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**INTRODUCTION**

**Teacher: Samantha Hobush**

**Room 1030**

Please message direct through Canvas

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***How can I become an active citizen by thinking critically about current world issues?***

**SKILLS & COURSE HIGHLIGHTS**

Current Issues is a year-long social studies elective course designed for students who have a strong interest in better understanding the wild world around them. Students will begin the year by building media literacy skills necessary for digesting news in our modern world, including identifying credible sources and misinformation. Students will then be taken to the center of debates on various contested international issues such as; immigration, climate change, terrorism, international trade, genocide, and human rights as well as the United States’ involvement with Afghanistan, China, Iraq, and Russia. These topics are explored in-depth by building an understanding of the historical context, use of diverse primary texts, and challenging students to participate in decision-making activities where they will be asked to help resolve such issues.

***Students will…***

* Check for Bias
* Judge Reliability and Credibility
* Identify Misinformation and Conspiracies
* Analyze and collect evidence from diverse primary and secondary sources
* Evaluate options and defend unique solutions for a variety of world issues
* Communicate conclusions through collaborative and individual persuasive speaking and writing

***Potential Course Units:***

* News Literacy
* The U.S Role in a Changing World
* Mexico at a Crossroads
* U.S. Immigration Policy
* Climate Change: Questions of Justice
* Dilemmas of Foreign Aid
* Responding to Terrorism
* The Middle East: U.S. Policy Questions
* Russia’s Transformation
* The Challenge of Nuclear Weapons
* Competing Visions for Human Rights
* Confronting Genocide: Never Again
* China on the World Stage
* International Trade in a Global World
* Challenges and Change: United Nations

*\*\*Unit topics are planned as outlined, but has the potential to change connected to relevant issues throughout the school year\*\**

**CLASS RESOURCES & MATERIALS NEEDED**

**CLASS POLICIES**

* Majority of content designed by the [Choices Program at Brown University](https://www.choices.edu/curriculum-series/current-issues/)
* [News Literacy Project](https://newslit.org/)
* [PBS Newshour](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/classroom/)
* [Allsides- Balanced News](https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news)
* Fully charged laptop
* Access/Submit all assignments and class calendar through Canvas course
* Organizational item to keep hard copy assignments (folder/binder)
* Positive attitude, open mind and willingness to listen and accept others’ opinions as valid

**GRADING POLICIES**

* Your grade is heavily dependent on attendance and class participation in activities. Unexcused absences will greatly diminish your chance of passing as much of the work is participation based.
* The completion of in class written assignments, engagement in speaking activities, and submission of summative projects will make up the remainder of your grade.
* Assignments must be completed on time for full points. *Late work* will be accepted for **10% off a day** up to **60%.** Assignments will lock a week before mid-term and end of term to allow adequate time for final grading.
* If you are aware of an upcoming absence, please let me know ASAP- all assignment descriptions will be accessed through Canvas. Open communication with your teacher is the best way to do well!
* Parents can make an appointment to come to the school/classroom to view the instructional materials being used in the class. Please contact Samantha Hobush to set up a time if you would like to view materials we are using in class. Parents can also access daily assignments and curriculum using Canvas or the links provided in the resources section.

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*“*[***Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.***](https://www.azquotes.com/quote/87312?ref=understanding-the-world)***”***

**[Albert Einstein](https://www.azquotes.com/author/4399-Albert_Einstein)**

**\* *PLAGIARISM*** is defined as copying or stealing someone’s ideas and presenting them as you own. Any work that falls into this category won’t be eligible for a grade or make-up. Therefore, please get in touch with me if you are struggling with an assignment. Plagiarism is never the answer!