Participation in Government – 12th Grade

2th, 3rd and 9th Periods

Mr. Cox – Room 116

Johnstown High School

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**Course Description and Objectives**

We will examine the role we as citizens play in our nation, as well as the role our government plays in our lives. This course will attempt to engage you in the thoughtful discussion of contemporary social, political, and personal issues. You will also be exposed and challenged to continue developing your thinking and research process, refining how you come to conclusions.

Students will learn in this course with the following goals:

Students will:

* Gain a broader perspective for the origins of government, including contemporary and modern thought, as well as current trends in American politics and government.
* Become smart consumers of information through the inclusion of current events and debate style discussions.
* Become fluent readers and writers in the Social Studies discipline through a variety of primary document analysis and research based learning approaches.
* Be able to understand and explain key content vocabulary and topics.

**Course Policies**

* Your education is your responsibility, but I am here to help! Please come see me if you are struggling and need extra help, I **want** you to come to me.
* Cell Phones: Are not to be used for any reason without the teacher’s approval.
* Food/Drink: Are not permitted in this class unless other arrangements have been made.
* **LATE WORK**: Is not accepted at the High School level. Submission of late work will result in a score of zero.
* Attendance: Is mandatory and will result in the best possible outcome for all students.
* Professionalism: Both you and myself. We must hold ourselves to the highest standards and keep each other accountable. Please make sure that I am doing an adequate job with the clarity and quality of my instruction. Likewise, you will be expected to act professionally while in class, meaning no tardiness, sleeping, etc. will be permitted.
* Independent assignments are the student’s responsibility to complete. I am flexible with students’ needs, but students should be proactive and approach me ahead of time with any concerns that they may have. One free homework pass for the year is given to the students at the beginning of the course to be used at the student’s and teacher’s agreement.

**Course Textbook and Readings**

There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be distributed to students as necessary, however.

**Course Assessment**

Grading for this course will be done on a point based scale, with different types of assignments being worth different amounts of points. Per academic quarter, it should be expected to have two Exams, 15 Homeworks, 2 Public Meetings, 5 Current Events, a Writing/Research Assignment, 2 Projects, and daily Participation Grades. The course will also feature one Midterm, one Final, and other assignments TBA.

Approximate point values for assignments are as follows:

Unit Exam: 100 points

Homework: 5-20 points

Current Events: 30 points

Public Meetings 20 points (each)

Writing Assignments: 50-100 points

Projects 50-100 points

Daily participation: 5 points (per week)

These points will all be **earned, not expected**. Extra credit may be assigned and available to the entire class.

Students’ Final Grade for the course will be the average of the two academic quarters and the final exam, with each counting as 33% of the Final Grade.

**Course Exams**

Exams will be given as a Unit is completed. The exams will include a variety of topics from the previously completed Unit. Study guide and in-class review time will be provided to the students in preparation for an exam. It is the responsibility of the STUDENT to come to the TEACHER if the student is unsure with course material or policies. I am extremely opening to providing extra help to students as they need it, but the student must be willing to approach me with these concerns. The format of the exams will contain the following sections:

* Multiple-choice style questions
* Matching style questions
* Map identification and labeling activities
* Short Answer responses
* Document-based responses
* A written Essay

**Course Current Events**

Current Event assignments will use a modified handout prompting student to conduct independent research and evaluation on current topics in the field of Government and Politics. The format of these assignments will be covered with the students in-class.

**Daily Participation and Attendance**

Is expected of all students. Failure to attend class and participate will result in a loss of points. Excused absences from class will not negatively affect a student’s grade.

**Public Meetings for PIG**

* 2 meetings of your choosing, and 2 School Board Meeting (2 total *per quarter/ 4 Total*)
* You must fill out the appropriate form to get credit
* The grade is scaled 1-20, based on your record and analysis of the meeting.
* You are required to stay for a *minimum* of 1 hour or the duration of the meeting.
  + - * Your attendance and exit must be both courteous and appropriate.
      * Ill reports will result in the loss of credit and possible disciplinary action.
      * A select few meetings will count twice

**Course Materials**

* One sturdy binder for notes, handouts
* Pens, Pencils, paper

**Plagiarism**

Completely unacceptable in this course. We will be learning through research based methods, therefore making citation of sources an important part of our learning. Any student caught submitting work that is not 100% of their own (or of their group) creation will forfeit credit for that assignment and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

**Mr. Cox’s Laptop Policy**

These instructional tools may be used in this course for educational purposes. During class time, they are to be used for note taking, research, or other course related tasks. If a student is caught using their device for any purpose other than for a course related task, they will henceforth lose the privilege to use their device in class.

**Course Schedule**

There are 4 Units that we will be covering throughout the academic year. This breaks down to two Units for each of the two academic quarters. Exams will be given during the middle and at the end of each quarter as units are completed. A range of topics covered by Quarter are as follows:

(Schedule subject to change)

**Quarter One – Foundations of Government in America and Modern Ideologies**

Unit I – Foundations of American Government and the Constitution

Lesson 1 - **Foundations of American Government**

Lesson 2 – **Morals and Ethics in Government and Law Making**

Lesson 3 - **The Declaration of Independence “The Why”**

Lesson 4 - **Reading the Constitution** **“The How”**

Lesson 5 - **Basic Role of Limited Government**

Unit II – American Political Ideologies

Lesson 1 - **Conservative v. Liberal Core Beliefs**

Lesson 2 - **Political Parties**

Lesson 3 - **Presidential Elections**

Lesson 4 - **Overview of Societal Issues**

Lesson 5 - **(Project)** **Research and Debate a Controversial Topic**

**Quarter Two – Lawmaking Process, and The Role of the Media**

Unit III – Lawmaking: Legislature, Executive, and Judicial Roles

Lesson 1 - **Constitutional Process of the Federal Law Creating Process** Lesson 2 – **Lobbying, Special Interest Groups, and PACs**

Lesson 3 - **Policy**

Lesson 4 - **The Amendment Process**

Lesson 5 - **Personal Liberties and the Amendments**

Unit VI – Influence of the Media on American Government

Lesson 1 – **Growth of American Media**

Lesson 2 – **What are you being fed? Smart Consumer Lesson**

Lesson 3 - **Analysis of American Media (Student Driven Research)**

Lesson 4 – **Local Lawmaking: Government in our City, Town, County, State**

Final Examination