COURSE DESCRIPTION
Facing History traces the history of discrimination, prejudice, and their escalation into violence and genocide worldwide in the twentieth century. The course examines global history of the past 100+ years by focusing on how people have marginalized and ultimately sought to separate themselves in extreme ways from one another. It considers the role of perpetrators, victims, bystanders, as well as rescuers and resisters as it looks at the role that individuals play in history. Genocide in Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas is examined in depth in this course, as are other many examples of ethnic cleansing, religious and racial hatreds, and violations of human rights through present-day events. Of particular interest are recent genocides in Nazi-occupied Europe, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Darfur as well as atrocities in Asia during World War II. The course is taught from an interdisciplinary perspective with a heavy reliance on primary source materials, literature, and art, and makes considerable use of the latest in educational technology, with much of the work required for the course produced online. Current events are emphasized, as the issues raised are—regrettably—ongoing. Numerous guest speakers, including survivors of these historical events as well as scholars and human rights activists, address the class and field trips are an integral part of the course. The course seeks to equip students to become critically minded citizens with the ability to think through the big moral and political choices that they will confront as citizens in modern society.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
- How do we define and see our own identities? How do we categorize ourselves and others? How do others see us?
- How do stereotypes and traditional beliefs affect our views of other races, ethnicities, and genders? How do prejudice and discrimination develop?
- What human rights are we guaranteed and by whom? How might we protect these human rights?
- Why do people marginalize and separate themselves from one another?
- What roles do perpetrators, victims, bystanders, rescuers and resisters play in world events?
- What led to the genocides of the 20th and 21st centuries? What could have been done to have prevented them?
- Why is the role of the bystander/Upstander so critical in history?
- Why is there so much denial of history? How does one address and counter denial?
- What roles do justice, reconciliation, and memorialization play in the healing of societies?
- What roles can we as citizens play to be active participants in social action and justice efforts in our communities?
- In what ways do ongoing current events mirror, complicate, and/or extend the historical events that we study?

21ST CENTURY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS
Students will know and be able to demonstrate mastery of content and skills by way of the following:
- **Reading:** Students will utilize higher order thinking skills as they read authentic material from a variety of perspectives, cultures, and disciplines.
- **Writing:** Students will write competently and creatively, having mastered language conventions including rhetorical, stylistic, and grammatical structures.
- **Speaking and Presenting:** Students will communicate clearly and effectively in prepared and extemporaneous speech.
- **Researching:** Students will generate questions and use informed research and technological methodologies to evaluate information and synthesize new and innovative ideas.
- **Problem Solving:** Students will develop and apply problem solving skills across disciplines and settings.
• **Social engagement**: students will be open minded, respectful, responsible, and engaged members of the school community.

• **Civil engagement**: students will demonstrate leadership skills through active involvement and advocacy within the larger community.

**POWER STANDARDS**

• Students will be able to assess key aspects of modern and contemporary history by acknowledging their own identities and inherent biases.

• Students will be able to develop a deep understanding of racism, prejudice, marginalization, and discrimination both in history and in the present-day global context.

• Students will be able to understand their core human rights, as guaranteed by national and international law, and assess how these rights have been upheld and/or violated in specific global contexts.

• Students will be able to identify the roles of perpetrators, victims, bystanders, rescuers, resisters and upstanders.

• Students will be able to speculate on the causes of genocide and the key steps that appear in many episodes of genocide throughout history.

• Students will be able to recognize the roles of post-genocide and trauma justice, reconciliation, and memorialization efforts.

• Students will be able to define the roles that individuals can play in becoming active participants in social action and justice efforts.

• Students will be able to recognize echoes of past events in ongoing current ones.

**READING SYLLABUS**

A wide array of selected readings include primary source documents, in addition to the following volumes—Samantha Power’s book *A Problem from Hell*: *America in the Age of Genocide* (2002), Art Spiegelman’s *Maus* (1996), Ta Nehisi-Coates’ *Between the World and Me* (2015), John Hersey’s *Hiroshima* (1946), and Roy Gutman and David Rieff, *Crimes of War* (2002)—acting as principal texts. Materials from other disciplines—notably literature, art, theater, music, popular culture—are seamlessly integrated into the course. Much of the written work for the course generated by the students and by the instructor is housed on the course website, [www.learntoquestion.com](http://www.learntoquestion.com).

**INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

Classroom pedagogy will support learning by:

• Personalizing instruction

• Engaging students in cross disciplinary learning

• Engaging students as active and self-directed learners

• Emphasizing inquiry, problem-solving, and higher order thinking

• Applying knowledge and skills to authentic tasks

• Engaging students in self-assessment and reflection

• Integrating technology

**COMMON ASSESSMENTS**

There will be regular formative assessments, through regular tests and projects, throughout the course.

**GRADING**

Grades each term will be weighted and based on these criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignments, including online discussions</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay, papers, and projects</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Final Grade: marking terms are weighted unequally as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>25%</td>
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and please note: under no circumstances will a student receive a passing final grade in the course if he/she does not turn in a final project for the course on time that earns a passing grade for the project.

**CONDUCT**

Facing History classes will begin on time; students are expected to be in their seats on time and ready to focus. As much of the class is discussion-based, it is essential that each student participate actively, that they demonstrate tolerance and respect for their classmates and for divergent views. If students are absent, they are responsible for
making up all work and for checking with the teacher and on the [www.learntoquestion.com](http://www.learntoquestion.com) website for information about missed assignments and readings.

**SUPPLIES**
Students will need to have the following: a spiral notebook, a folder for handouts, some kind of USB “thumb drive” that is at least 8 GB in size, and access to a digital camera (phones included). Students will also be expected to have reliable internet and computer access, using available resources at home and/or at school on a virtually daily basis.

**OFFICE HOURS:**
Daily, during all study periods and R5, in room xxx.

**Students and Parents/Guardians:**
*Please read the above information for Facing History together, and indicate by your signatures on the reverse of the (color) copy of this syllabus that you understand the purpose, format, and expectations of this course. Please return the (color) copy to me and keep the white copy for your own reference. Please feel free to see, call, or e-mail me with any questions or problems you might have.*

**Student:**
I have read and I understand the course description and classroom expectations for the Facing History course. I also understand that I will be held accountable for the return of all texts and borrowed materials in May or June.

Student signature ________________________________ Date __________________

Student e-mail ________________________________

**Parent/Guardian:**
I have reviewed the course description and classroom expectations for the Facing History course with this student.

Parent/guardian signature ________________________________ Date ______________

Parent/guardian e-mail ________________________________

Parent/guardian principal phone/s ________________________________