

Syllabus
American Government
Mr. Sidoli
Room S -104

Course Description – The Government High School course focuses on the United States' founding principles and beliefs. Students will study the structure, functions, and powers of government at the national, state, and local levels. This course will also focus on the six basic principles of government which include: popular sovereignty, limited government, separations of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, and federalism.

Text – *Magruder's American Government*. Prentice Hall, 2008

Grading -

- A = 93 – 100
- B = 85 – 92
- C = 75 – 84
- D = 70 – 74
- F = 69 and below

Quizzes – Each chapter covered will have a quiz; all quiz grades will be averaged for one grade – 20%

Tests – Each unit covered will have a test – 30%

Notebook – Each student is required to have a notebook which will contain various assignments; it will be graded periodically during the course. This will count as a double grade – 40%

Group Projects – Students are expected to work together and participate contributing their input in each group assignment – 10%

Attendance – Students will follow attendance policies that are listed in the FCHS handbook.

Make-up Work – It is the students' responsibility to attain any assignments or missed quizzes or tests during his/her absence.

Tardies – Students will follow tardy policies that are listed in the FCHS handbook.

Classroom Rules –

1. Be Respectful (to teacher and peers)
2. Come to Class Prepared
3. Do Not Talk Out of Turn
4. Remain Seated

Course Outline

Unit 1 – Foundation

- What is government?
- Types of government
- Characteristics of the nation-state
- Origins of the state
 - Social Contract Theory of John Locke
 - Concepts of American Democracy
 - Limited/representative government – Republic
 - American free enterprise system – Adam Smith
- History of British rule
- Independence
 - Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence
- Constitution
 - Creation
 - Project – “Bill of Rights”
 - Six Basic Principles
 - Project – “Six Basic Principles of the US Constitution”

Unit 2 – Political Behavior

- Political parties
 - Political philosophies/spectrum
- Voters and voter behavior
- Electoral processes
- Mass media and Interest groups

Unit 3 – Legislative Branch

- Congress
- Powers of Congress
- Congress in Action

Unit 4 – Executive Branch

- The Presidency
- The Presidency in action
- Government at work: the Bureaucracy

Unit 5 – Judicial Branch

- The Federal Court System
- Bill of Rights
 - Civil liberties

Unit 6 – State and Local

- Breakdown of the state government in Tennessee
 - Project – “Comparing the National and State Governments”
- Local government and its functions