**Words of wisdom from the students of 2015-16 to the students of 2016-17**

**The below is a collection of thoughts offered by this year’s AP students, after the AP test in May, to next year’s students, in response to the following ‘prompt’…**

**“As you sit here on your first day of AP US history, we offer you these words of wisdom…”**

1. Get ready for a lot of work.

Don't procrastinate. Don't do it. Don't hold things off until the last minute. Don’t half-butt things. Don't copy and paste your information directly from other sources (he makes you put things on turnitin.com). Don't miss class. Don't skip school to avoid taking a test because you're just going to have to take it during lunch and you'll have less time anyway. Don't let your class be totally quiet when he asks a question because it gets really awkward.

Don’t not take notes during class, but don't get so absorbed in taking notes that you don't know what you're writing about. Don't not do your Spirits because they will be so helpful in understanding things. Don’t not ask questions when he's talking really fast and you miss something. Don’t question the lamb or WILCO or his socks because you're never going to get a straight answer anyway.

It's OK to cry. You can get together with your friends and cry together. Bonding over the pain of APUSH is the best part.

The work you will do is not a waste. This class is definitely worth taking, and you will be so prepared for that AP test in the spring. Don’t say you'll try your best; do your best. It will pay off in the end when you walk out of AP testing, breathe your sigh of relief, and think to yourself that it wasn't that bad.

1. The work is a lot. Signing up for this class is signing up for a huge workload, which you probably knew anyway. It’s not an easy class, but it’s definitely worth it. There may be some times this year where you feel like you can’t do it anymore and have to drop the class, but don’t. If you make it through this year, which you most likely will, you will be a lot better off in the future. For me, I can finish a five paragraph essay in fifteen minutes now, and by the end of this year, you will be able to do the same. Essays may seem awful and tedious now, but in May of 2017, you will just see them as minor assignments (they really do get easier).

Last thing: if you’re a guy and you haven’t payed much attention to the history of women’s rights, get interested now. If you fail to pay it sufficient attention, you may be punished in the form of a DBQ on women’s rights on the AP Test. :( It happens to the best of us.

* Pay attention and actively participate in class - nothing will help you understand history better than just taking initiative and talking about it.
* Actually do the work - even though some assignments will just be discussed in class and not graded, if you do them then you will be better off in the spring.
* If doing a game with a partner, do not make them do all the work - this is a group effort not the effort of one for the group’s benefit.
* If doing a game with a partner, choose the right partner - two lazy people working together will never get as much done as one lazy person and a person who takes initiative. Better yet, take the initiative yourself and encourage more work to get done. Even better than that would be if everyone had initiative and there was no laziness within groups.
* Do not complain about the work load - this is an AP class that ***you*** signed up for, plus nobody wants to hear you whine about it.

1. You really should realize that APUSH will not just be a class for you this year, but rather a way of life. It will have you up at 11 pm more times than you can count and you might find yourself with 4 hour piles of work. There’s a very good chance that you will ask yourself multiple times “Why did I take this class?”. This class will prepare you in so many ways for any other AP class you will take in highschool, and even for college. Though the workload can be dense, you find yourself actually retaining mountains of information and actually having your own history debates outside of the classroom. The two biggest pieces of advice I can give you is to not procrastinate and to never stop trying in this class. If you procrastinate you will be up at 1 A.M. with a cup of coffee in your hands and a wikipedia page open on your laptop about imperialism, trust me I’ve been there; don’t let it happen to you. As for the second half of my advice, the minute you stop trying in this class is the minute you fail (no not literally). You are going to learn from this class that you can only ever succeed as long as you put the effort in, and I really recommend you do. If you do that, you’ll certainly make it out alive and eventually sit here as an APUSH alumni writing this letter to a new recruit just like I am. So have a good time in this class and do not waste it.
2. First of all, relax, the course is difficult, but you will learn sooooo much that it will be worth it. Secondly, do not procrastinate. If you procrastinate you will get behind and you will not get caught up. My third piece of advice, don't be intimidated by Schiavo. Working together will help you so much, so make sure to use your friends to help you!!
3. At first when I went into this class, I was really worried. I expected it to be a lot of work and since I’m not really a huge history buff, to be honest, I was hoping I’d be able to get through all the concentrated work for the long periods of time without falling apart. At first, it wasn’t too bad because school was just starting and everyone is always excited and full of energy when the year first starts. Personally, the fall is great for me because I go into ‘go’ mode and get a lot accomplished. I stayed really on top of everything in the beginning and was studying a lot, making extra review guides, and looking ahead to outline the stuff we were going to do. Once school really got into full gear, it became A LOT harder to focus. I knew I was capable of doing everything because, honestly, none of the work is hard, just really attention demanding and time consuming, but my motivation plummeted because I was overwhelmed with the crazy non-stop routine of school, sports, clubs, and activities.

As the end of the year came close, we started cramming it all in and the motivation came back because I wanted to do really well on the test, so I was back to studying all the time, looking everything over, and taking a crazy amount of notes. I think I went from a notebook and folder in the beginning of the year, to a binder, back to a notebook, to then taking notes on loose leaf papers in a binder, and I just had everything everywhere. By, the time the AP test came, the week before was stressful because I felt like I was not prepared, but looking back and really organizing everything into time periods and looking at the big picture, I realized we accomplished SO MUCH over the year that I didn’t even realize.

