



Dominican International School
台北市私立道明外僑學校
No. 76, Dazhi Street, Taipei (104042), Taiwan, R.O.C.
10464 臺北市中山區大直街 76 號



COURSE SYLLABUS

School Year	2025-2026
Subject	Social Studies
Grade Level	8
Teacher	Mr Andrew Hogenson
Email	ahogenson@dishs.tp.edu.tw

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This Social Studies course is designed to ensure the students understand the cultural exchange and histories of the regions of the western hemisphere in a geopolitical sense. After taking this course students will be able to read, understand, use research methods, and identify through primary and secondary sources the histories of the Americas, as well as name important characters, places, and events that helped create the trade networks and cultural exchanges that make this region the economic powerhouse it is today. Students will also familiarize themselves with the academic vocabulary necessary to understand and discuss social studies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of the semester/school year, (SWBAT) Students will be able to:

- Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies
- Describe how a text presents information
- Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
- Read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
- Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

PRIMARY TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER RESOURCES:

National Geographic. (2026). *World Cultures & Geography*. ISBN: 978-0-357-54326-9

St Agnes Google Classroom Link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/Nzk0ODI3MjIzMzIz>

St Agnes Digital Textbook Link: <https://student.cengage.com/course-link/MTPQJXZ5SMPT>

St Catherine Google Classroom Link: <https://classroom.google.com/c/NzAwNTQ5Njk1Mjg3>

St Catherine Digital Textbook Link: <https://student.cengage.com/course-link/MTPP0GN5FN81>

Please always check Google Classroom for homework and announcements.

GRADING SYSTEM/ASSESSMENT:

30% daily work assignments. Expect 2 assignments a week. The first will be questions based on the lesson for that week. 5pts. The second will be a project or assignment that we'll perform for the remainder of that week. 20pts per an assignment for 25 pts per week total (subject to change due to activities and/or holidays).

30% quizzes. 2 quizzes per quarter. It will begin with 4 multiple choice questions. Answer all 4 for 1pt each. After that there are 10 short essay questions. Each question will require a 3-4 sentence response. Students only need to answer 7 of the 10 questions. Each question is worth 3pts. 25pts per quiz total. In addition there



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will be two essays per quarter. One essay will be a research essay that we will outline and write over the course of two weeks. The second will be an essay that we will write in class over a single 45 minute period. Each essay is 20pts.

30% quarter exam. The exam will have 10 multiple choice questions. Answer all 10 for 1pt each. After that there are 20 short essay questions. Each question will require a 3-4 sentence response. Students only need to answer 15 of the 20 questions. Each question is worth 5pts. 85pts total.

10% deportment. Deportment is based on class participation, behavior, and attitude.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic Dishonesty means employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at DIS.

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following:

- Purposely incorporating the ideas, words of sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof without appropriate acknowledgment and representing the product as one's work;
- Representing another's intellectual work, such as photographs, paintings, drawings, sculpture, research, or the like, as one's own, including failure to attribute content to an AI.
- Employing a tutor, using Artificial Intelligence without acknowledgment, getting a parent to write a paper or do an assignment, and paying for an essay to be written by someone else and presented as the student's work.
- Committing any act that a reasonable person would conclude, when informed of the evidence, to be a dishonest means of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work.

Any act of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic zero on the entire assignment/learning task.

First Quarter Tentative Course Content

Week/Date	Topic/Projects/Assessments
Week 1 (August 12 to 15) 4 days of class 12-General Assembly at the Gymnasium 15-Opening Mass & Assumption of Our Lady	Unit 2: North America (US & Canada Only) Introduction • Rules • Textbook introduction • Virtual classroom setup
Week 2 (August 18 to 22) 18-St. Dominic de Guzman Feast Day Celebration) Integrated during the Monday Assembly 20- House Shirt & Blue Jeans Day Starts 22- Club Orientation and Club Sign-up	3.1-3.2 Geography of North America • Physical geography • Natural resources • Mountains & plateaus
Week 3 (August 25 to 29) 27- High School Talk - "Kickstart Your Success: Winning Mindsets for a Great School Year" 29- First Club Meeting	3.4-3.6 US & Canadian History • Native American cultures • Early US & Canadian colonialism • A new culture
Week 4 (September 1 to 5) 1- Launching of the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation (During the Monday Assembly) 1-AP Registration 3- AEO Fall University Fair 5- House Ceremony	3.7-3.10 US & Canadian History • The American Revolution • Westward Expansion



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Week 5 (September 8 to 12) 8- Holy Mass: Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary & VIP Induction 10- House Mini Games Start	3.7-3.10 US & Canadian History (cont) - The American Civil War - Becoming a world power
Week 6 (September 15 to 19) 15- Catholic Bridge Program for all New Students (After the Monday Assembly at the Gymnasium) 19- Athletics / Sports Orientation 19- PSAT/NMSQT Registration deadline	4.1-4.4 Canada & the US Today - Cultural diversity - Economic issues - Civil liberties
Week 7 (September 22 to 26) 22- Celebration of the International Day of Peace-Peace Pole Ceremony (During the Monday Assembly) Teacher's Day Celebration & 26-Teachers' Appreciation 26- Grade 12 Career Educational Trip 24 to 26-Pre-Exam Days	4.1-4.4 Canada & the US Today (cont) - Geopolitical standing - Government organization
Week 8 (September 29 to October 3) 29- Launching of the Month of the Holy Rosary (During the Monday Assembly) Oct. 1-2- First Quarter Exam (half day)	Review, Summarize, Questions Exam: Quarter 1
Oct. 3-DIS Teachers and Staff Recognition Day/ Record Day Recollection for Aunties and Uncles (no classes for students)	

