

Course Description

This one semester course gives a broad overview of modern forms of government, present in today's global community. It provides the student an opportunity to acquire detailed knowledge of the philosophy behind the democratic form of government practiced in the United States. This course incorporates the roots and changes in our system from colonial times to the present. The overall objective of this course is to prepare seniors for their place in society, by helping them learn how the U.S. government works, how it can be changed and what rights and freedoms the Constitution guarantees its citizens.

Course Objectives - Students will:

- understand the purpose of government.
- know the political theories that formed the foundation for the U.S. government.
- be able to compare and contrast different forms of government.
- understand the roles and responsibilities of the different branches of government.
- examine how interpretations of the Constitution have changed over time.
- understand the election process.
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- detect bias in the media, political commentaries, and political campaigns.
- trace the evolution of Americans' civil rights and liberties.

Philosophy

This school year we will be spending many hours together learning the importance and value of Government and Economics. Here is a list of goals, expectations and guidelines for my class:

- To become a more perceptive and informed student
- You will learn the study of politics and governments is subjective
- You will learn to analyze historical figures and why they made their decisions
- You will learn how to defend a point of view even if you don't agree with it
- You will learn to analyze charts, political cartoons, pictures and historical sources
- You will learn how to convey your ideas verbally and on paper.
- You will learn Government is alive, exciting and worthy to be learned

Methods of Instruction

A variety of teaching techniques and methods are used in this course. A combination of lecture and class discussion, from both the text and outside sources, is utilized, with the emphasis on student involvement. This class will be structured using a variety of activities that will incorporate teacher direction, cooperative group work, group and/or individual presentations, simulations (role-playing), films and tapes, class discussion, readings and writings. So that everyone is working on task, each activity will be discussed before being implemented.

Integrity Issues

You are expected to do your own work at all times whether it's an article critique, assignment, quiz, or test. Work not of your own will be given a zero (0 points) – see your handbook for rules governing this. Copying an assignment is considered cheating, and neither party will receive credit. At this level, this should not be an issue.

Throughout this class, we will be discussing issues that are prevalent in 21st Century America.

Please remember that every individual's opinion is to be respected. Of course, you are encouraged to agree or disagree with anybody in the room, even the teacher. However, regardless of how passionate a discussion may be, the debate will be ended if and when it becomes personal. Class participation is extremely important to your success. Saying ideas out loud, and comparing these ideas to the beliefs of others, is important to your own understanding of the material.

SPECIAL NOTE → Ask Questions!

- One of the most important roles in any classroom is the student who is not afraid to ask questions.
- Too often, students are afraid to ask a question because they think they are the only person who doesn't understand the topic at hand. Our goal is to learn, so be brave, raise your hand, get your answer and help others who are also seeking clarification. Research shows that when students are active learners, they retain more.

TEXTBOOK - *Magruder's American Government*, Prentice Hall, 2008 Edition

WEB SITE

A requirement of this class is to make regular use of the course Web site. Class notes, assignments and projects, practice tests, useful links, etc., are all available at the Web site for this course at <http://mrfarshtey.net/Gov.html>