I felt extremely prepared for the test and was not at all expecting the calmness and relief that came over me during and after taking it. Now, I’m here to give you guys some advice on how to make your experience a teensy bit better. First of all, do the spirits. You probably won’t know what that means now if you are reading this in the beginning of the year, but you’ll learn very soon. Just do them. Secondly, stay on top of the work. You’ll probably be doing something or working on something every night, but don’t let your interest or motivation fade because getting behind on work is like entering a black hole of stress and anxiety of having to catch up and never fully being caught up, which just leads to confusion and extra grief you don’t need and or want sophomore year. So just do the work when it is assigned. Lastly, don’t drop. It may seem overwhelming and there might be times where you just think you can’t possibly go on and keep doing this. There will be times, probably around mid-January where there is no light at the end of the tunnel, but it is there, and it will come in no time. Just keep swimming. You will learn a lot this year without even realizing it at all. By the time you get to the AP test, you’re going to think ‘Wow! I’ve improved so much!’ regarding history and just how to survive a fast paced legit class for your future. It is going to be something you’ll remember forever: the experience, the bonding with classmates, the unique classroom environment, and the study habits. After accomplishing all the work for history, everything else seems like a walk in the park. You might want to give up, but don’t because the end result of feeling like such an accomplished and intelligent human being is so much more worth it than the hour of grief and defeat you experience as you’re seven spirits in, seven to go at twelve at night. I promise it gets better.

Good luck kiddies! Enjoy high school. You’re going to be looking back wishing the time didn’t fly so fast as you get older, so don’t stress and just be happy. Hope to see you all survive at the end of 2017.

1. The biggest problem you will have with this class is time management. It isn’t exceedingly difficult work, there’s just A LOT of it and it’s hard to keep up with. You will have one-in-the-morning nights where you’re up super late working, especially if you are trying to juggle extracurriculars. I know people who have pulled all nighters for this class. If you’re not willing to do it, drop the class now.

If you are willing to do it, this class will be a rewarding experience for you. Yes, you’ll learn history, but you’ll learn more than that. You’ll learn to manage your time, to study effectively, to work hard. You will become a better student and you will do things you never thought you could do. For example, write an essay in twenty minutes. Speak publicly. Work as a group. Debate intelligently. You will grow as a student to the point where your other work feels like nothing. The rest of school becomes easy compared to APUSH.

So here are my tips for time management:

* Have a plan. Don’t put anything off to the last minute, especially not the games. You will regret that. Make a plan to spread out your work and stick to it.
* Work in blocks. Do twenty minutes, take five minutes. If you can go longer, go longer, but my attention span is about twenty minutes long. Just have a foreseeable end to a period of toil.
* Put the phone away. Don’t be distracted by social media. Access it only on your breaks.

I hope these were helpful. I wish I’d followed them from the start. The most important thing you will take from this class probably won’t have to do with Hamilton or Jackson. Hopefully, this class will prepare you for the rest of high school, college, and perhaps life.

Yours truly,

Fellow APUSH Kiddy

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom; sleep while you can. Although the course may seem overwhelming at times, do not drop. Taking this class will not only prepare you to pass the AP exam but will require you to form proper study habits. It also helped prepare me for the SAT because we practice writing essays in short periods of time and reading long primary sources that taught my brain to stay focused during long periods of reading.
2. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom:

To begin with, AP US History is not an easy course. It is a huge step up from some of the honors classes taken during freshman year. There are some nights that you will stay up until midnight trying to finish some of your projects, and others where you might get barely any sleep. During these times you think to yourself, “Why did I take this class? Is it really worth the stress?” The moment you start asking yourself these questions, your brain is telling you to quit, and that it would be easier for you to drop down to a lower-level course, but I am telling you not to. You may not realize at first, but taking this course teaches you more than history, and is truly worth taking throughout the entire year. Not only does Mr. Schiavo teach us about the boring times throughout our country’s history, but he teaches us important life skills such as note-taking, listening, and especially not to procrastinate. These skills are what you need to succeed in college, and even in your career. To help you succeed in AP US History, I will offer you some tips:

First and foremost, do your work... All of it. You will receive a book that is referred to as ‘The Spirit’, and will be assigned readings with the task of answering questions within these readings. They may not seem important to do, but trust me, without them you will not be able to participate in class discussions, ultimately leading to not being able to understand what is going on. Next, pay attention. As easy as this seems, it’s not. Due to the short length of the year, and the amount of time we have to cover, the class goes quick. If you do not pay attention, you will be lost before you can say ‘Wilco’. Make sure you are prepared to take notes, and even more important - don’t be tired! Finally, being tired in this class is common, but don’t be. Start your work the night you get it. If you wait until last minute, you will be up all night scrambling to get it done before the morning. This is probably the most important advice you will receive, so I’ll say it again… DO NOT PROCRASTINATE! It will only hurt you, and make you want to quit. Good luck, and have fun!

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I offer you these words of wisdom:

Don’t quit. In the beginning of the year, I honestly hated this class. I have never been a big fan of history; in fact, I have always detested it. However, I do not regret taking APUSH in the slightest. As time progressed, I somehow found myself interested in what was being taught. Even more importantly, I have noticed a huge amount of growth within my abilities. After taking this course, my vocabulary had become more diverse and my writing has improved greatly. In addition, I feel that this course taught me better studying habits and helped me to develop a better work ethic. My point is this: even though this class might seem boring or very difficult at first, it is worth it in the end.

