student arranges for a makeup quiz or assignment that day.

Make-up policy: Students will be allowed to make up work that they missed due to an excused absence, but it is the student's responsibility to find out what work was missed. Tests or quizzes may only be made up outside of regular class time by appointment. Work that is missed due to unexcused absence may not be made up.

Late work: Any work that is not turned in at the beginning of the class period in which it is due will be subject to a 25% deduction in points if one day late and 50% for two or three days. (School days, not class meetings.) Work that is more than three days late will not be accepted.

Academic Dishonesty: Metro has extremely high regard for academic integrity and, as such, has zero tolerance for any and all forms of academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, all forms of cheating on any assessments, essays, or assignments (copying, taking pictures, group chats with answers, etc.), plagiarism, and any other

unethical academic behavior. Any student in violation will receive no credit (zero/F letter grade), a family meeting will be scheduled, and a notation of the violation will be in the student's school record. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as Chat GPT, has the potential for misuse and often borders on plagiarism. At Metro, we utilize Turnitin to disrupt plagiarism and ensure the integrity of all student work. If it is deemed that a student has used any AI tool to complete an assignment, the student will receive no credit (zero/F letter grade), a family meeting will be scheduled, as well as a notation of the violation in the student's school record. Any academic dishonesty violation will affect recommendations written by the school for any student applying for post-secondary institutions, scholarships, and other educational programs.

Questions or concerns:

If any student or their parent or guardian has any questions or concerns, they should feel free to speak to me. I can be contacted by e-mail at joseph.chambers@slps.org or by phone at Metro at (314) 534-3894. Assignments and course documents are available at www.slps.org/jchambers.