**IN SEARCH OF HISTORY: UNCOVERING THE PAST**

**Dr. Urban
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This senior-level course is the capstone seminar in the Gilder Lehrman American History sequence. The goal of this course is to provide you with the necessary tools to conduct historical research in American History, and to equip you with the habits of mind to become socially aware and intellectually capable citizens. This course emphasizes many skills associated with historical investigation, including critical thinking, reading comprehension, problem solving, and written and oral communication. In addition to examining, analyzing, and evaluating various primary document sources, you will learn about historiography, comparing and contrasting various interpretations and theories about the past. This course also addresses competencies that transcend traditional historical inquiry, such as media and Internet literacy. The main texts for this course are *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, by Mary Lynn Rampolla, and various articles and chapters that I will assign throughout the semester.

**Requirements and Responsibilities**

***Materials****:*

* You must have paper (any type of notebook or binder) and a pen /pencil for each class. If you’re not prepared for class, you risk losing points on your participation grade.

***Attendance****:*

* You are expected to be in class *on time* each school day—that means, in your seat when the bell rings.
* Daily attendance is necessary in order to be successful in this course.
* If you are absent, it is *your* responsibility to get the notes and materials that you missed.

***Behavior:***

* Respect other students and the teacher at all times; treat others how you would want to be treated.
* Participation in class is required and discussion is encouraged most of the time, but you must *raise your hand* if you have something to contribute to the class.
* Feel free to ask questions if you do not understand something.
* Prejudicial remarks and other offensive language will not be tolerated.
* Food and drinks are not permitted in class. Also, remove your hats before entering class.

***Homework****:*

* I post all homework assignments on my website (<http://www.DrUrban.info>).
* Expect at least one homework assignment per week.
* I will collect and grade all homework assignments.

**Projects**

* Throughout this course I will be assigning several projects and papers
* Each project is expected to be turned in on its due date; late projects will lose points.
* Plagiarism will result in a *ZERO.*
* You will submit many of your papers through TurnItIn ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)). More info will follow.

***Email:*** You must check your school email address (@bmchsd.org) regularly and use it to register for TurnItIn and access Google Drive.

***Remind:*** I will send out announcements, assignments, and documents via Remind.

***Apps*:** Please download the following free apps on your Smartphone and/or iPad: *Google Drive,* *Google Docs,* & *EasyBib* OR *RefME*.

**National History Day**

*The future of democracy depends on an inspired, thoughtful and informed citizenry. Historical understanding is crucial to that process. National History Day teaches essential historical literacy that motivates students to secure the future of democracy.*

  What is National History Day?

National History Day (NHD) is a highly regarded academic organization for elementary and secondary school students.

Each year, more than half a million students, encouraged by thousands of teachers nationwide participate in the NHD contest. Students choose historical topics related to a theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research through libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews and historic sites. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics’ significance in history, students present their work in original papers, websites, exhibits, performances and documentaries. These products are entered into competitions in the spring at local, state and national levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. The program culminates in a national competition each June held at the University of Maryland at College Park.

In addition to discovering the exciting world of the past, NHD also helps students develop the following attributes that are critical for future success:

* critical thinking and problem-solving skills
* research and reading skills
* oral and written communication and presentation skills
* self-esteem and confidence
* a sense of responsibility for and involvement in the democratic process

More than 5 million students have gone on to careers in business, law, medicine and countless other disciplines where they are putting into practice what they learned through NHD.

