

## GRADING

**Purpose:** The purpose of grading is for the teacher to provide feedback on the progress of the student with regard to learning goals. To be informative and meaningful, grades should clearly connect student work to learning goals.

**Grading for the Course:** Currently, Bedford Public Schools requires a single numerical percentage grade for the entire course. This course grade is calculated with each quarterly grade counting 20%, the midyear examination counting 10% and the final examination counting 10%.

**Grading for the Quarters:** Quarterly grades will be calculated using a weighted category system. The categories are described around learning goals (rather than the common learning activities). In this way, grades should clearly connect to learning goals. We will be using four categories weighted unevenly to reflect the value of each learning goal. They are as follows in descending order of importance:

- **Effort/Grit (40%)**—A fundamental key to success is effort. It is the teacher's responsibility to provide learning challenges and it is the student's responsibility to meet those challenges to the best of his/her ability. Grading in this category is primarily about work completion but not exclusively. It also includes the extent to which the student tries to persevere through difficult work and the student's willingness to challenge him/herself by taking risks.
- **Historical Thinking Skills (25%)**—Central to historical study as well as productive functioning in our society are critical and creative skills. In general, these are the skills associated with thinking for yourself and expressing yourself clearly. More specifically these include historical significance, evidence, change & continuity, cause & effect, historical perspective, & historical empathy.
- **Citizenship (20%)**—Horace Mann argued that for a republic to endure, its citizenry must be educated. Mann's argument became a cornerstone of the American Public School system and remains so to this day. Stated differently, a major goal, perhaps the primary goal, of our public school system is to prepare young people to become contributing members of society. This applies to this course in the sense that this course is a community. Each student's citizenship will be graded according to how much s/he contributes to the community.
- **Historical Knowledge (15%)**—A healthy republic also depends upon a citizenry that has some knowledge its past. Furthermore, this is a history (not a math, science, etc.) course. However, the specifics of what happen in the past are either matters of fact, which are generally quite accessible through research tools at our fingertips, or are matters of interpretation that require sharp critical skills to manage. Given that critical thinking skills are assessed in the critical and creative skills category, this category is concerned with how much about the past does the student know and to what degree of complexity.

**Grading on Individual Assignments:** To help connect specific pieces of work (assignments) to learning goals (categories), for each assignment, students will be provided with instructions that explicitly indicate the objectives and, when appropriate, a rubric. Because assignments may deal with multiple learning goals that fall into more than one category, assignments may receive more than one grade. For example, an essay may receive an "effort" grade for being done, a "skill" grade for the articulateness of expression and thoroughness of historical analysis and a "knowledge" grade for the amount and complexity of historical knowledge demonstrated. On the other hand, a homework that is only spot-checked would receive only an "effort" grade for completion.