Course Overview: What is American Studies 8 all about?
The 8th grade American Studies curriculum is about the continuum of American history as studied through the lens of the U.S. Constitution. What does it mean to be an American? How has that changed over time? (about the images)

Units and Activities: What will we be learning about and doing in this course?
How did the American identity take shape? What makes America great? What challenges do we face as Americans today? We will explore change, continuity, and context through time and space, examining cause-and-effect relationships between major transformative events in American history and the social, economic, and cultural factors involved. Ties to current events figure strongly in every unit. Units will include:
- Foundations: Who are we as a nation? (U.S. Constitution, Vermont Statehood)
- Becoming a World Power
- Social Justice: Our Rights and Responsibilities

Standards: What knowledge and skills will I gain by the end of this course?
This course will assess the knowledge and skills students build in key Anchor Standards and Content Standards.

Anchor Standards: Students will have multiple opportunities to show their proficiency in each Anchor Standard. “I can...” statements follow as descriptors for each Anchor Standard that will be assessed.
Sourcing: I can... gather, evaluate, integrate, and cite information and evidence presented in diverse formats; evaluate various explanations in order to make informed decisions to solve problems
Taking Action: I can... assess and present adaptations of arguments and explanations for individual and collective action
Arguing and Explaining: I can... construct arguments by evaluating and using evidence from multiple sources
Speaking and Listening: I can... initiate and participate in a range of collaborative discussions; make strategic use of digital media to enhance understanding

Course Standards: This course builds student content knowledge and skills and using the C3 Standards for Global Citizenship that were adopted by the Vermont Agency of Education in
2017, and the National Council for the Social Studies 10 Themes. The course standards for American Studies 8 include:

- **Civics:** Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence.

- **Economics:** People have wants and needs that often exceed the resources available to them, and societies have evolved a variety of ways to respond. The realities of global interdependence require understanding the increasingly important and diverse global connections among world societies and the frequent tension between national interests and global priorities.

- **Geography:** The study of people, places, and human-environment interactions assists students as they create their spatial views and geographic perspectives of the world beyond their personal locations.

- **History:** What are the common characteristics of different cultures? How did belief systems, such as religion or political ideals evolve and influence other parts of the culture? What are the transformative events that signaled major culture change to accommodate different ideas and beliefs? What can we learn from these things to inform how we move forward in positive and constructive ways today?

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**Assessment of Learning**

**Assessment Types:**
Three types of assessments will be used to determine if you have gained the necessary knowledge and skills of this course: Formative assessments, Summative assessments, and Habits of Work for Learning. Each is briefly described below:

- **Formative Assessments:** *Formative = Forming my knowledge and skills.* Formative Assessments receive a weight of .1 in the overall grade. Formative assessments are information for teachers, students, and parents on the progress students are making as they practice gaining knowledge and skills found in Anchor Standards. Teachers use the results of these assessments as data to understand individual student learning needs, adjust instructional pathways, and modify lessons to help students better meet course standards. Students use the results of these assessments to determine how they are progressing and to plan steps to ensure their success.

- **Summative Assessments:** *Summative = Summation of my knowledge and skills.* Summative Assessments can receive three different weights: 1, 1.5, or 2 depending on the size of the assessment, and therefore have the greatest impact on the Overall Course Mastery Grade. Summative assessments are used as a measure of independent student achievement in Anchor Standards. Throughout this course, summative assessments provide benchmark student achievement data. A summative assessment will always have clear scoring criteria for students to understand how they are performing.

- **Habits of Work for Learning:** Habits of Work for Learning (HOWLs) are skills and dispositions that are essential to the learning process but do not provide evidence of what a
student knows or can do in relation to content. WUHSMS teachers work to foster Habits of Work for Learning in three categories: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**Assessment Scoring:**
Teachers will provide framing for summative assessment scores using proficiency level scoring criteria for grading similar to the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchor Standard: Computational Modeling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Standards:</strong> NGSS HS-L2-1 Use mathematical and/or computational representations to support explanations of factors that affect the carrying capacity of ecosystems at different scales. NGSS HS-LS2-4 Use mathematical representations to support claims for the cycling of matter and flow of energy among organisms in an ecosystem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Representa
| tion |
| I can identify the components of a system. |
| I can represent the components of a system using numbers or variables. |
| I can show connections between components of a system using a computational model. |
| I can use mathematics and/or a computational representation to make predictions about how changing one variable or component will affect the system. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.0</th>
<th>1.3</th>
<th>1.7</th>
<th>2.0</th>
<th>2.3</th>
<th>2.7</th>
<th>3.0</th>
<th>3.3</th>
<th>3.7</th>
<th>4.0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>NC</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Beginning* | *Approaching* | *Proficient* | *Distinguished* |

*scores in the “Beginning range” are well below proficient and thus they are below passing.*

**HOWL Scoring:**
HOWLs will be scored at least once per checkpoint, and will be based on the frequency with which students demonstrate each of the habits: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**How is my Overall Course Grade Determined?**
Overall course grades will be reported as letter grades and will be comprised of:

- Formative & Summative Scores: 95%
- HOWLs: 5%

For more information, please see the WUHSMS student handbook.

**Communication:**
**How Do I Know My Grades?**
- On Summative Assessments, a teacher will provide both a 4-point grade and a letter grade.
- You can monitor your progress in the following ways:
  - By reading feedback and scoring returned to students on summative assessments
By monitoring the scores and Overall Course Mastery Grade in the Parent/Student portal on JumpRope
By monitoring the grades sent home quarterly through report cards

Where Can I Find This Syllabus during the School Year?
- This syllabus will be available on the school website in each subject's department tab once the school year is up and running.

How Do I See What's Due?
- Summative assessment due dates and handouts are posted to the blue “Upcoming Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal on or before the day they are assigned to students. We also use Google Classroom (GC) as a platform to hand out electronic documents, communicate due dates, and collect work from students. GC does not house grades.

How Do I See What's Past Due?
- If a student is missing an assessment, it will be listed in the red “Missing Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal along with any attachments.

Best Way to Contact Me:
bdrufovka@wcsu.net
We can also schedule a phone conversation or meeting if you would like.

Materials:
Students should come to class prepared with a notebook, binder or folder for organizing papers, a pen or pencil, and their Chromebook.

Schoolwide Procedures:
Please see the Student Handbook for Procedures and Policies related to: Due dates and deadlines, extra credit, retaking assessments, and turnaround time for grade entry.
Personal Mobile Devices: This class will follow the procedures outlined in the student handbook

Classroom Expectations:
Students are expected to arrive with open minds, be prepared to challenge their own thinking, practice challenging others thoughtfully and respectfully, and engage in all class activities and discussions.

Teacher Contact Information:
bdrufovka@wcsu.net
Room 210, 802-457-1317 x1210
KEEP TOP PORTION FOR YOUR RECORDS AND RETURN THIS PORTION TO MRS. DRUFOVKA

I have read this syllabus, and I have contacted the teacher with any questions I have.

Student name (printed): ____________________________________________

Student Signed: __________________________________ Date: __________

Parent/Guardian name (printed): ________________________________

Parent/Guardian Signed: ________________________________ Date: __________