Second Quarter Tentative Course Content

Week/Date	Topic/Projects/Assessments
6-Moon Festival (no classes)	
7-9 Teacher's Conference (no classes)	
Week 1 (11) (October 13 to 17) 13- Second Quarter Begins 13- Start of New Applicant Enrollment for 2nd Semester 14- Visit of Mother Mary to Classrooms 15- AP Exam Only Registration Deadline 15- Monthly Career Talk - College Prep 17- PSAT/NMSQT Digital Exam	Unit 2: North America (Mexico) Unit 3: Central America and the Caribbean 3.3 Mexico's Mountains and Plateaus 5.1-5.3 Geography - Physical features of the region - Natural resources and economics resulting from the geography
Week 2 (12) (October 20 to 24) 20- Jubilee: Marian Exhibit Opening 20- Campus Safety Talk for Students 24- Book Fair (Senior Escape Room)	3.11 Native Americans in Mexico and Central America - Mayans and Aztecs - Mythology of Mesoamerica - Power and rule
Week 3 (13) (October 27 to 31) 29- Grade 11 Career Educational Trip Oct. 31 to Nov. 1- Gr.6 SEL Camp	3.12 The Conquistadors 5.4-5.6 Spanish Colonialism - The Columbian Exchange - Triangular trade - Interest in independence
Week 4 (14) (November 3 to 7) 3- Feast of St. Martin de Porres Mass 5- Monthly Career Talk - College Prep	3.13-3.14 History of Mexico - Independence in Mexico - Class struggles in Mexico - The Mexican Revolution
Week 5 (15) (November 10 to 14) 14- Health Week 14- VIP-Parent Learning Community	4.5-4.7 Mexico Today - Daily life in Mexico - Free trade and globalization



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Week 6 (16) (November 17 to 21) 17- Launching of Mental Health and Anti-Bullying Month 21- Young Shakespeare Play Writing and Performing Contest	6.1-6.3 Culture in the Caribbean - Exports - Tourism - Economic growth
Week 7 (17) (November 24 to 28) 24- Peace Pole Day (Monday Assembly) 24- Lighting of the Christmas Tree after school 25-27- Pre-Exam Days 27- Thanksgiving Potluck after school for teachers and staff 27- Thanksgiving Family Day 28- Gr. 12 Second Quarter Exam	6.4-6.5 Caribbean Economic Issues - Income inequality - Struggles in Haiti
Nov. 29 Invitation for All: The Jubilee Pilgrimage to Taipei (Saturday)	
Week 8 (18) (December 1 to 5) 1- First Week of Advent: Lighting of First Advent Candle (During the Monday Assembly) 3- Monthly Career Talk - College Prep 5- Nativity Play (Collaboration with Campus Ministry) 5- Christmas Fair Whole Day	6.6-6.7 Environmental issues - Migration and population movement - The rainforest
Week 9 (19) (December 8 to 12) 8- Foundation Day Mass, cake ceremony, and Class Party (half day) 8- Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception 8- Second Week of Advent 10- Gr. 12 Advent Immersion 11 and 12- Second Quarter Exam (half day)	Review, Summarize, Questions Exam: Quarter 2
December 13 Invitation for All: Advent Recollection @DIS (Saturday)	
December 15 to January 2 Christmas Break	

Third Quarter Tentative Course Content

Week/Date	Topic/Projects/Assessments
January 5- Record Day (No Classes for students)	
Week 1 (20) (January 5 to 9) 5- PSAT 8/9 Registration Starts 6- Third Quarter Begins 7- Monthly Career Talk-College Prep 9- New Year Mass at 8:00	Unit 4: South America 7.1-7.3 Geography - The Andes Mountains - The Amazon - The rainforest
Week 2 (21) (January 12 to 16) 16- Club Orientation & Sign Up	7.4 Native Americans in South America - The Inca - Culture and respect
Week 3 (22) (January 19 to 23) 19-23- Individual Yearbook Photoshoot for Students 19-23- Career Awareness Week 22- Grade 9 Career Educational trip 23- First Club Meeting for 2nd Semester	7.5-7.6 Colonialism in South America - Pizarro - Simon Bolivar & Jose de San Martin - Colonialism in Brazil