This class is challenging but rewarding. With that in mind, I can offer some tips:

* Do NOT procrastinate! Trust me. I started practically every Game and Thesis Thing the night before and it was horrible. Taking initiative and completing your projects earlier leads to less stress and a more enriching experience.
* When doing partnered projects, be sure to share the work.
* Do the Spirits! Actually reading the Spirits makes taking ID tests much easier and greatly aids in improving your analytical skills.
* Observe Mr. Schiavo’s fashion choices. He’s a trendsetter.
* Don’t forget to turn in assignments online!

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP U.S. History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom: Know what you signed up for. This class is going to require your sweat, tears, and maybe even your blood (depending how susceptible you are to paper cuts). Of course you’ll have the right to complain about it, but know that it won’t help you at all. Just roll up your sleeves, click your pen, and get to work because AP is the real deal. Confide in your APUSH friends, make countless group chats — because misery loves company and you’re all in this together. Don’t worry, you’re not signing your life away (well maybe you are). This class will prepare you for the worst — the AP U.S. History exam. It will shape you into the AP scholar that you are. You can do this, you’re smart!

Be brave, don’t drop, and always be “On Top”

1. **Letter of Advice**

As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom.

As you may have already noticed, Mr. Schiavo talks very quietly. Don’t worry, you’ll get used to it. I know it may seem intimidating for your first two days of class to be taking a test then writing an essay, but don’t drop. You are probably going to do badly on the first couple tests, but that’s how you get better. If

you don’t think you can write ID’s and an essay in an hour, by the end of the year you can write a welldeveloped essay in 20 minutes. Time management is very important. If Schiavo gives you a project or a homework assignment with some time before it’s due, start it early. Space it out as much as you can. You will learn to only function off of 2 hours of sleep. It is not the end of the world.

Do the Spirit readings. They help a lot for the AP Test. The workload you will get is a lot, but it is good preparation for the future. When you finish the course, you’ll feel very confident in your abilities to write essays, take tests, and work well under stress. The feeling once you finish the AP test is probably the best feeling in the world; it feels as though you just ran a marathon. All the hard work you put into this class will all feel worth it once you finish that test. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Schiavo does speak quietly and sometimes fast, so don’t be afraid to ask him to stop and repeat what you didn’t catch. Also, if you don’t understand anything, speak up until you do understand. If you don’t like talking in class, you can always talk to him after class. Also, Schiavo is the fastest person I know to respond to emails; you can always email him questions about projects, homework, etc. I suggest getting an AP Test Prep book as soon as the newest and last years edition comes out. Read through it was you learn to see what your learning compared to what the test wants you to know. It will also help you to start practicing the test early. In addition to preparing for the AP Exam, I suggest getting the Barron’s 500 Flash Cards. They are very helpful the night before the test to briefly brush up on the information you've learned all throughout the school year.

At the end of the day, to quote Mr. Schiavo, “It is all just a game.”

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Do not be intimidated. This class is a lot of work, but it's all worth it in the end. So take a breath and relax.

In my eyes, these are the keys to success in the class:

* Be persistent and methodical in all your work
* Manage your time-- DO NOT push everything back until the last minute or you will greatly regret it, especially if you play sports or do any extra-curricular activities
* Get a concise, bulleted AP test prep book EARLY in the year-- I waited until the very end of the year and regretted it immensely. I personally did not find the one from freshman year to be helpful because it was wordy and included way too many minutiae and trivial details you will never need to know. However, many of these other books go right along with what Mr. Schiavo teaches and make the class so much easier to follow, especially if you don't take great notes
* As you take notes in class remember to make sure to star or highlight any important or emphasized terms mentioned throughout the chapter-- this makes studying for ID tests so much simpler because you already have a basic list of key terms to look over that you might’ve forgotten (the AP test prep books often includes terms Mr. Schiavo commonly uses as well)
* Be organized-- keep all handouts, quizzes, tests, essays, games, thesis things, etc in a file or separate folders. I found them to be very useful while studying for the AP test
* Look over AP tests from previous years online-- it’s important to get a feel of the test prior to taking it in May
* Watch Youtube videos-- some people learn better by watching crash course videos. I found Adam Norris to be very helpful

Follow these tips, relax, and have a great year! Good luck!

1. Newest APUSH recruit,

As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. The first thing you probably have heard about this class is that it is a lot of work. I’m not going to sugarcoat it, it is. When it comes to the work load, although it's going to be a lot, but it is manageable if you do not procrastinate. The biggest mistake in this class is waiting until the last minute. Working on the assignments each night for an allotted amount of time will help you be more effective and less stressed. Also, always do your work. At times it seems like things are unnecessary and are just busy work, but every single assignment you do has a purpose. It seems like the objective of the class is to do as much work as possible, but each assignment has a purpose and helps you learn. While doing the assignment, it does not feel that way, trust me I know, but after the AP test you can see how each assignment helped you. When it comes to Spirits, they are helpful as well. With the formatting of the AP test, the document analysis you do with spirits help you understand the multiple choice and gives good practice.

When it comes to games and thesis thingys, just because someone else’s is longer, doesn’t mean it is better. Do not stress if someone else’s is more pages than yours, it is about quality over quantity. While it is easy to go on and on and add a lot of fluff, sometimes you have to draw a line and realize what is important and what isn’t. While it is good to have a lot of information, it is also important to sort out the important things for later studying.

In class, it is important to pay attention and take good notes. He moves quickly, so try not to miss anything. Don’t stress about writing every minute detail, but make sure you grasp the key concepts. However, try to write down as much as you can, for it will be helpful in the long run. Participating in class also makes the class more interesting and reiterates what you already know. In a weird sense, speaking to the rest of the class helps you remember details better.

