Course Description: The purpose of this course is to provide students with the modern historical framework and factual background to understand issues going on in the United States and world today. The course will also help them develop the research, writing, and thinking skills necessary to become informed citizens who are able to take action.

The course is organized **thematically around essential questions**. In each unit students will: 1) Develop a deeper understanding of events, themes, and concepts that serve as examples for the current world; 2) Study at least one historical case study of this concept/theme in action – these case studies are drawn from the state frameworks; 3) Apply knowledge of past events and themes to current events and develop informed opinions. The main themes/units of study are:

1. **The Role of the Government in Citizens’ Social and Economic Lives**: How do beliefs about the role of government changes along the political spectrum? How do liberal and conservative leaders disagree as to how to solve economic and social problems? What is the right role of government in citizens’ social and economic lives?
2. **The Role of the United States in World Affairs**: What is the appropriate role of the US in world affairs? What are examples of “hard” and “soft” power and when should the US use them in the current world? What different Presidential Doctrines have guided US foreign policy? What is your Doctrine? When, if ever, is war just?
3. **The American Homeland During Times of International Crisis**: Is the government justified in violating your Constitutional rights in the name of security during a time of crisis? What role does fear play in domestic policy during times of crisis?
4. **The Roles of Individuals and Groups Working towards a More Perfect Union**: What is the “American Dream” and is it equally achievable for all? What groups have fought for social change and what methods did they use? How have these groups influenced other groups fighting for change? How effective have different individuals and groups been at making change?

Assessments: Students will be assessed on the required content for each unit through tests and quizzes. Throughout the year, students will also be assessed through performances on essays, debates, presentations, and simulations. Each unit will contain at least one Document Based Question essay task. Students will also complete an extended research paper on a topic of their choice in the 4th quarter.
Common Core and NCSS C3 Alignment:

This course incorporates many Common Core standards from the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy. **Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies** are all included with particular emphasis on: 1) Citing specific textual evidence to support analysis; 2) Determining central ideas and providing an accurate summary; 6) Comparing points of view; 8) Assessing an author’s evidence and claims; 10) reading text independently. **Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies** are also included with an emphasis on: 1) Writing arguments with precise claims and academic language; 2) Writing informative/explanatory texts; 7) Conducting short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question; 8) Gathering relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources; 9) Drawing evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

This course also incorporates dimensions from the NCSS C3 Framework. From the case studies in each unit, students learn disciplinary tools and concepts (Dimension 2) and develop and support claims using evidence provided in class (Dimension 3). With each independent research task, students use the concepts and tools they have learned to develop and plan inquiries (Dimension 1), and gather and evaluate sources, and use evidence to develop claims (Dimension 3). Through presentations, debates, and simulations, students communicate conclusions and recommend action (Dimension 4).
### Unit 1: Role of the Government in Citizens’ Social and Economic Lives

1. **What is the political spectrum of beliefs and how do liberal and conservative leaders disagree as to how to solve economic and social problems?**
   - The Gilded Age (USII.1, USII.5)
   - The Great Depression & the New Deal (USII.11, USII.12, USII.13)
   - The Reagan 1980’s and Conservative Movement (USII.29)
   - The State of the Union in the 21st Century (USII.30, USII.31, USII.32)

2. **What is the right role of government in citizens’ social and economic lives?**
   - \[\text{Case Studies:}\]
   - \[\text{Common Assessments:}\]
     - \[\text{DBQ: Was the New Deal a success or a failure?}\]
     - \[\text{Presidential Candidate Analysis: Endorse a current presidential candidate based on your beliefs and their positions.}\]

### Unit 2: Role of the United States in World Affairs:

1. **What is the appropriate role of the US in world affairs?**
   - Age of US Imperialism (USII.6)
   - World War One (USII.7)
   - World War Two (US II.15, USII.16)
   - The Cold War: Korea, Vietnam (USII.18, USII.19, USII.20)
   - The US in the 21st Century (USII.33)

2. **What are examples of “hard” and “soft” power and when should the US use them in the current world?**

3. **What different Presidential Doctrines have guided US foreign policy? What is your Doctrine?**

4. **When, if ever, is war just?**
   - \[\text{Case Studies:}\]
   - \[\text{Common Assessments:}\]
     - \[\text{Foreign Policy Doctrine: Research presidential foreign policy doctrines and develop your own to use when analyzing several US foreign interventions.}\]
     - \[\text{WWII Museum Artifacts and Documents: Utilize local history museum to build a narrative around a document/artifact from the perspective of a person who experienced the war.}\]
     - \[\text{DBQ: Was the US justified in dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945?}\]
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| **Unit 3: American Homeland During Times of International Crisis:**  
  1. Is the government justified in violating your Constitutional rights in the name of security during a time of crises?  
  2. What role does fear play in domestic policy during times of crisis? | **Case Studies:**  
  - The Red Scare of the 1920’s (USII.10)  
  - Japanese Internment in WWII (USII.17)  
  - McCarthyism and the Second Red Scare (USII.24)  
  - The Patriot Act and the War on Terror (USII.33) | **Common Assessments**  
  - **Debate/Forum:** Is the Constitution a “suicide pact” as Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg warned?  
  - **DBQ:** Was the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII a matter of national security or racial prejudice?  
  - **Essay:** How should the US government protect the homeland from domestic and international terrorism? |  
  - Reading Standards for Literacy: 2, 6, 10  
  - Writing Standards for Literacy: 1, 2, 7, 8  

| **Unit 4: Roles of Individuals and Groups Working towards a More Perfect Union:**  
  1. What is the “American Dream” and is it equally achievable for all?  
  2. What groups have fought for social change and what methods did they use?  
  3. How have these groups influenced other groups fighting for change?  
  4. How effective have different individuals and groups been at making change? | **Case Studies:**  
  - African American Civil Rights from Reconstruction to Present Day (USII.9, USII.25, USII.26)  
  - Woman’s Rights Movement (USII.9, USII.27)  
  - Groups Fighting For Opportunity & Change in the 21st Century (Immigrants, LGBTQ, Hispanic, Native American, etc.) | **Common Assessments**  
  - **Debate/Forum:** MLK vs. Malcolm X: who’s approach works best?  
  - **Research Task:** Writing assignments focus on incorporating quotes, citing sources.  
  - **DBQ:** How did the Civil Rights movement attempt to create equality for minorities in the 1950’s and 1960’s and how does that impact society today?  
  - **Research/Presentation:** Research a group fighting for change in the 21st Century. What methods have they used and how effective have they been? |  
  - Reading Standards for Literacy: 2, 6, 10  
  - Writing Standards for Literacy: 1, 2, 7, 8  
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| **Unit 5: Research Paper**             | Massachusetts State Frameworks Social Studies Skills | Common Assessments | • Reading Standards for Literacy: 2, 6, 10  
• Writing Standards for Literacy: 1, 2, 7, 8  
• C3 Framework: Disciplinary Tools and Concepts, developing and supporting claims using evidence, planning inquiries, gathering and supporting evidence, communicating conclusions. |
| • Distinguish between long-term and short-term cause and effect relationships. (H, G, C, E)  
• Show connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments. (H, G, C, E)  
• Distinguish intended from unintended consequences. (H, E, C)  
• Connections to ELA Composition Standards 19 and 24 ; | • Extended Research Paper: Choose a person, idea, or event from 20th Century American History. Summarize the topic, and analyze its impact on the United States now. |