



Geo-Political Studies

Teacher: Mr. Hamilton Semester(s): Full Year

Email: dhamilton@pittsfield.k12.nh.us Phone: 435-6701 (x4223)

School Improvement Goals

Goal #1: Curriculum / Instruction / Assessment By October 2013, 85% or more of all Pittsfield School District students will be proficient in reading and math as measured by the state's annual administration of the NECAP assessment measures.

Goal #2: Culture / Climate By June 2013, all members of the Pittsfield school community will work together to create an intentional culture characterized by collaboration, respect, responsibility, and safety as demonstrated by student, parent, and staff surveys and other measures.

Goal #3: College / Career By June 2013, 100% of Pittsfield Middle High School graduates will develop and activate an informed, realistic, and ambitious plan for college and career.

Course Description: Geo-Political Studies is designed to provide students with an understanding of physical and human systems and how people interact with the environment. Students will learn how to geographic tools as they explore the physical and political landscape of the world's land regions. The course will provide students with an understanding of cultural elements and social, political and economic challenges of the past and present. The overall aim of the course is to expand the student's knowledge of the world around them and to gain a better understanding of human development.

Course Competencies	Performance Indicators
Students will understand that geographic tools are used to acquire, process, report and analyze information about the world around them (SS:GE:1).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can demonstrate how geographers and mapmakers organize our world. I can construct a map using map elements. I can analyze information using geographic tools such as maps, climate graphs and population pyramids.
Students will understand that physical and human geographic features define places and people's perceptions of places and regions (SS:GE:2).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can investigate how relationships between humans and the physical environment lead to the formation of a place. I can analyze the role of physical features in the spread of people and ideas.
Students will understand that physical processes shape the Earth's surface and the characteristics and distribution of ecosystems (SS:GE:3).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain how physical processes interact to shape landforms. I can compare the characteristics of ecosystems and the processes involved in their geographic distribution.
Students will understand that human settlement and migration in an area leads to complex cultural mosaics that include diverse ethnic groups, language and cultures (SS:GE:4).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can distinguish the spatial arrangement and characteristics of an area. I can explain how culture traits shape the character of a region. I can analyze how individuals, groups and societies interact with their physical environments. I can assess the significance of population trends in relationship to geographic issues. I can analyze the roles of cooperation and conflict among people in the distribution and formation of regions.
Students will understand that the interaction of Earth's physical and human systems support and alter the global environment (SS:GE:5).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain the significance of human modification of the physical environment. I can assess changes in the physical environment and its ability to support human activity. I can evaluate the management and use of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Student Expectations

1. Students are expected to be prompt for class.
2. Students are expected to be respectful of themselves and others.
3. Students are expected to act responsibly in the care of school materials and equipment.
4. Students are expected to come prepared with a pen/pencil, notebook and three-ring binder.
5. Students are expected to participate in class and group activities.
6. Students are expected to turn assignments in on time or establish another time frame with the instructor.
7. Students are expected to see the instructor for assignments and/or materials if they are absent from class.
8. Students are expected to ask permission to use cell phones, iPods or other devices during class.

Course Evaluation & Assessment

1. Students must demonstrate mastery of all course competencies to earn course credit.
2. Mastery is demonstrated by *meeting expectations* on all indicator assessments for each competency.
3. Assignments will be categorized as summative assessments (weighted as 80% of course progress) and formative assessments (20%).
 - Examples of summative assessments include essays, presentations, projects or tests.
 - Examples of formative assessments include homework, worksheets, drafts or quizzes.
4. When a student has mastered all course competencies, the final course grade will be calculated by averaging the individual course competencies.
5. Students are encouraged to reattempt indicator assessments which did not *meet expectations* throughout the course.
6. Students who do not demonstrate mastery of all course competencies will be required to develop an approved competency recovery plan or retake the course.

Additional Notes

Please sign and return this form by Tuesday, September 4. If you have any questions or would like further information regarding the course please email Mr. Hamilton directly.

As signified by our signatures, we have received and read this course outline.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date