

## American Government Course Outline

Mr. Steinback

### I. General Information:

American Government /12 grade

Course length: one semester

Credits: 5 units

Text: Magruder's American Government, McClenaghan

Course required for graduation

### II. Course Content:

#### ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Principles of American Democracy : Standards for grade 12	state standards	quarter
Students will study the effects of ancient Greece, Rome, and leading European political thinkers such as Locke, Hobbes etc. on the development of American government. Students will discuss the pros and cons of federal, confederate and unitary systems. Students will compare the ways in which power is distributed, shared and limited in various systems of shared powers and in parliamentary systems	12.1:#1 12.9 #2,3	1st and 3rd
Students will evaluate past events to examine the roots of American democracy (colonial period to the U.S. Constitution) by using primary source documents i.e.: The Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, and the Articles of Confederation.	12.1#3 Analysis, chronology and point of view	1st and 3rd
Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the 3 branches of government established by the Constitution. Including an in-depth study of the Bill of Rights and other amendments, and how the Constitution reflects a balance between the republican philosophies and right of the individual. Students will evaluate the principals of the Constitution-including checks and balances, separation of powers, minority vs. minority rights, equality of rights and the rule of law.	12.1 #3 12.4 #1,2,3,4,5,6 12.5 #1,3 12.7 #4	1st and 3rd
Students analyze and compare powers and procedures of national and state governments and how conflicts between them are resolved. Students will identify major responsibilities and sources of revenue for state governments and discuss reserved and concurrent powers of government.	12.7 #1,2,3	1st and 3rd
Students will study the role of Federalism (the system of separated and shared powers). Powers studied will include the delegated powers of the federal government : including enumerated, implied and inherent as well as reserved powers of the states.	12.1 #5	1st and 3rd

Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationship among them and how they are secured. This includes a discussion of basic civil rights and liberties	12.2 # 1,5,6	2nd and 4th
Students summarize landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments•changing interpretation of the Bill of Rights over time •study the Warren and Rehnquist courts •case study of, Plessy, Brown, Bakke, Miranda, Mapp, VMI and Citadel cases, Roe, Webster, and more.	12.5 # 1,2,3,4	2nd and 4th
Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national	12.6	2nd and 4th

and state offices. Coverage will include political parties, propaganda, media, polls and trends in voter turnout and participation in the political process.	#1,2,3,4,6	
Through a study of the media students will learn the meaning and importance of a free press and how the public officials use the media to communicate with the people and shape public opinion.	12,8 # 1,2	2nd and 4th
Students discover the importance of maintaining a balance between: Majority rule and individual rights, civil disobedience and the rule of law, freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial, and the relationship between religion and government.	12.10	2nd and 4th

### III. Instructional Plan:

Students will learn to develop study skills in the areas of reading, writing, listening, classifying, comparing, surveying, recalling, organizing, speaking, leadership and technology as they relate to course content. We will work on nurturing critical thinking skills as related to identification, analysis, interpretation and application of information. The class begins with a look into the origins of the governance of man paying special attention to the Enlightenment Era. We then move to a history of the restraint of the divine right of kings following important documents from the Magna Carta to the U.S. Bill of Rights. We then turn our attention to the American Revolution and the eventual failure of the Articles of Confederation paying close attention to John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton and James Madison. This leads us to the U.S. Constitution with an in depth look at the seven articles and twenty-seven amendments. Second quarter we move to the idea of federalism and States rights. The class ends with a look into the formation of the party system, history of the Judicial Branch with a special focus on landmark cases, the civil rights movement and the politics of today with a special interest on the media.

### IV. Assessment:

**Homework/Classwork:** When homework is assigned it is always due the following class period. Homework can be turned in one day late for half credit. Classwork is mainly class notes and current event journal entries. Class binders will be collected and graded based on organization every quarter.

**Examinations:** Section quizzes will be given nearly every week. Chapter tests are given every three to four weeks.

**Class Debate:** Students will work in pairs, choose a debate topic and debate their topic against their peers. This is a formal outline and will be roughly 20% of their total grade.

### V. Grades:

90% +	=	A
80-89%	=	B
70-79%	=	C
60-69%	=	D
Less than 60%	=	F

### VI. Attendance:

The school policies for attendance and tardies will be followed. Please see Student Handbook for specifics.

### VII. Rules/Discipline:

Maintain good manners with respect for the teacher and peers at all times.

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Warning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Clean classroom for 5 minutes after class
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Detention
- 4<sup>th</sup> – Saturday School (call parent)
- 5<sup>th</sup> – 5% grade reduction (parent conference)

### VIII. Participation:

Students will be expected to participate in class discussion, ask questions, take on speaking roles during class projects and be respectful to the teacher and their peers. All of these things will be considered when allocating class participation points.