Lastly, enjoy the class. Although at the time, especially around April, it gets extremely stressful, it is worth it. It teaches you a lot more than just history (study habits, how to effectively research, and take good notes). With all the high stress that is put on you throughout the year, walking out of the test in May is the best feeling in the world and shows all the hard work pays off.

Best of Luck

1. To the APUSH students of 2016-2017:

As you sit here today on your first day of AP U.S. History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom: Keep going. You *will* be overwhelmed. This is **nothing** you have ever experienced before. It will feel like you've signed your soul away... and maybe you have because the amount of work you'll face will make you feel like a slave (metaphorically). However, I guarantee you that it **will** be worth it. You will feel like quitting when you're still up at 3AM, after drinking two cups of coffee, trying to finish your AP U.S. History work. But once you're finished, the feeling of closing the twenty something tabs you had opened on your computer for APUSH and laying in bed, knowing that you can sleep without worrying about any unfinished work, is EXTREMELY satisfying (take it from someone who has experience). Let the feeling of accomplishment after the AP exam be your motivation, because IT. IS. WORTH. IT! It may not feel like it during the nine months you've spent preparing for the big test, but trust me. Just keep going. Don't quit. And strive to be "On Top!"

From a fellow student free from the nerve-frazzling stress of APUSH

As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Do not worry if you do not do well in the first few months of the class. You will eventually get used to the class. Everyone pretty much fails the multiple-choice tests in class so do not stress about that. The games in this class are heavily dependent on the amount of research you conduct. So the more relevant information and research you have, the better your grade will be. Lastly, make sure you know the information. The purpose of this class is to prepare you for a 4 hour exam in May. As long as you know the material and can finish the assigned task within the time constraints, you will be fine.

Good luck in both the class and on the AP exam!

1. “As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom.” Don’t procrastinate in the class and you won’t be staying up until 5am doing one of the games. The workload is a lot, but it is definitely worth it in the end. The way he teaches is way different than other teachers and will definitely be a new experience. He prepares you very well for the AP Exam so make sure to do all of the work he gives out. Stay on top of things and pay attention and you will be well on your way to getting an A in the class and a 5 on the AP Exam. Oh, and don’t get distracted staring at the little thingy hanging from the ceiling in the front of the classroom.
2. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. For starters, this class lives up to the rumors. It is hard and it is a lot of work, however, the work pays off and you will be prepared for the AP exam. The hours of research and work all pays off. Make sure that you do all your work and put in as much effort as possible. The AP exam will be easy if you do all the work assigned with a solid effort. Also, remember to turn all your assignments in on turn it in because the faster he gets them the faster he will grade your work! It was a fun class; there were a lot of memorable and hilarious moments. You will not get Mr. Schiavo’s humor at first but when you do you will laugh uncontrollably. Have fun, learn, and good luck!
3. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. So you’re probably reading these Words of Wisdom hoping to find the secret to succeeding in APUSH. Unfortunately, success in this class won’t come from what anyone else tells you; it’s all about how far **you** are willing to go. To do well in this class,  you have to be self-motivated and willing to push yourself to put in the time that is necessary. Some nights it’s so tempting to skip doing your spirits, and sure, you may be fine in class the next day, but when it comes time to taking the test, you will feel that missed homework assignment. You can’t just study the night before and expect to do well on the quiz or the test, you have to do your homework and practice, because the material is hard.

Although putting time and effort in homework is crucial, the MOST important advice that I could give you is to enjoy learning in general. I promise you that we all have that feeling of not wanting to continue reading.. I mean REALLY not wanting to read at all. But it’s important to stay on task and believe that you aren’t doing these readings just because it is mandatory, but because learning history is interesting to you. I assure you that this class will never stress you out as long as you continue to focus. Take advice from the words of Clarence Darrow, “I have never killed a man, but I have read many obituaries with great pleasure”

All in all, don’t worry about grades in the beginning of the year. Trust me, they will get BETTER. Just live by the example, “Don’t do anything well for the first time because no one will ever appreciate how difficult it was.” You may struggle with adapting to the new course and its pace, but cmon, everyone starts somewhere right? Right now I would like to end with some funny references from history, but I know you’ll be looking that this right now with total confusion and Mr. Schaivo just laughing and thinking  “Damn we have a long way to go.”

So here are my last words:

-Why was WW1 so quick?...........because they were Russian  
Then Why was WW2 so slow?.............Because they were Stalin.

1. Dear Terrified Student,

As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you some words of wisdom. First off I hope you did the summer work because you don’t want to start the year as a procrastinator. That leads me to my next point DO NOT PROCRASTINATE unless you want to get zero sleep and cry every night. Also, don’t drop this class because the first week is meant to weed out anyone who isn’t cut out for the work and hopefully you are not one of those lazy people. My next piece of advice is to do your spirits on your own because you’ll understand the concepts better and learning to analyze documents in your own will help with the AP test multiple choice section. Another thing you will want to do is buy lots and lots of candy and anything sugary to keep you awake because chances are even if you aren’t a procrastinator you’ll end up staying up late. In addition to all these wise words I have given you don’t believe those people who tell you you need at least 8 hours of sleep to function you’ll do just fine with 6. Also he may seem like he wants to kill you and rip out your soul when you realize how much work the class is, but he really does care for his students and wants them to succeed. This may seem a little crazy, but try to have fun and enjoy the class. The sleepless nights and crying with your peers is something you wont forget. Finally, make sure you understand when he is using sarcasm and when he is not. Good luck this year and make sure to put in your best effort to succeed.

