Dear Parent or Guardian,

I am excited to begin this new school year as it means that I will have the opportunity to explore world history with students who are eager to learn and expand their global awareness. Advanced Placement World History is my favorite course to teach and it is my hope that your child will share in the enthusiasm that I have for the topics they will cover throughout the year.

Advanced Placement World History is based on the philosophy that the study of world history should emphasize underlying threads that tie together the six major time periods in world history as outlined by the College Board. A major purpose of this course is to prepare each student to take, and pass, the AP World History Exam in May. More information on this exam will be forthcoming.

The Advanced Placement is a cooperative program between secondary schools and colleges/universities sponsored by the College Board. It gives high school students exposure to *college-level* material through involvement in an AP course, and then gives them an option to show what they have learned by taking an AP exam at the end of that school year. Colleges and universities are then able to grant college credit, placement, or both to these students depending upon the student’s score on the exam. However, regardless of whether or not a student passes the College Board’s exam in May, studies have shown that simply participating in AP courses correlates with higher rates of success in college. Simply put, AP World is worth your student’s time and effort.

I hold myself to a high standard when teaching all of my classes. It is my promise to you and your child that I will provide a quality learning environment daily. However, I also expect each of my students to hold themselves to the same high standards by taking greater responsibility for their own learning. AP World may be one of the most challenging courses that your son/daughter will take in high school, so commitment from the student is imperative. In the past, some parents have been surprised by a sudden drop in their child’s grades at the outset of taking their first AP-level course load. Many students are caught off-guard by the demanding pace of AP World as well as the intensive preparation that it requires. For example, he/she must be prepared to read, study, write, and do research **every night**. Students who passed with the highest scores on the College Board exam in May have reported that they spent between 1 and 2 hours on AP World assignments daily.

To inform students of their daily assignments, I will post on the classroom’s board and the class website all assignments that are due in the near future. You will find the website address at the bottom of this letter. I encourage you to explore the site.

One textbook will be provided by the school for your student to use: *Ways of the World: A Global History* by Robert Strayer, although we will also use a variety of scholarly and historical articles from a wide array of sources. Some students also find it helpful to purchase their own AP World History exam preparation book. These include topic summaries and practice tests. I recommend the books published by Kaplan or Princeton.

Quarterly grades will be calculated using the following formula: Major assignments (tests, projects, major papers)= 60%; Minor assignments (vocab and reading quizzes, classwork, short writings)= 40%. No late work will be accepted.

It is my hope that you will continue to support your child in his/her academic career. Parents have often asked what they can do to help their child, especially if they face initial struggles with the challenging reading, writing, and studying. I suggest the following guidelines:

1. **Review the readings with your child in casual conversation.**
2. **Allow them to teach *you* the material they have read and discussed in class.**
3. **Assist your child with reading management and their homework schedule.**
4. **Help find and maintain a proper balance of studying, eating, physical activity, and sleep.**
5. **Do not do the work for them. Encourage your child to be their own self-advocate in terms of resolving any issues that may arise during the year.**

Usually, this class will have exams every two weeks that cover 3 or 4 chapters from the textbook. Exams consist of essays and multiple-choice questions. As they will certainly do in college, I recommend the development of independent study groups, which can create a camaraderie that allows for development of different views and mutual support between the students.

Though the course is centered on historical developments, I strongly believe that your child will learn valuable skills that will not only help with college course work, but will also enhance his/her ability to communicate effectively throughout life. I am very excited about this school year and look forward to working with you and your child.

Please contact me if I can be of further help.

Respectfully,

Mr. Gregg Halkuff

AP World History Teacher

Class website: http://halkuffhistory.weebly.com/

E-mail: ghalkuff@wcpss.net

Phone: 919-557-2511