

# **American Government**

## **Trimester Two, 2023-2024**

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### **Full Course Description**

This high school course in American Government and Politics provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the structure, functions, and dynamics of the United States government. Through a combination of historical analysis, current events examination, and critical thinking exercises, students will explore the foundations of the American political system and the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

### **Learning Outcomes**

#### **Key Topics and Learning Objectives:**

##### **1. Foundations of American Government:**

- Explore the historical roots and philosophical principles that influenced the creation of the U.S. Constitution.
- Analyze the Articles of Confederation and the Constitutional Convention, highlighting the compromises and debates that shaped the Constitution.

##### **2. The U.S. Constitution:**

- Examine the structure and content of the Constitution, including the separation of powers, checks and balances, and the Bill of Rights.
- Understand the role of the Constitution in shaping the American political system and protecting individual rights.

##### **3. Branches of Government:**

- Investigate the roles and powers of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches.
- Analyze the interplay between the branches and their impact on policy-making.

##### **4. Elections and Political Participation:**

- Study the electoral process, from primaries to general elections, and the role of political parties.
- Explore the significance of voting rights, the Electoral College, and the impact of the media on elections.

##### **5. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights:**

- Examine landmark Supreme Court cases that have shaped the interpretation of individual liberties and rights.
- Investigate the evolution of civil rights movements and their impact on American society.

#### **6. Public Policy and Domestic Issues:**

- Analyze major domestic policy issues such as healthcare, education, and the economy.
- Evaluate the role of government in addressing societal challenges and promoting general welfare.

#### **7. International Relations and Foreign Policy:**

- Explore the role of the United States in the global community.
- Examine the decision-making process in foreign policy and its impact on diplomatic relations.

#### **8. Civic Engagement and Responsibilities:**

- Encourage active civic participation and responsible citizenship.
- Discuss the importance of community involvement, advocacy, and the impact of informed decision-making.

### **Course Assignments and Grading**

#### **Games**

Students will participate in a myriad of activities such as vocabulary practice, trivia, learning games, classwide review, and much more. Activities given in class will not be homework, and will be completed during class time. Grading of these activities will be derived from the completion of activities as well as the participation in the activities.

#### **Reading Assignments**

Students will read at least one chapter on the content per week. Their reading will be accompanied by reading comprehension questions due at the end of each week.

#### **Individual Projects**

Students will be expected to do individual projects throughout the trimester such as government reports, political party brochures, and current event reports.

#### **Assessment and Evaluation**

Assessment methods will include a combination of exams, research projects, class discussions, and simulations of political processes. Students will be expected to critically analyze political events, demonstrate an understanding of key concepts, and articulate their own informed perspectives on issues. This course aims to prepare students for active and informed citizenship in a democratic society.

**Grades**

All grades will be posted on Powerschool. You are strongly encouraged to check your scores in Powerschool regularly. A final grade will be assigned at the end of the course in accordance with your total points earned.

**Late Work**

Students will be allowed to turn in late work with no point deductions up into one week after the due date. For each week following the late assignment will be deducted 10% of the total points earned.

**Course Policies and Procedures****Privileges**

Food and Drink: Small, clean snacks and appropriate drinks are allowed in class as long as they do not become a distraction or a mess.

Phones: Phones will be stored in a safe area during class time where students can request access to them if need be..

Any and all of these privileges can be revoked if students disrespect the given rules and abuse freedoms.

**Attendance Policy**

When students miss class, they miss important information. If students are absent, they will be permitted to make up coursework or complete an equivalent assignment agreed upon with me. When absent, students must email me to receive an outline of what they must complete in order to stay on track in this class.

**Academic Integrity**

It is important that any assignment submission is a pure reflection of a student's work and understanding. Students are expected to practice the highest possible standards of academic integrity. Any deviation from this expectation will result in a minimum academic penalty of failing the assignment, and will result in additional disciplinary measures as needed. This includes improper citation of sources, using another student's work, using Chat GPT, using AI, and any other form of academic misrepresentation.

**Mental Health**

If stress is impacting you or getting in the way of your ability to do your schoolwork, maintain relationships, eat, sleep, or enjoy yourself, please reach out to me or any of our staff to get you connected with our counselors and wellness team.