



# HISTORY OVERVIEW



## UNCOVERING THE PAST: WORLD EMPIRES

*(Davidson Explore only):* This course introduces students to historical thinking skills by studying some of the world's greatest empires. Each semester students will explore a different empire, delving into its rise to power, the key figures during its reign, and the experiences of its people. As they become historical thinkers, students will also formulate and support arguments for the causes of each empire's collapse and draw broader conclusions about the nature of empires.

### DAVIDSON EXPLORE

Davidson Explore (DE) courses are offered through the Davidson Institute for Talent Development and not by the Davidson Academy. They are often taught by Davidson Academy staff.

### PLACEMENT IN HISTORY

Placement is determined by a combination of content knowledge, critical reasoning skills, close reading skills, and analytical writing skills. Maturity and discussion skills also play a role in placement. Some DAO students might end up sitting out of history for a year while their thinking, reading, and writing skills improve in their English courses. We encourage students to delay registration in History of the US until they are signed up for American Literature, but this alignment is no longer required as long as thinking and writing skills align with the class. Teachers will make recommendations during the diagnostic period.

### GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

- One credit US History
- One credit US Government
- One credit World History

## EARLY CIVILIZATIONS

This survey course of the five “big eras” of ancient times will examine the overarching global themes, patterns, and connections found throughout history. Students will follow the course of early human civilization, from the first human settlements through the rise of the major world empires, concluding with the middle ages. Throughout the course, students will learn to analyze primary documents and compare and contrast these with various secondary sources; engage in increasingly sophisticated academic discussions; and learn the basic principles of writing about history.

## PATTERNS IN MODERN HISTORY

In this survey course of the four “big eras” of modern times, students will examine the overarching global themes, patterns, and connections found throughout history. The course is divided into five units that connect through major themes, including: the impact of economics and differing economic systems; types of government and power; and multi-cultural communication, cooperation, competition, and interdependence. Students will explore these themes via discussion, research, the examination of both primary and secondary sources, and various writing assignments.

## CYBER SOCIETY

This course focuses on the ways in which technology is advancing rapidly and connecting us in ways never before imagined. Through studying law, ethics, terrorism, communications, and business as they pertain to cyberspace, students work to improve critical thinking and reading skills by pulling information from articles and other sources. Students will develop speaking skills as they participate in debates, discussions, and group presentations.



## HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Students begin their study in the late colonial period and finish at the end of the Cold War. Students learn various approaches to historical thinking in order to balance “big picture” ideas – economic, cultural and intellectual themes – with some of the finer details of daily social life. In content, the course emphasizes power relations, conflict, compromise and exchange in the transition from a European empire to the formation of 20th-century American institutions and identities. As a craft, it emphasizes conceptual approaches to historical methods, critical and comparative thinking, and analytical and synthetic.

## PRINCIPLES IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

After an initial review of the Constitutional Foundations, this course then proceeds with students analyses of economic, political, and social dilemmas and the responses of the government by researching and reviewing U.S. public policy. Next, the course looks at political participation by United States citizens and the influences of Mass Media, Public Opinion, and Freedom of Expression on the United States Government. The major focus of the second semester will be on public policy from the many different components that make it possible for the negotiation, implementation, and ramifications of public policy.

## ASIAN STUDIES

This course helps develop a sound understanding of East Asia in the contemporary context of globalization by exploring the cultural, social, and political history of the region. Readings on historical and sociocultural events of China, Japan, and Korea will be synchronized with study of artifacts, arts, literature, films, and the analysis of primary and secondary resources. Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to contextualize and discuss the geography, traditional worldviews, material cultures, and practices of customs and etiquette of East Asian cultural communities in relation to their own cultural experiences.

## IMPERIALISM AND POST-COLONIALISM

In this course students will explore imperialism, colonialism, and decolonization, interlinked historical processes that have profoundly shaped the world we live in today. While the course covers a broad swath of time—the late fifteenth century to the present—we will focus especially on the nine–teenth and twentieth centuries as we look at how modern empires were created, negotiated, contested, and formally dismantled. As we examine our themes in a global context, we will also pay particular attention to how indigenous and local peoples experienced and responded to colonial rule.

### HOW HISTORY IS TAUGHT AT DAO

Our history classes are designed to promote an understanding of the connections between historical events, eras, peoples, doctrines, wars, movements, religions, technologies, climates, values, and leaders. Rather than memorizing names and dates, students are asked to critically consider the past; to investigate a variety of documents (primary and secondary texts, art, film, speeches, archeological finds, letters, etc.); to assess perspective and bias; to connect past and present, pulling together information in a way that offers insights about and deeper understandings of our world; and to consider history and the present from a variety of humanities and social sciences perspectives (including anthropology, cultural studies, geography, media studies, political science, sociology, etc.).



### COURSE PROGRESSIONS

Check out the DAO Course Progression Map to see the order in which courses are taken.