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. As you've probably heard, this class isn't going to be easy. Procrastination isn't going to work. I have had my fair share of last minute assignments, showing up late to school, and getting little to no sleep. The projects are time consuming, but if you put your best effort into it, your grade will be plenty rewarding. Also, there will be plenty of times where your hand cramps up taking each day's notes, but in the end the information really starts to stick. This class may seem like a lot of work at first but you progressively get used to it. By the end of the course we learned to write a half decent essay in 20 minutes or less after writing 5-6 IDs. By the end of the course, you'll be plenty prepared for the AP exam. Also don't be afraid to ask to throw parties, my class threw 3 (Thanksgiving, Winter Break, Spring break). Good luck this year and I hope, like me, you find this course to be both rewarding and not as dreadful as you had expected.
2. Brave Sophomores,

As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom…

First of all, the room is a little overwhelming, with all of the Wilco posters everywhere (you can ask him what it means, but he’ll pretend to not hear you and move on... just google it later). Don’t be afraid to ask questions, it’s better to ask questions than to wonder about it later. He is very quiet, so ask him to repeat himself if you miss something. Whenever someone would be missing class, we would record the class and send it to them later, do that. His room is freezing, so bring a sweatshirt. Most of the time, whenever he assigns homework, it won’t be due the next day, but get it done as he gives it to you because he will definitely assign more, whether you’ve covered all of the work or not.

SAVE EVERYTHING! I suggest putting all of your work throughout the year on google drive or on a flashdrive organized in folders. It will 10x easier to find everything to review prior to the AP test. It will be stressful, but keep up with your other classes and take one day at a time. How you manage your time will make or break you.

If you procrastinate, you will get very good at doing 20 page papers at 4am….but try not to let it go until then. When studying for the ID test, make flashcards. If he says a name more than once in class, study that person, chances are he/she will be on the test. Study in groups as well, and try to connect over all themes, ideas and historical significance when studying, it’ll make the test easier.

As you should manage your time at home with all of the work, manage your time when taking the test as well. The test starts when you get there, not when the bell rings so walk in with a pencil and paper in hand.

Especially when nearing the test, study in advance and use an AP test book throughout the year and to study. It outlines everything for you and connects it to the bigger picture. A few days before the test, I met with a few girls at school and ordered pizza and we studied for the AP test. It worked out really well because we were able to cover a lot. It’ll make your life a lot easier, and less stressful prior to the test. Best of luck

1. **No rest until the AP test…**

**I know this is long, but trust me you will want to hear what I have to say…**

“As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom.” Okay hey to start off “APUSH” means AP US History if you didn’t know because it took me a few weeks to figure that out haha.. But that being said, I was clearly not one of the smartest kids when it came to school. People would wonder why I even took this class in the first place, and walking into class everyday almost made me cry because I was with the annoyingly smart kids who would know what exact year Thomas Jefferson was born and who already had the whole Constitution memorized. Trust me, if APUSH is not your whole life than I’m completely relatable. **So, Listen to me I have important information to tell!!!**

There is so much to say, and I have no idea how to organize it all. I think I’ll begin with why I chose to take this class in the first place… Well, besides my mom forcing me, I heard Mr. Schiavo is a wonderful teacher and that he truly goes above and beyond to get his students prepared for the AP test in May. After I took the test, I have now seen that these rumors were true. I am not lying when I say that he is probably one of the best teachers that I’ve ever had. He really goes out of his way to make sure you know the material, and offers to give up his free time just to make sure you actually know what is going on. (I know it might be annoying to come into class on days you have off like PARCC but get over yourself and realize that it really helps!!) That being said, please please please please please do not be afraid to speak up, or even go to him during lunch if you have questions. I know he might seem scary, but trust me he will not eat you. In the end he will probably be impressed that you actually have the balls to ask questions when you realize that you do not know anything. Just do me a favor and promise me you will speak up.

I will now start with the summer work. I think at least 20 kids dropped the class last year during summer when they saw the summer work (WHICH HONESTLY ISN’T BAD AT ALL).. Listen. It is an AP class, and you will expected to do more work than you think….Which brings me to his Games… :) good luck my friend. If you didn’t know, Schiavo renames “projects” to games either because a teacher is only allowed to assign a certain amount of projects within a marking period, or that he thinks it is funny to watch us struggle while we attempt to play his games. For the love of God, Do NOT wait until the night before to start one of his games. I am telling you right now, you will die, and probably get a bad grade. However, that being said, he does grade pretty easily on games, but that also being said, do not try to do half-ass work because he will see right through you, and you will not get a good grade. I think I did two games the night before it was due, and I never attempted to do it again. I’m pretty sure I finished the first game a week before it was due because I was scared and actually wanted to get sleep. Please promise me you won’t start a game hours before it is due. I cannot stress this enough. Also, please just do your work. Schiavo is pretty laid back when it comes to turning something in a day late for any reason but it really sucks when you start to see people taking advantage of that. For example, we had a game due the day before spring break and a girl in my class never even attempted to do it. Everyday he would tell her to put it up on turnitin.com and she would always make up some excuse why she couldn’t… like even months later… when everyone else knew that she just didn’t do it….I still don’t think she did it. SO yeah just please do your work. Especially when it comes to Spirits in the beginning of the year. You will see that about 4 people talk per class and if no one does their work then it gets silent and really awkward… just please do your work.

