

## Unit 1 - American Core Values

You will be provided with a unit outline for each unit we study. Outlines are broken down into several sections. Each section contains the readings, terms and questions that must be read/defined/answered/understood for that section's quiz. The date of each quiz will be posted on the website. To prepare for the quiz, take good notes in class and complete all readings and activities associated with that section. Quizzes are always open note and open homework. You **may not** use your phone, textbook or any materials copied from someone else.

### Key Question:

What are the ideals behind the American political system and how well has the United States lived up to them?

### Major Assessments:

- Four quizzes - The quizzes are how I assess your homework. You may use your homework and notes on the quizzes. The quizzes are worth 20 points in the quiz category. (20 points each)
- **Letter to the editor** - This will be based on a current events article that we read as a class. It will introduce the basic structure of persuasive writing that we will use in this class. Your task will be examine a recent event in light of American core values. (40 points)
- **Unit exam** - Like most exams in this class, the unit one exam will contain a mix of short answer, reading comprehension and extended writing questions. There will be no multiple choice questions. So you can see how the curriculum of this unit connects to the exam, the exam itself is available on my website here. This is the only exam you will see in its entirety prior to taking it. You will also receive an exam preparation handout about a week prior to the exam. Part of the exam will be open note and part closed note. The best way to prepare for success on the exams in this class is to engage seriously in the activities of the class itself and to complete and study the exam preparation sheet. The exam very closely reflects what is done in class during the unit. The exam will be worth 400 points. The review sheet will be worth 20 points and the journals and notes submitted with the exam 20 points as well.

### Section 1 - American Core Values in the Declaration of Independence

#### Readings

Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence  
(handout)

Excerpts from John Locke's Second Treatise on Government (handout)

Excerpts from Howard Zinn and Bernard Bailyn on the Declaration of Independence (handout)

#### Terms

Declaration of Independence  
Thomas Jefferson  
Natural Rights  
Limited government  
Diversity/equality  
Historiography  
Howard Zinn on the Declaration of Independence  
Bernard Bailyn on the Declaration of Independence

#### Questions/Key concepts

How does the Declaration of Independence reflect the three values of natural rights, limited government and diversity/equality? Find and explain a quotation from the document that supports each principle. You should be able to provide examples of each principle.

### Section 2 - Chronological overview of American History from colonization to the Civil War

#### Readings

Excerpts from John Winthrop - A Model of Christian Charity (handout)

Excerpts from Abraham Lincoln - Second Inaugural Address (handout)

#### Terms

John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity*  
13 original colonies  
Colonial Assemblies  
Revolutionary War  
Washington's Farewell Address  
Democratic Republicans and Federalists  
Monroe Doctrine  
Missouri Compromise  
Manifest destiny/Westward expansion  
Mexican War  
Republicans and Democrats  
*Dred Scott v. Sanford*  
The Civil War

#### Questions/Key concepts

How does the history of the American colonies and the US reflect the both the themes contained in the Winthrop and Lincoln documents?

### Section 3 - Federalist 10 and the idea of pluralism

#### Readings

Excerpts from Federalist 10 (handout)

#### Terms

Federalist papers  
Alexander Hamilton  
James Madison  
Factions

#### Questions/Key concepts

It is often said that democratic government is simply the will of the majority. To what extent would Madison agree with this statement based on what he wrote in Federalist 10?

### Section 4 - The Constitution and the struggle to realize American values

#### Readings

The US Constitution in *The Americans*, pp. 84-103  
The Bill of Rights (handout)

#### Terms

Separation of powers/3 branch structure  
Know the major topic of each of the seven articles of the Constitution  
Fugitive slave clause  
3/5 clause  
"slavery" in the Constitution  
Know the major topic(s) of each of the following amendments: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 19, 24

#### Questions/Key concepts

Provide examples from the original Constitution (before amendments) of where the US lived up to its values as described in section 1. Then provide at least one example of how the nation failed to live up to these values. How was the Constitution changed after 1791 to make it more consistent with American values?

## Content Outline

- I. What is a value?
- II. American values in the Declaration of Independence
  - A. Natural Rights
  - B. Equality
  - C. Limited government
  - D. The Enlightenment background
- III. Historiography and the Declaration of Independence
- IV. Overview of American history, 1607-1865
- V. Trials of forming a new government
  - A. Articles of Confederation
  - B. Crisis of the 1780s
  - C. The Constitutional Convention
  - D. The Federalist Papers and Federalist 10
- VI. American values and the US Constitution
  - A. The first seven articles
  - B. The Bill of Rights
  - C. The Civil War amendments
  - D. Amendments in the twentieth century
  - E. Problems with the Constitution
- VII. Class organization - values and topics