



U.S. Government & Politics Syllabus

Kubitschek / CRHS / Room 345
Jackie_kubitschek@ahschool.us
763-506-7234

Course Description: United States Government and Politics is a one trimester, required social studies class. Seniors must take both economics and government to fulfill the senior social studies requirement.

The course covers the legislative, executive and judicial branches of the U.S. government, the creation of public policy, state and local government, constitutional law concepts, the American legal system, and U.S. foreign policy.

Text & required reading: *Government Alive! Power, Politics and You* (2014 Teachers' Curriculum Institute). Students will also read news articles on a regular basis, and be asked to follow government current events. Other readings may be added during the term.

Materials: Bring your textbook, a folder & notebook *just for this class*, and a writing utensil to class every day. Notebooks will sometimes be collected.

Expectations: Be in class on time and ready to learn. Actively participate in classroom activities. Treat classmates, teachers and guests with RESPECT – LISTENING to each other is key. Because of the nature of studying government and politics, we will discuss some controversial issues and the focus will be on articulating views in a respectful and thoughtful way.

Attendance: It is important that you are in class. Many activities and discussions cannot be duplicated outside of class. If you miss a day of class, it is your responsibility to find out and make up what you missed. You are responsible for all information presented to the class.

Community Service Requirement / Senior Project: As part of the U.S. Government and Politics class, each student is required to complete at least five hours of community service. The community service requirement is 5% of a student's grade.

Grading: Grading will be done using the following system:

Grading Breakdown: 60% Exams/Assessments 25% Projects/homework 10% Common Summative Assessment (District Final) 5% Youth Service (See below) Students scoring below 70% on quizzes may retake them within one week after meeting the teacher's requirements for a retake (including: filling in a study guide, coming in for help, or more)	Grading Scale A 93 - 100% A- 90- 92% B+ 87- 89% B 83- 86% B- 80- 82% C+ 77- 79% C 73 - 76% C- 70- 72% D+ 67 - 69% D 63- 66% D- 60- 62% F 0 - 59%
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Grading modifications may be made for students with IEP or 504 plans.

Late Work: Assignments are due at the beginning of the hour on the due date. The expectation is that you have work completed when you arrive at class. ALL assignments must be completed. Late work will be eligible for partial credit.

Current Events: We will regularly discuss government and legal current events in class. To effectively participate and understand these discussions, students need to watch/read/listen to state and national news on a regular basis. Additionally, students will be required to complete current events reports throughout the term. If you do not already do so, please get in the habit of staying on top of current events!

Tests/Quizzes/Makeup Work: Students will take chapter quizzes and unit tests. If a student has a planned absence on a due date, make arrangements to turn in work ahead of time. Make up tests may be different than the original tests.

Plagiarism: “Plagiarism is copying; it is cheating; it is stealing – yes, stealing the work of someone else and taking credit for it as if it were your own. It is serious, dishonest, and results in serious consequences!” (Student Handbook). Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will not be tolerated. Please refer to the student handbook for a detailed description of plagiarism and its consequences.

Parents, Guardians & Students: Please feel free to contact me with questions or concerns about your student. Email is the most efficient way for me to communicate with you but I can also be reached by phone.

Unit Learning Targets

Government & Politics Unit 1: Introduction to Government and Politics

LT #	Learning Target	Book Location
1A	I can recall the three branches of government, checks and balances and federalism as they relate to government laws and powers.	Ch.6, pages 61-62 and page 69
1B	I can understand how civic participation impacts public policy.	Ch. 1.4 and Ch.8.4
1C	I can demonstrate advocacy skills in political or social action.	Ch. 7.5
1D	I can explain state election procedures, including the voter registration process.	Ch. 10
1E	I can synthesize the factors that influence political socialization.	Ch. 9, chart pg 155
1F	I can describe the role of media in impacting public opinion and public policy formation.	Ch. 9
1G	I can analyze the unique features of the Minnesota Constitution.	pg. 106
1H	I can explore the powers and operations of local government by examining a local public policy issue.	Ch. 6.5

Government & Politics Unit 2: The Three Branches of Government

LT #	Learning Target	Book Location
2 A	I can explain how Congress works and describe the lawmaking process.	Ch. 11 & 12
2 B	I can explain how the Executive branch works and describe the roles of the President.	Ch. 13
2 C	I can explain the structure of the U.S. Court System, including the Supreme Court.	Ch. 4.4, 15.4, 15.5, page 273 & 282
2 D	I can determine how the three branches interact and hold each other accountable.	Pages 68-69, 205, 243 & 276

Government & Politics Unit 3: Constitutional Law

LT #	Learning Target	Book Location
3 A	I can articulate the characteristics of Constitutional law.	Ch. 5
3 B	I can articulate the Constitutional rights and responsibilities of a citizen.	Ch. 7.2
3 C	I can examine the government's role of protecting individual rights while balancing the broader needs of society.	Ch. 4 & 5
3 D	I can interpret the historical development and modern relevance of the Constitution, Bill of Rights and Amendments in expanding rights for minority groups in the United States.	Ch. 4.3, 4.4, 7.2
3 E	I can research a current Supreme Court case that deals with constitutional rights and present a case study.	Ch. 4 & 5

Government & Politics Unit 4: The American Legal System

LT #	Learning Target	Book Location
4 A	I can categorize civil and criminal law terms while developing an understanding of the difference between the two.	Ch. 15.2 & 16
4 B	I can analyze current criminal cases (4th, 5th, 6th and 8th Amendments) and assess constitutionality.	Ch. 5.4, 5.5, 16
4 C	I can analyze and articulate arguments on both sides of current civil law cases.	Ch. 15.2
4 D	I can trace the steps and procedures of the criminal process.	Ch. 16
4 E	I can outline the rights of the accused and integrate due process concepts.	Ch. 16
4 F	I can explain the importance of the jury system, from selecting a jury to the deliberation process and verdict.	Ch. 16

Government & Politics Unit 5: The U.S. and the World

LT #	Learning Target	Book Location
5 A	I can recognize how social media impacts the urgency of political movements.	page 321
5 B	I can assess how the United States works to achieve foreign policy goals through diplomacy and treaties.	Ch. 17
5 C	I can analyze how and why the United States participates in international organizations.	Ch.18
5 D	I can articulate how various groups affect the development of U.S. foreign policy.	Ch. 17