Some tips that I have are making study groups with friends...especially before a test. It might seem nerdy and stupid, but trust me you will want as many people as you can guessing what random ID’s he will put on the test just so you can be prepared. I remember I would always have my friends over the night before, and I actually did fairly well on them!! More tips are just always being prepared when it comes to work…. Especially debates…(every shy kid’s worst nightmare.) I am telling you right now you will have nowhere to run and hide when it comes to debates, so you better be ready :) Also, QUIZLET IS YOUR BEST FRIEND!!!!!!!!! Trust me you’ll thank me later.

Okay i think i’ve written too much at this point, so I’m just gonna keep going. As i said in the beginning, I was not the smartest kid in my class; I never was. I just did well because I made sure I knew what was going on, and I did my work ahead of time. Mr. Schiavo’s class was definitely one of my favorite classes I’ve taken so far in Mainland because I loved the way he taught. You sit in a circle and you just listen to him talk for hours. He will bring up something and then connect to another moment in history, and you will soon see everything connect, and come together like roots growing into a tree. (If that makes sense). History is long and confusing, but Schiavo does a wonderful job of making it seem as simple, yet interesting at the same time. You will soon know why you took this class, and how it will get you ready for the future. He forced me to participate, ask questions when I was confused, and best of all, to not procrastinate. Now i am not going to lie, there were times where i wanted to drop the class, but if you ever think of doing that go onto his page and read the words of wisdom because i did that waaayyy too many times. You can also read this letter again if you want :)

I know I’ve typed way too much, but I really really believe that you will do just fine in this class. It is a lot of work, but trust me, it is so worth it in the end. (plus now that the ap test is done we get to do fun stuff) You will meet, and become friends with people who you thought that would would never talk to, and you will have a great experience. When deciding to take this class, i talked to people who actually took APUSH that already graduated high school, and they all advised me to take the class because it was an AP course, and that it was also one of their favorite classes throughout Mainland.

I really believe that you should stay in this class, and try your best. It is so so so so so so so so so so worth it in the end. If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to get in touch with me somehow because i’ll help you with anything! I probably should stay anonymous, but I just typed so much I’m impressed. Anyway, good luck this year! You can do it!

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP U.S. History, I would like to offer some words of wisdom. If you're thinking about dropping, I would like you to consider this: this class is the hardest I've ever worked for a good grade. There is a lot of homework, and a lot of studying and preparation outside of the classroom. The amount of knowledge you will obtain is immense. Despite the long nights and the mountain of work ahead of you, this class is also the most rewarding by far. You will leave everyday feeling smarter than when you walked in. Once the year comes to an end, whether you believe it or not, you will know everything you need for the exam. Even if you tried not to learn anything in this class, you will still probably obtain enough information to pass. Once it's over, you relax and you reflect. This is by far the most rewarding class I've ever taken and I highly rev one d sticking with it.

Good luck!

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. First, everyone tells you that this class is a lot of work, more like a ton, but it is totally worth it in the end. Schiavo may seem intimating at first, but he is honestly the best teacher you will have at Mainland. This class is like no class you have ever taken, rather than reading textbooks and listening to power points you circle up. And the days you don't circle up, you would rather be circled up because you are taking a test. In this class, it is possible to go to bed before 10 pm every night if you manage your time, which may seem difficult during the first few weeks. Don't drop, even though up until the night of the AP test, you might want to, your growth and improvement is unbelievable. In addition, apush has its own freshman15, but it is called apush25 because at 11pm at night, ice cream sounds pretty nice when you just finished your game or need to start it. Remember to ask for gift cards to Wawa or Starbucks to allow for all nighters. I would like to personally welcome you to the world of apush and once you are welcomed, you will never be the same person. Also, all the work Schiavo assigns may seem terrible, but in the end of the year walking out of the ap test, you will be so confident and excited that all the work and discussions were worth it.

From one apush survivor to a future one.

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Now, remember that I too was in your shoes last year, and on my first day, as I walked in and sat in that awfully uncomfortable desk, in that awkwardly small classroom, in that horrifyingly dead silence, I was scared to DEATH! I didn't have anyone I knew who had taken this course before, and had no previous advice, so I had to take on the "dreaded" APUSH, day by day. In my advice to you, I encourage you to ask as many questions as you can, because I did not and it's one of the many things I regret. Turn in your assignments on turnitin.com ON TIME, because Schiavo doesn't enjoy having to change the due date, and if you let it go long enough, he will not hesitate to contact your parents (and that is never good). Take as many notes as you can, and invest in a 3 or 5 subject notebook so that you don't have to purchase 3 individual notebooks throughout the year. As you're wondering what those posters up on the wall, they're concert momentos from a band called Wilco, who happen to be Schiavo's favorite, and if you ask him, you most likely won't get an answer. Finally, don't be afraid to talk, don't be afraid of Schiavo, and don't be afraid in general. APUSH is a very helpful and interesting course, and you're going to enjoy it, I promise.

Sincerely, A former APUSH survivor.

1. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom.

Don’t be afraid to do a lot of work; by the end of the year you’ll write a 14 page paper like it’s no big deal. Games and thesis things will want to make you cry but, what took you four days in the beginning of the year, will take you four hours by the end. Also contrary to popular belief, the work did not get any less or any easier after the first marking period but, although it’s very difficult for me to say this, it is worth it. Don’t freak out too much about the AP test, you know more than you think you do. By the end of the year I went so insane I couldn’t remember the whether September came before May or not, so good luck your gonna need it.

27. As you sit here on you first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. I’m not a big fan of essay writing, as I’ve written more papers this year than I ever imagined I was capable of, so let’s make this short and sweet.

