

**Merrimack High School Social Studies Department**  
**Honors & College Level Application Process**

**Overview for Guidance Counselors, Students, and Parents:**

Due to the philosophy of the College Board, there is no application process for **AP social studies courses**. A student can be placed in an AP course with the signature of their current social studies teacher or the social studies department chair. However, the student is encouraged to meet with the social studies department chair if they have any concerns about taking this type of college-level course.

The MHS Social Studies Department uses the following process for students applying to **Honors level** courses, including **US - Running Start**.

- ❑ Students may receive a signature from their current social studies teacher on their pre-enrollment form for Honors/College level courses if they have already demonstrated the skills and motivation to be successful at that level.
  - Teachers will consider students' traditional grades (such as receiving a 90 or above for the semester), and/or the demonstration of strong study skills, high motivation, and exceptional subject interest, etc.
  - Since this process happens early in second semester, if a student is in a semester course, their current teacher may request that the student get the signature of their most recent social studies teacher.
- If a teacher has concerns or reservations, the student will not receive their signature on the pre-enrollment form, but may choose to go through the petition process. In that case, they must:
  - ❑ Submit the **Petition Form**, including a writing sample, to their social studies teacher
    - The Petition Form includes grades from previous Social Studies and English courses, the student's self-assessment of their strengths, weaknesses, and motivation for Honors or college-level courses.
    - If a student does not have a current social studies course, they may include a writing sample from their most recent social studies class, or from an English class.
    - If a student does not have a traditional writing sample, a non-traditional writing sample (such as a powerpoint, research project, one-pager, etc.) will suffice.
    - This form must be submitted to a student's social studies teacher, who will then pass it along to the social studies department chair, along with the required Teacher Recommendation Form.
    - It is no longer required that students meet with the Social Studies department chair to review their forms and discuss their petition, though they certainly may schedule a meeting if they wish: [trevor.knight@sau26.org](mailto:trevor.knight@sau26.org)
    - Students will receive an email from the department chair regarding the placement decision, and the application form will be returned to their guidance counselor.
    - If the student's petition is denied, it is possible to schedule a parent meeting to further discuss the matter, with the student present.