

US Government Syllabus

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Course overview

Students will study the purposes, principles, and practices of American government as established by the United States Constitution. They will also learn the structure and processes of the government of the state of Tennessee and local governments. The course will help students recognize their rights and responsibilities as citizens and how to exercise these rights and responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels.

This semester, you will learn about the founding of our country, the foundations of constitutional government, the three branches, federalism, civil liberties and important court cases involving civil liberties, the importance of citizen participation, and the operation of the government of Tennessee.

I hope this will be a great class! It really depends on you and me. I need you to listen, read, think critically, and participate in class.

Materials Needed for Class

- Textbook (physical or online version)
- Computer or Chromebook
- Binder (preferably 2-inch)
- Paper
- Pencil or pen

Google Classroom

We will be using Google Classroom this year for assignments and other activities. You must use your school email addresses to access this program. Links to Google Classroom can be found on my teacher website: [Mr. Harvey's Website](#).

We will discuss Google Classroom in more detail in class.

Class Expectations (Non-negotiable)

All expectations and procedures outlined in the BCHS Student Handbook apply to this class.

Respect

- Show respect for ourselves, others, and our classroom.

Curiosity

- Be curious about the world around us and ask questions.

Collaboration

- Work with others to develop our knowledge and understand group roles.

Communication

- Speak to others respectfully and communicate learning and needs.

Open-Mindedness

- Be open-minded to other people's ideas, perspectives, cultures, and beliefs. You don't have to agree, just be respectful of others' opinions.

Class Procedures

- Be in your seat ready to begin class with all supplies, textbook, and school device when the bell rings. The school tardy policy will apply for all tardies. You must begin your BELLRINGER assignment when you enter the classroom.
- Cell phones are not allowed during class time and should be powered off and placed in your assigned holder in the front of the room or in your backpack.
- If you are absent, it is your responsibility to complete all missed assignments within 5 days starting the day you return to school.

- Respect others. Bullying and inappropriate language are not allowed.
- Dispose of garbage in a trash can before leaving the classroom.
- Wait until the teacher dismisses you before leaving class.
- Cheating on any test, quiz, or assignment will result in an automatic zero.
- Follow all school rules and the Golden Rule: do unto others (including the teacher) as you would have them do unto you.

Disciplinary Actions

Tardies:

1. Document in Skyward
2. Document in Skyward
3. Document in Skyward, Assign 1 day LD, Parent notified
- 4+. Document in Skyward, Office Referral, Parent notified

Cell Phones or Unauthorized Devices:

1. Take up the device and return it at the end of class
2. Lunch Detention, Parent notified
 - Take up the device and send to the office
3. 2 days Lunch Detention, Parent notified
 - Take up the device and send to the office
4. Office referral through Skyward, Parent notified
 - Take up the device and send to the office

Most Other Issues:

1. Warning
2. One day of lunch detention; inform parent their child is on step 2
3. Two days of lunch detention; inform parent their child is on step 3
4. Office referral through Skyward

School Devices

You will need your school-provided Chromebook each day. Please bring it daily as we will do much of our work electronically. Your participation grade will be based on bringing your device to class every day, charged and ready to use. Devices must be used according to the school's Acceptable Use Policy, and all devices must be returned at the end of the year. Students may be responsible for any damage to the devices.

Textbook

I will provide everyone with a hard copy of the textbook, and a link to the online version will be posted on Google Classroom. It is your responsibility to bring either the hard copy or a device to access the online version to class each day. All hard copy textbooks must be returned at the end of the semester.

Attendance

You can only miss 5 unexcused days and still receive credit for the class. Anyone who arrives to class 10 minutes late or leaves with less than 10 minutes remaining will be counted absent for that class period.

Late Work/Makeup Work

Late work will only be accepted at the discretion of the teacher. You have five days from the day you return to school to make up work if you are absent. You can only make a maximum of a 70 on any work turned in after the five days.

Daily Reading Assignments

You will receive a daily reading assignment along with key terms that you need to know for that day in class. You must read these assignments before the corresponding class and keep your notes in your binder. On some days, there will be a quiz on the reading assignment (you may use your reading notes during the quiz). All reading assignments for each week will be posted in Google Classroom at the end of the previous week.

Citizenship Tests

Per TN state law (T.C.A. § 49-6-408), students must take and pass (70 percent or higher) the United States citizenship and immigration test during their high school career. Schools in which all seniors earning a regular diploma score 85 percent or higher on the U.S. civics test will be recognized by the department as a U.S. Civics All-Star School. We will take this test once a month until everyone in the class reaches a grade of 85.

Major Tests

There will be several major tests during the semester. Tests will consist of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. I will prepare study guides for the class before most tests.

Binders

You are required to maintain a binder for this class. The binder should include the following sections, each separated and labeled:

1. Class Syllabus
2. Reading Notes
3. Bellwork
4. Class Notes
5. Handouts
6. Returned Assignments/Tests (if done on paper)

I will periodically collect these binders for grading. Additional points will be awarded for having a creative cover page for your binder.

Role Play/Discussions

We will have discussions or role-play exercises over many topics we cover in class. You will be graded on your participation in these discussions. This will count as part of your participation grade.

Exit Tickets

Each day you will have an exit ticket covering that day's class. This will be posted to Google Classroom and will be due at the end of each class period.

Projects

You will have several projects during the class. They will count for 15% of your grade.

Grading Categories

- Classwork/Quizzes/Homework: 30%
- Tests: 30%
- Class Projects: 15%
- Participation: 10%
- Midterm/Final*: 15%

*To be exempt from the final exam, a student must have an average of 90% or higher in the class with no more than 5 excused or unexcused absences.

Grading Scale:

- A: 100-90
- B: 89-80
- C: 79-70
- D: 69-60
- F: 59 and below

Tentative Schedule (Subject to Change)

- Week One: Class Introduction, Citizenship Test #1, and Foundations of Government
- Week Two: Continue Foundations of Government, The Beginnings of American Government
- Week Three: The Constitution
- Week Four: Major Test #1, Elections, Voting, and Citizenship, Citizenship Test #2
- Week Five: Continue Elections, Voting, and Citizenship
- Week Six: Executive Branch
- Week Seven: The Executive Branch
- Week Eight: Major Test #2
- Week Nine: Midterm and Citizenship Test #3
- Week Ten: Legislative Branch
- Week Eleven: Continue Legislative Branch
- Week Twelve: Major Test #3
- Week Thirteen: The Judicial Branch
- Week Fourteen: Civil Rights, Freedoms, and Liberties
- Week Fifteen: Supreme Court Case Study Presentations
- Week Sixteen: Major Test #4, Begin State and Local Government
- Week Seventeen: Continue State and Local Government
- Week Eighteen: Final Exam

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor or as a result of changes to school or system policy.