1. You should probably bring a sweatshirt. It’s always going to be fine or cold, it will never be hot. Ever.

2. Pull your weight in group projects. Everyone in the class will know who does and who doesn’t.

3. Don’t google all the answers to the multiple choice. Try themself yourself first, maybe you’ll learn something. But after that definitely look them up.

4. You can probably put off a lot of “game” projects until the day before, but for the love of God, do not put off the election game. You’ll understand this later.

5. It doesn’t get easier.

6. But you’ll never believe what you are capable of.

Props to you for sticking around, even after that awful summer assignment. As long as you put in the work and are open minded, you’ll be fine. Good luck...you’ll probably need it.

28.As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Firstly, my advice is to expect a lot of work. This class is difficult, but very rewarding. It may be overwhelming at times, but from experience, just do your best and you will do fine. Also, make sure you don’t procrastinate. You will want to, but this just results in you being even more stressed out. If you are given a large amount of time to work on something, take advantage of that time and start early. The amount of time you have to work on things shrink as you progress through the year anyway, so enjoy the extra time while you have it. Also, this class is built around discussion, so don’t be afraid to talk in class. It will help you on tests and in general. And a lot of times you come into class and simply take notes, so either have a big notebook or a binder with lots of paper in it. Finally, my last piece of advice is to usually have a sweatshirt or jacket with you; I was almost always cold.

29. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Most important of all, listen to Mr. Schiavo. If he is giving homework, such as spirits or a thesis thing,  actually do it, it helps during class discussion and identify bias in DBQs. He would not give you work, if it was unnecessary. It will help in the long run regarding the AP exam. Second, debates are stressful, but they are actually somewhat fun if you are prepared. Don’t wing it, and rely on other people for quotes, but actually look up stuff and read through it; research helps you learn. Also, pay attention to debates because you never know if that will be a topic on the AP test. Second, study for ID test because that makes a huge difference during the IDs, when writing the essay, and class discussions in general. Third, you can eat in his class. I have probably eaten over one-hundred fruits and vegetables in his class. Fourth, it is chilly in the classroom, therefore, you should bring a jacket. Fifth, don't leave everything for eight o'clock at night the day before it is due, but if you are going to do that start right when you wake up or when you get home, otherwise you will be extremely tired the next morning. That is my words of wisdom from an APUSH student in 2015-2016.

30. As you sit here on your first day of AP , I would like to offer you these words of wisdom.. First off, relax. I know you probably can’t hear Mr. Schiavo and you are question why you even took this course in the first place, but trust me when I say it is worth it. Chasing the Red White and Blue was super confusing and boring for me but that does not define this class. I grew so much as a student and di things I did not even know I could, and you will too. By the end of this class you will be able to write a solid essay in under a half hour, research topics incredibly well and be ready for every other class Mainland has to offer. Trust me. I recommend listening closely to Schiavo for his jokes that not many people get because it will make the class funnier and more enjoyable, work in groups when you can, use quizlet as much as possible and actually do your Spirit’s (you’ll learn what I mean). Also ask Mr. Schiavo any and all questions you have. I know he seems super scary and monotone and quiet but I swear he is one of the most understanding teachers and he will go any distance to help you. He cares a lot more than you think he does right now and one on one can really make you understand what is going on if you’re having trouble. ID tests are difficult and I suggest going through your notes and picking out even the smallest thing he said and making flash cards. I recorded the class before an ID test on voice memo and listened to that and found it very helpful. Also, do not let the first marking period freak you out because I swear it gets better. You think that thesis thingys and games are super hard but each one you will get a better grade on until you start acing all of them. It gets better. My main piece of advice is spend your time doing your work, study hard, and DO NOT be afraid. This class is worth the time you put into it and Mr. Schiavo is not scary – he’s actually a nice guy. This class is an unbelievable amount of work and will overwhelm you at times but it is worth it. Don’t drop!

31. As you sit here on your first day of APUSH, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. The class is hard but manageable. It is a ton of work (like you probably have heard) but it s worth it in the end. Take it from me and do not procrastinate. It really sucks if you are up all night working on a game – I’ve never done this but my friends have. Also, I would wake up to texts from my groupchat from 4am. I can not stress enough to not procrastinate. The hardest part of the work was starting it. All you have to do is start then the rest will not be that bad. Also, do not complain, for you did choose to take the class. Schiavo is not as scary as you may think, he likes to have class parties. Mod 7 always brought in food… Good luck, try not to stress too much!

32. As you sit her on your first day of APUSH I would like to offer you these words of wisdom… Don’t procrastinate in class and you won’t be staying up until 5am doing on of the games. The workload is a lot, but it is definitely worth it in the end. The way he teaches is way different that others and will definitely be a new experience. He prepares you very well for the AP exam so make sure to do all of the work he gives out. Stay on top of things and pay attention and you will be well on your way to getting an A in the class and a 5 on the AP exam. Oh, and don’t get distracted staring at the little thingy hanging from the ceiling in the front of the classroom.

33. As you sit here on your first day of APUSH I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. The biggest thing is do not freak out. The class is hard and very stressful. To your own advantage read all of the spirits and answer the questions even though sometimes they are long and boring it’s worth the read even if it does not seem like it. Also, push yourself to the full extent if your essay or thesis thing is only two pages go back and find more information. When you get your first debate don’t freak out even though it looks like a lot and it is, it’s not a s bad as it seems. If you ever want to drop out don’t, you’ll end up regretting it. If you have a friend in the class sit with them it will calm your nerves and if you have a question or an answer that you’re not sure is right you can ask them. Another thing is always participate no matter if your right or wrong, you get more out of class. Lastly don’t stress about your beginning of the year grades, they get better.

