

American Government

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classroom: C-207

Course Overview:

We the peopleare going Constitutional. This course will examine the fundamentals of government on national, state and local levels. This includes the three branches of government, rights & responsibilities of American citizenship, and the role of political parties in our system. Also, we will examine the U.S. Constitution, Constitutional Amendments, U.S. Supreme Court cases and the U.S. legal system.

In addition, this course prepares students for the academic rigors of higher education and the working world. Students will need an open mind, respect for themselves, classmates, the instructor, and their surroundings. This class will be quite beneficial in understanding of how our country works. Students who gain the most are the ones who put forth the maximum effort to see how what we learn applies directly to their own lives.

Throughout the semester, we will conduct class using a variety of methods: lecture/discussion, simulations, cooperative learning activities and independent research. Students need to become familiar with current events through the use of online and cable broadcasts news outlets. A variety of news video clips will be shown throughout the course. Students are expected to follow the daily news and will submit formal current events assignments every 2 weeks. Students will also have notebook checks every 2 weeks.

The course meets all Arizona State Standards for a high school government course and fulfills the graduation requirements of the Chandler Unified School District. All information contained in this syllabus is subject to change at the teacher's discretion.

Major Assignments & Activities:

1. Students will be assessed through the use of class assignments, KBATS, quizzes, unit tests, discussions, activities, and projects.
2. Length of assignments will vary daily, but students should expect some type of homework on a regular basis.

Student Expectations:

1. Show up to class on-time and prepared each day. This means all homework is done, assignments are read, and the proper materials brought to class.
2. Engage in class discussions, which are meant to stimulate ideas, foster intellectual growth and provide confidence to all students involved. No shutting down.

3. Turn off your phone and put it in your backpack upon entering class. There will be occasions to use them for learning only. I'll let you know when.
4. **Required supplies.** Have a notebook for class notes (3 ring binder), number two pencils, ballpoint pen (blue or black ink), and spiral notebook.
5. All assignments will be typed **or** completed in BLUE or BLACK ink only. Pencil and/or colored ink will not be accepted. All Current Events and projects must be typed.
6. Do not ask to use the restroom during instruction, presentations or activities. In fact, make every effort to keep restroom breaks to a minimum.
7. Every rule in the Perry handbook regarding plagiarism, cheating, food, hats, dress code, language, and conduct is enforced in this class.

Controversial Topics:

All government systems are laden with the righteous & the sleazeballs; the mundane & the tantalizing; persecutions & liberties; politics & religion. The content of this class deals with current real world, controversial issues. ***It is vital that everyone is respectful of each other's opinions, backgrounds, beliefs, and world views. There will be a lot of agreement and disagreement on topics. Listening is essential to communicating. Everyone is to be valued and respected.***

Grading Scale, Attendance & Make-up Work:

Consistent attendance is vital for success. Your semester grade consists of class assignments, projects, homework, quizzes, and tests. Per the Social Studies Dept. policy grades are quantified and scaled:

Semester grade = 40% (Quarter 1) + 40% (Quarter 2) + 20% (Final Exam)

100%-90%=A 89%-80%= B 79%-70% = C 69%-60%= D Below 60% =F

Grades are rounded up only if they meet the 9.5 or higher threshold. Do NOT ask to have your grade rounded up for anything less than this. Do NOT come to me on bended knee on or near Finals week to ask for extra credit. The answer will be no and you will have created an awkward situation.

Excused absences. You will have the same amount of days as your absence to complete assignments. It is 1000% your responsibility to check the website and/or ask classmates what you missed.

Late policy. Assignments submitted 1-day late, can earn 50%. After that, it zeros out in the gradebook. If you are absent from a quiz or test, you are responsible for arranging a make-up *within one week* of the assessment. If not, it will zero out in the gradebook.

Field trips and sports. Plan around them. I know your coaches, and I know you know your game schedules. Field trips are also planned weeks in advance. Assignments are due beforehand.

Life gets difficult. Seriously. Please tell me in advance when you cannot get computer access at home, are struggling in classes, incur health problems, or become overly stressed out. We will find solutions *before* things get unmanageable. There's a difference between excuses and legitimate difficulties. I'm on your side.

Government Class Contract

Please return this page of the syllabus by Friday of the first week of school.

Copyright, Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:

Students expected to cite material where appropriate. Your homework and/or projects must be COMPLETELY original. Plagiarism will result in a "0" on the assignment, parent contact, and administrative discipline. Academic dishonesty can be described as, but not limited to:

- Copying another's work with or without permission.
- Giving your work to someone else to pass as her/hers own.
- Working in a group unless explicitly told to do so.
- Using "crib notes" on tests, quizzes or other assessments.
- Securing answers for tests from others who have already taken a test. This includes passing information along to a future test-takers.
- Using notes or a book when they have not been permitted.
- Passing off another's work as your own to any capacity.

____ I entirely read and understand Mrs. Tompkins' syllabus for American Government.

____ I understand the academic commitment and expectations for my behavior in class.

Student printed name: _____ ID #: _____

Student Signature _____

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____ I am aware of the academic honesty and plagiarism policy expected of my son/daughter.

____ I am aware of the potential videos/movies that may possibly be viewed in class (see back).

Parent PRINTED name _____

Parent Signature _____

Parents: Please attend the OPEN HOUSE on campus Thursday, August 8th, 6:15 PM.

Dear Parents,

The following is a stock (not comprehensive) list of videos that may be shown- in full or segments- during the school year. Please keep in mind that this is a college course and material can be controversial/sensitive. If you have concerns about any of these, please contact me. I will give an alternate assignment to your student to fulfill that requirement.

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| _____ Gideon's Trumpet | _____ West Wing |
| _____ Crash Course US Government | _____ Swing Vote |
| _____ Twelve Angry Men | _____ Dave |
| _____ Mr. Smith Goes to Washington | _____ A More Perfect Union |
| _____ The American President | _____ Lincoln |
| _____ School House Rocks | _____ John Stossel video clips |
| _____ PBS Frontline | _____ The People & Power Game 1996 |
| _____ PBS Eyes on the Prize | _____ Select comedy clips |
| _____ News clips from various news stations | _____ Gerrymandering videos |
| _____ National Geographic Solitary Confinement | _____ CBS 60 Minutes |
| _____ The Rainmaker | _____ The War Room (Universal) 1994 |
| _____ Eyes on the Prize I & II PBS 1987 | _____ TED Talks |
| _____ Liberty! The American Revolution:
Are We to be a Nation? PBS 1997 | |