

VA and US Government



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Planning Period (best time to reach me): 1st period – Odd days – 8:10-9:40

Overview:

This course will provide students with knowledge of Virginia and United States Government that will enable them to participate effectively in civic life in America. Students will examine fundamental constitutional principles; the organization of government at the federal, state, and local level; the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; the policy-making process; political parties and elections; comparative government and foreign policy; and the American economic system.

Course Objectives: (What I hope you get out of the class)

- ☐ Appreciation of the foundation of our government
- ☐ Perspective on the issues that are important in our democracy
- ☐ A vigor to actively participate in our society

Some of the topics to be covered

FIRST NINE WEEKS

- ☐ Historical background of our constitution and its ideas
- ☐ The nomination process and the election
- ☐ Duties of being a citizen
- ☐ Ideologies or belief systems of the main political parties

SECOND NINE WEEKS and beyond...

- ☐ Branches of government
- ☐ The specific function of those branches of government
- ☐ Checks and balances
- ☐ State and local government

For a full listing of the SOLs covered in this course, please visit:
<http://tinyurl.com/zv754rf>



Student Assessment:

Students will be assessed in a variety of ways including class participation, classwork, homework, quizzes, exit tickets, starters, unit tests, essays, research assignments, oral presentations, projects and group tasks. Grades will be posted on PowerSchool, which students are able to view at any time.

Year End Grades average the 2 Semesters together.

Homework: Occasionally assigned. Just do it. It won't take long.

Classwork: Notes, readings, presenting, answering questions and creating are all part of the daily class life here.

Participation:

"Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you."

"Those who are politically apathetic can only survive if they are supported by people who are capable of taking action." - Pericles

Tests/Projects: Tests = Questions about unit material, usually multiple choice.
Projects = Creative interpretations of material, either individually completed or in a group.

Quizzes: Short and focusing on vocabulary and basic concepts.

News Paper Reading Assignments are an integral part of class. A variety of newspaper, news magazines, and television clips will be used. A weekly current events synopsis will be required from the Daily News Record.

Service Learning Project will count 40% of the 4th term grade! Seniors are required, per RCSB guidelines, to perform 15 hours of community service and attend a local government meeting. **Due 5/3**

Textbooks will not be assigned to each student unless one is requested for home use. There will be a class set of books available for in-class assignments. Students are responsible for the use, maintenance, and return of the textbook granted to them.

Exams: Exam policies will follow handbook guidelines. Serious undertakings.

Late Work: Late assignments or presentations will lose 10% each class period it is not turned in. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to speak to the teacher to find out what work was missed and turn it in the next class period.

Make Up Work: You are responsible for making up all work. Please coordinate with the teacher to make-up work. Anytime I'm here will normally work.

Student Material List:

- ☐ 3 Ringed Binder filled with loose-leaf lined paper.
- ☐ Dividers
- ☐ 1 Notebook
- ☐ Pencils and Pens
- ☐ Highlighter
- ☐ Ruler
- ☐ 1 pack of colored pencils
- ☐ 1 pack of markers

Student Expectations: (What is expected of you)

- ☐ "Be Nice Work Hard" - Rafe Esquith
- ☐ Listen, take part and be positive
- ☐ Be on time and prepared (see materials)
- ☐ Follow the student Code of Conduct
- ☐ No eating or drinking during the class (bottled water is acceptable)
- ☐ Class begins and ends with the bell

Classroom Rules:

1. Listen and follow directions.
2. Raise your hand before speaking or leaving your seat.
3. Keep your hands to yourself and away from another's property.
4. Respect your classmates, your teacher and yourself.
5. No Food - water is allowed.

Classroom Consequences:

- ☐ Warning
- ☐ Conference between student and teacher; Phone call home
- ☐ Referral (D-Slip)
- ☐ Conference with Parent and Administrator

Cell Phones:

Turn off , mute and conceal your phone during class. Cell phones are not to be used during class. If your phone is out, you will be told to put it away, if it still remains out it will be **confiscated**.

Tardy Policy:

Be on time. Attendance is taken immediately, if you are not here before the bell rings, you will be marked absent or tardy. The school enforces its own tardy policy which may may result in detention or even suspension.

Food:

You are allowed water. There is also a water fountain outside of the classroom. No food is allowed including candy, cookies, etc. Please fill up your water bottle before class.

Bathroom Policy:

Do not interrupt lecture or instruction time. Be sensible and diligent to catch up on what was missed. Do not go during paired, group work, or presentations. Like cell phone usage there is a courtesy to others. You must sign out legibly and sign back in upon your return.

“Remind”:

Remind, formerly Remind101, is a communication tool that helps teachers reach students and parents where they are without directly messaging a student. It can used to “remind” students of quizzes, tests, appointments, practices and rehearsals. I’ve never used it before and would like to try it out this year. More to come.

Jobs:

Students will be asked to apply for jobs for the classroom in which extra credit will be awarded. This is new and I have never implemented it and might seem out of place for High School, but let’s give it a shot. At the very least it will make things more interesting and get some folks up and about throughout the class period. More to come on this one. :)

Student & Parent Signature Portion – Due Next Class – 8/26

I have read the syllabus and understand the course of study and expectations of this class. _____ (student signature)

BONUS SIGNATURE!!!

I have looked over the syllabus and understand the expectations of my child and will do my best to support their efforts in the classroom.

_____ (parent/guardian signature)