34. You’re probably wondering if all the scary rumors about this class are true. They are. Just kidding. Well not really. I’m not exactly sure. It’s past midnight right now, so my mind can’t really function, right now but you’ll get used to that. Procrastination is the APUSH experience. So what I’m trying to say is before I pass out on my kitchen counter is to not be afraid of this class. People drop this class because it is a little extra work compared to what they are used to. This class is unlike any class you’ve ever had. If you drop, you might think that you made the right choice based off of what everyone else has said, but you’re wrong. This class is fun. Most people don’t know this but Mr. Schiavo is one of the most sarcastic people you’ll meet. Bu the end of the y ear he will have roasted everyone even the quiet kids. No one is safe. So there’s my advice. Don’t drop or I’ll slap you.

35. Most important of all, listen to what Mr. Schiavo. If he is giving homework, such as spirits or thesis thing, actually do it, it helps during class discussion and identify bias in DBQs. He would not give you work if it was unnecessary. It will help in the long run regarding the AP exam. Second, debates are stressful, but they are actually somewhat fun if you are prepared. Don’t wing it, and rely on other peoples for quotes, but actually look up stuff and red through it; research helps you learn Also Pay attention to debates because you never know if that will be a topic on the AP test. Second, study for ID tests because that makes a huge difference during the IDs, when writing the essay, and class discussions in general. Third, you can at in his class. I have probably eaten over one-hundred fruits and vegetables in his class. Fourth, it is chilly in the classroom, there you should bring a jacket fifth, don’t leave everything for 8:00 the night before it is due, but if you are going to do that start right when you wake up or when you get home, otherwise you will be extremely tire the next morning.

36. The most important skill you can bring to and learn from APUSH is time management. I took this course as a lousy senior, planning for college, with three other AP classes, trying to balance that with a social life and two jobs. And on top of that I am a habitual procrastinator. It was awful. APUSH is a time commitment so if you have sports, clubs or other difficult classes it is especially important to budge your time wisely. Even if you’re been a master procrastinator for years now is the time to break that habit. Do the work as soon as you can, the night it’s given to you if possible and just get it out of the way. It may not be fun, you may not want to, but once it’s over with you don’t have to worry about it ever again. There’s no sense in avoiding it until the last minute because the amount of thesis thingies will kill you. And if you’re into AP classes for college credit, you should take as many as you can your sophomore and junior years so that you have a little more time as a senior, because you’re going to have other things you’re going to want to do.

Also it never hurts to make friends with your classmates. The other students in my class, because they were already friends, became a sort of team and really worked together for games and debates to make it a better time. It helps. It may seem like a lot at times but you’re going to have fun, and whether you realize it or not, you’ll learn a lot. Good luck!

37. As you sit here on your first day of AP US History, I would like to offer you these words of wisdom. Let me just say this now. APUSH is not easy. You are going to cry. You are going to stress out. Your world will revolve around this class for 9 months. You will have mental breakdowns. You will stay up until 3 in the morning. You will need a lot of coffee. You will get grades you won’t be proud of. You will ask yourself why you are taking the class. You will consider dropping. You will want to apush yourself off a cliff. You will become insane, at one point or another. You will not have fun with “games”. You will be confused. You will not have any weekends. But, when everything is all said and done, you will be amazed at all the hard work you have accomplished. You will have learned so many things. You will be proud of the apush student that you are. But most importantly, you will be prepared. With taking this class, you have to be dedicated, you have to be willing to give up your time, and you have to be fearless. Every project you do, put everything you got into it. It will be worth it in the end. Do not procrastinate, things will pile up very very fast. It would probably be a very good idea to keep all of your work, and keep it organized. And no, a folder is not going to cut it in this class. Well, I guess thats all there is to say! Good luck!

38. As you sit here on your first day of APUSH I would like to offer these words of wisdom. I think the best way to write this is to start by introducing myself. Going into APUSH, I believed I knew it all, history was my best class throughout my entire life. Not only in history, but in life as well. As I looked around the classroom on my first day, I soon came to the realization I was nowhere near the sharpest knife in the drawer. To be completely honest, I wanted to drop the class as soon as the first class ended. The kids I was surrounded with were valedictorian-material, straight A+ students. And frankly, I wasn’t. Passing my first marking period average with an 88 average, I still never felt smart enough. But as the year went on, I realized that I was special to Mod 8 class, even if I didn’t know the answer to every question. Whether you relate to me or not, I cannot begin to tell you how much you will learn this year. It wasn’t until I put down my pen to my final exam that I realized how much more confident I was about what I learned/knew. Here’s my advice: Raise your hand and participate. I know it sounds silly but all year I didn’t because I was scared to be wrong and have people laugh at me. I’m an extremely outgoing person and I never get embarrassed easily but something about being laughed at for seeming stupid stings more than embarrassment for falling in the hallway (or things like that). DON’T PROCRASTINATE! Please, please listen to me on that. I am literally the biggest procrastinator at Mainland but after pulling all-nighters, you realize it starts to affect you emotionally and physically. Not good. Finally, be yourself, make mistakes, learn from them, and don’t be afraid to be yourself. Sophomore year is a rollercoaster of emotions and a process of finding yourself even if it sounds cheesy. APUSH is so much fin and the bonds you will form in your mods and other classes will carry on for as long as you’re in high school. Be confident in how much you’ve learned and will learn throughout the year. Good luck, you will do great. You’re fellow APUSH friend/alumni/survivor