

Jefferson High School
American Government and Civics

Instructor: Mr. Freeman
Room: Annex No. 7

email: sfreeman@jeffcityschools.org

Phone: 706/367-2881
Tutorial: Mon.-Thu. 3-4 p.m.

A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another, which shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government.

Thomas Jefferson

Course Description

The American Government course is designed to provide all students with an understanding and appreciation of the fundamental philosophies, structures, and functions of our democracy. Students will become literate in the vocabulary of government and politics. In addition, the class will immerse students in the current issues of the American political scene. It will involve them in gathering information, political discussion, critical reading, and critical writing about those issues.

Textbook

William A. McClenaghan, *Magruder's American Government*, 2005 Edition, (Boston: Prentice Hall)

- Textbook website: PHSchool.com

Grading Policy*

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| • Chapter Tests:
- Multiple Choice, Matching, True-False, Essays, etc. | 40% |
| • Daily Work
- Homework, Classwork, Quizzes, Free-Response Essays, etc. | 40% |
| • Class Participation and Notebook:
- Notebook evaluation every 4 ½ weeks. Includes use of Planner.
- Classroom participation evaluated every 4 ½ weeks by rubric. | 20% |
| • Comprehensive Final Examination (No examination exemptions allowed)
This grade is automatically added by Infinite Campus – the other three groups will total 85%. | 15% |

*No EOCT (End of Course Test) required for this class.

Notebook Requirement

All students must maintain a notebook and use it effectively in order to be successful. Each notebook must meet the following requirements:

- 2 inch, three-ring binder of any color with a clear plastic cover. A good quality binder is worth the cost.
- Label tabs in this order: **notes vocabulary reference toolbox syllabus standards**
- Stock notebook with no more than 20 sheets of white, college-ruled notebook paper per day.
- Daily use of the JHS Planner is considered to be a part of the notebook requirement.

Academic Integrity Policy

By school policy, cheating is defined as:

- Copying an assignment from another person without explicit permission from the teacher. This includes sharing work that should be individually produced and includes obtaining answers from another student.
- Using, supplying, or communicating with unauthorized devices with the intent of deception. This includes I-Pods, calculators, cameras, cell phones, textbooks, computers, phones, etc.

Consequences include zeros on assignments, parent conferences, suspension, and revoking privileges – see handbook.

Cheating is a serious offense and will not be overlooked or tolerated at any time in American Government. All student work will be closely monitored throughout the semester for evidence of cheating.

Attendance Policy

In order to be successful in this class, consistent attendance is absolutely necessary. You are expected to be present every day, on time, and physically and emotionally ready to get to work. If, through unavoidable circumstances, you are forced to be absent, I expect you to do the following:

- Check the website to obtain assignments for the evening. Always have your book and notebook at home. Try your best to have the assignment done when you return to class.
- Be sure to bring a note to the attendance office – it matters if the absence is excused or unexcused. I will check to see why you were absent. You have a limit of seven absences per semester in order to get class credit.
- Early checkouts count as absences if you miss most of the class, and you should avoid them.
- If you know you will be absent, let me know face to face or contact me by school email. This is courteous and shows a responsible attitude toward the class.
- Obtain all materials you missed by seeing me between classes – I will have them ready for you. You are responsible for prompt completion and return of all missed work to avoid a zero grade. I will follow school policy on the time allowed to turn in late work – five days is the maximum allowed.
- Consider coming to tutorial for make-up instruction. If you do not follow the above process, then tutorials will not be optional.

Class Participation Policy

Concerning participation, I *strongly suggest* that you offer your thoughts when I open the floor for discussion. Taking good notes and listening actively are good, and an important part of participation. In addition, however, I expect you to respond thoughtfully and critically when I call upon you. The subject-matter of American Government lends itself to lively class discussions, full of arguments and differing opinions. I expect you to be a part of these discussions – and your contributions will be a part of your grade.

Late Work Policy

Late work is a sign of poor organization and poor motivation to succeed. I will accept late work for one day – with a penalty - after the due date of the assignment if you see me with an explanation and/or a parent note. I will deal with each circumstance individually, always trying to be fair to each student. Do not make a habit of late work – it will result in a poor grade and required after-school tutorials.

Courtesy Policy

I don't expect your behavior in class to be an issue, since I assume someone has taught you about good manners. But just for the record, here's my policy concerning in-class courtesy. During any class session, any behavior that could be considered disruptive, defiant, or disrespectful to me or anyone else will **not** be tolerated. This includes rude comments, consuming drinks or food, sleeping, **text messaging or use of cell phones** or other electronics, passing notes, or physical contact whether playful or serious. I will deal with all these types of behaviors in accordance with school policy, and with firmness. The goals of this class are important to all, and will not be delayed or disrupted by any individual for any reason.

Classroom Procedures

- No bathroom breaks allowed once the bell has rung except in the case of a medical emergency. Medical conditions should be brought to the teacher's attention by phone, text, or note from a parent.
- Place all book bags and other equipment in the back of the room as directed. Have your textbook and notebook at your desk every day – nothing else. Do not have electronics at your desk at any time. **Use of cell phones is strictly prohibited at all times. Ladies: store handbags on the rack under your desk at all times.**
- No eating or drinking at your desk at any time. No empty bottles at desks at any time.
- Dress according to school policy every day to avoid being sent to the office to change. Students who miss class for this reason will be assigned to tutorials from 3-4pm the next day. **Do not wear hats into the class under any circumstances. The teacher reserves the right to be the final authority on appropriate dress.**
- Tardiness is a serious issue and results in after school detention and other consequences.
- Body language is an indication of attitude. I expect you to face the front of the room, sit up straight, both feet on the floor, make eye contact with the teacher, and keep your head off your desk. Do not leave your desk unless you have been given instructions or permission to do so.

freeman09