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Week 4 (23) (January 26 to 30) 26- Feast Day of St. Thomas Aquinas/Launching of the Catholic Week 26-28- Aquinas Conference: Science and Faith 26-30- Catholic Week Activities 30- DYM Charity Concert	8.1-8.4 Culture and Government in South America - Diversity - Living in South America - Prominent cultural festivals - Systems of government
Week 5 (24) (February 2 to 6) 1-4- WASC Mid-Cycle Visit 4- Monthly Career Talk - College Prep 6-7- SUA0 Recollection for MS	8.5-8.6 Chile and Argentina - Economies of Chile and Argentina - Resources in the region - International organizations
Week 6 (25) (February 9 to 13) 9- Start of New Applicant Enrollment for 1st Semester for SY2025-26 13- PSAT 8/9 Registration Deadline 13- House Valentine's Mini Fair 13- Chinese New Year Celebration	8.7 Northern South America - Peru - Struggles in Venezuela - The non-Spanish speaking region
February 16-20 Chinese New Year Holiday	
Week 7 (26) (February 23 to 26) 23-26- IOWA Assessments 23- Student Council Application 24-26- Pre-Exam Days	8.8-8.10 Brazil - Economy of Brazil - Major cities of Brazil - Brazil in the world
February 27 Memorial Day Holiday (no classes)	
Week 8 (27) (March 2 to 6) 3- Monthly Career Talk - College Prep 6- PSAT 8/9 System Installation and Practice Test	Extra: The future of Brazil
Week 9 (28) (March 9 to 13) 13 and 16- Third Quarter Exam (half day)	Review, Summarize, Questions Exam: Quarter 3

Fourth Quarter Tentative Course Content

Week/Date	Topic/Projects/Assessments
Week 1 (29) (March 16 to 20) 16- Third Quarter Exam (half day) 16-20- Faculty & Staff Yearbook Photo 17- Fourth Quarter Begins 18-21- EARCOS Teachers' Conference 19- Lectio Divina and Feast of St. Joseph 20- Parents Learning Community Meeting 20- Kindilympics 20-House Movie Night and Club Fair	Unit 12: Australia, the Pacific, and Antarctica 23.1-23.4 Geography - Australian Geography - Weird Australian plants and animals - Life in Antarctica
March 21 (Saturday) Spring Fair	
Week 2 (30) (March 23 to 27) 23-27 Student Leaders Applicant Interviews 26- Annual Visit to World Religion Museum Gr. 11 27- Lower School Readers Theatre	23.5-23.6 History of Australia - The aboriginals - The penal colony - Independent Australia
March 30 to April 6 Easter/Spring Break	



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Week 3 (31) (April 7 to 10) 7- Spring University Fair 9- Easter Mass 9- Easter Egg Hunt for Lower School Students	24.1-24.2 Modern Australia • Migration and ethnic trends • Rights for the aboriginals
Week 4 (32) (April 13 to 17) 13 Laudato Si Month Launching (During the Monday Assembly) 13-30 Laudato Si Month Activities 13-17- Class Photo Taking 17- AP Chinese/Japanese Practice Test	24.3-24.4 Oceania & Antarctica • Pacific islanders cultures • New Zealand • Antarctica
Week 5 (33) (April 20 to 24) 20-24 Cultural Awareness Week / Art Exhibit / Earth Week 24- Music Recital 20-24 Student Council Campaign 20-24 AP Mock Exams	24.5-24.7 Government & Economics • Resources and trade • Reefs and tourism • Environmentalism
Week 6 (34) (April 27 to 30) 27- Student Council Elections 27-30 Senior Project Presentations 28-30 Pre-Exam Days	Extra: Antarctica • Who says they own it? • Who does it belong to? • Who can go there?
May 1: Labor Day Public Holiday	
Week 7 (35) (May 4 to 8) 4- May Crowning & Mother's Day Celebration (During the Monday Assembly) 4-14 Final Exams (K, Gr. 5, 8, & 12 Only) 4-15 AP Exams	Exam: Quarter 4
Week 8 (36) (May 11 to 15) 13 and 14- Fourth Quarter Exam—Undergraduate (half day) 14-16 Student Leaders Retreat Days	Celebration, Congratulations, Movie
May 15 Record Day (No Classes for students) Final Deliberation for Graduating/Promoting Classes	
Week 9 (37) (May 18 to 22) 18- Gr. 5 Recollection & Mass 19- Gr. 8 Recollection & Mass 20- Gr. 12 Recollection 20- Baccalaureate Mass (Whole School) 18-21 WIDA Testing 19- Lower School Sports Day / Gr. 6 & 7 School Field Trip 19- Gr. 9 - 11 - "Senior Success Forum: Inspiring the Next Generation" 19-22 Student Clearance Days 21- Middle & High School Sports Day 21- High School Field Trip 22- House Culminating Activity 20-22 Final Deliberation for Non-Graduating Classes 22- Student Leaders One Day Recollection / Turn Over Ceremony	Preparation for Graduation



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Week 10 (38)

(May 25 to 29)

25- Kindergarten Graduation/Gr. 5 Promotion

26- LS Field Trip

26- Gr. 8 Graduation and Gr. 12 Graduation

27- Pre-Kindergarten & Gr. 1 - 4, 6 & 7, 9-11 Recognition

Last Day of School, Report Card 28- Distribution, & Class

Party (half day)

29- Last day for Teachers/Staff Meeting

Graduation