

Randleman High School
American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics
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Course Description: American History: The Founding Principles, Civics and Economics is a course that provides a framework for your understanding of the basic tenets of American democracy, practices of American government as established by the United States Constitution, basic concepts of American politics and citizenship and concepts in macro and micro economics and personal finance. This course is organized into three basic parts: Civics and Government, Personal Financial Literacy and Economics. The Civics and Government strand will increase your understanding of the institutions of constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded, the skills necessary to participate as effective and responsible citizens and the knowledge of how to use democratic procedures for making decisions and managing conflict. The Economic and Personal Financial Literacy strands will provide you with an understanding of the role economic factors play in making economic decisions, the ability to reason logically about key economic issues and the knowledge and skills needed to manage personal financial resources effectively for lifetime financial security. Taken together, these three strands should help to prepare you to become responsible and effective citizens in an interdependent world.

Many of the subjects we will discuss in this class will include topics where you may have prior knowledge and pre-developed opinions. I would encourage you to have an open mind, but also to speak your mind. Being an American is first and foremost about participation in the process. If you are unwilling to offer your opinion then no one has to care what you think. If you say something that someone disagrees with, expect to be challenged. It is okay to have a different opinion, but be prepared to defend your position. My hope is that the skills and information you learn in this class will allow you to become a better citizen of America.

Required Materials:

- Pencil or Pen (no red or pink ink)
- Notebook or Loose leaf paper

Optional Supplies:

Glue Stick, Markers, Colored Pencils, Highlighter

Grading Policy:

Major Assessments (Tests/Major Projects and Quizzes): 60%

Minor Assessments (Classwork/Minor Projects): 40%

Grading Policy:

100 – 90 = A

89 – 80 = B

79 – 70 = C

69 – 60 = D

59 and below = F

The final grade will figured as follows:

Average of the two nine weeks grades – 75%

Final Exam – 25%

Course and Instructor Policies:

Make up work: When a student misses an assignment due to an absence the student is responsible for checking the missing work folder and completing the assignment.

Extra Credit: Extra Credit assignments will be given at the teacher's discretion.

Late work: Students may turn in late work up until the unit test for a reduced grade. The maximum amount of points you may earn after one day late will be 80. You will be penalized an additional 10 points for each day after that. Honors level classes will be allowed to turn in work one day late with a 20 point deduction.

Attendance: Randolph County Policy states that students are not allowed to miss more than five days of school. Any student who misses more than five days must receive a waiver from the attendance committee in order to receive credit for the course.

Behavior: All students are expected to follow the behavior guidelines established by Randolph County Schools and Randleman High School. Any student who fails to follow these guidelines will be subject to the penalties and consequences for failure to follow the rules.

Remediation/tutoring opportunities: Any student who needs remediation or tutoring can receive help on remediation days or before school at 7:30.

Sequence of Units:

Unit 1: Democratic Principles

Major concepts will focus on America's founding principles and documents, including but not limited to the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Key topics will also include debates on power and authority and its impact on the shape of government in the United States over time. This unit will also focus on the major principles and ideals underlying American democracy in terms of how they promote freedom.

Unit 2: Government Systems

Major concepts will focus on analyzing the structures of national, state and local governments in terms of ways they are organized to maintain order, security, welfare of the public and the protection of citizens. Key topics will also include summarizing the functions of North Carolina state and local governments. There will be an in depth study of the U.S. Constitution as a "living document" to learn how the Constitution has been interpreted and applied throughout history. We will compare the U.S. Constitution with the N.C. State Constitution. Issues related to Civil Rights, Immigration, Health Care, and Economic Development will be among some of the big issues that are discussed. This unit will also include an in depth study of law, the law-making process, and major Supreme Court decisions.

Unit 3: Political Processes

Major concepts will focus on the two-party system in terms of the political and economic views that led to its emergence and the role that political parties play in American politics. We will explain the ways that laws have been influenced by political parties, constituents, interest groups, lobbyists, the media and public opinion. An analysis of the election process at the national, state, and local levels will be conducted in terms of the checks and balances provided by qualifications and procedures for voting.

Unit 4: Citizenship

Major concepts will focus on comparing citizenship in the American constitutional democracy to membership in other types of government. We will analyze the roles of citizens of North Carolina and the United States in terms of responsibilities, participation, civic life and criteria for membership and admission. This will include analyzing the obligations of citizens by determining when their personal desires, interests and involvement are subordinate to the good of the nation or state. We will explain the changing perception and interpretation of citizenship and naturalization.

Unit 5: Personal Financial Literacy

Major concepts will help explain how education, income, career, and life choices impact an individual's financial plan and goals. We will explain how fiscally responsible individuals create and manage a personal budget that is inclusive of income, taxes, gross and net pay, giving, fixed and variable expenses and retirement. This will include analyzing how managing a checking and savings account contributes to financial well-being. Students will summarize how debt management and creditworthiness impact an individual's ability to become a responsible consumer and borrower. Students will also learn to compare investing strategies and tax implications for their potential to build wealth and explain how consumer protection laws and government regulation contribute to the empowerment of the individual. We will also learn the strategies individuals use for resolving consumer conflict.

Unit 6: Economics

Major concepts will include comparing how individuals and governments use scarce resources, analyzing a market economy in terms of economic characteristics, the roles they play in decision-making and the importance of each role. We will focus on the concepts of supply and demand, analyze the ways in which incentives and profits influence what is produced and distributed in a market system, and compare how various market structures affect decisions made in a market economy. We will also make comparisons between the national, state, and local economic activities. Unit 6 will also look at explaining the impact of government policies on international trade, summarize basic macroeconomic indicators and how they vary over the course of a business cycle, explain how fiscal policy and the monetary policy influence overall levels of employment, interest rates, production, price level and economic growth.

We will finish each unit with a test and/or project to assess your knowledge of the material.

The course will finish with a comprehensive review and a Final Exam.