



American Government Class Syllabus

Mrs. Bergt



Class Description:

This class is designed to help the student understand how the American system of government operates, how it began, and what the Christian's role is within that system.

Course Objectives:

- 1) Identify ways to use your Christian faith in the process of being involved as a citizen of the U.S.
- 2) Understand the way the U.S. government works.
- 3) Identify the process involved in the making of our government as it is today.
- 4) Understand what the Bible says about government.

Course Outline:

Unit 1: Foundations (chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)

- Focus on the beginning of government & the beginning of U.S. government.
- Discuss the Christian's place in government.

Unit 2: The Constitution (chapter 5)

- Focus on the document that is the supreme law of the land.



Unit 3: The Legislative Branch (chapters 6, 11, 12)

- Focus on the law making branch of government, what its duties are, and the qualifications of members.

Unit 4: The Executive Branch (chapters 6, 13, 15)

- Focus on the law enforcing branch of government, what its duties are, and the qualifications of members.
- Quick review over foreign policy past & present (chapters 13 & 16)
- During elections years special attention will be paid to the election process.

Unit 5: The Judicial Branch (chapters 6, 17)

- Focus on the law interpreting branch of government, what its duties are, and the qualifications of members.

Unit 7: The Amendments (chapters 6, 18)

- Focus on all 27 Amendment of the Constitution and what they mean to the U.S. citizen.

Current Events:

Current Events Notebooks will be due **every Thursday** (unless otherwise noted by the teacher). It will be **YOUR** responsibility to remember! Notebooks that are not turned in on time will receive 0 points for that day (no late grades will be given unless you were sick that day)! A separate handout will explain the notebook.

Rules and Regulations:

- 1) All rules in the Family/Student Handbook will be followed during the school day.
- 2) Students will **ONLY** bring materials that pertain to this class, unless otherwise directed by the teacher.
- 3) **TEACHER PET PEEVE: Any student working on other subjects during class time may have it taken from them.** Whether or not the work is returned to them after class will depend on prior offenses. You need to be paying attention in class (this includes not sleeping)!
- 4) **TEACHER PET PEEVE: Any copying or cheating on homework, projects, quizzes, or tests will NOT be tolerated! Any cheating or copying will result in an immediate 0% on that work.** You may **HELP** others find where answers can be found, but do not give answers. Everyone should do their own work! There is also a zero tolerance policy on plagiarism (see the Student Handbook).
- 6) If absent, you will have as many days as you were gone to make up any assignments, presentations, projects, or tests.
- 7) Students must be in the classroom before the second bell rings. If you are late because of a previous class, bring a pass. If you are worried about making it back to class in time after a bathroom break, check with me before you go. Any late entrances will result in a tardy.



- 8) Food and drink (except water) are **NOT** allowed in class. **Unauthorized food in the classroom will result in a detention!** Do not bring in the rest of your breakfast/lunch or be snacking on something from your locker as you walk into my class!

Grading System:

The grading system that will be used in class will be the one that is in the student handbook. Extra credit opportunities **may** be available periodically throughout the year, which I will offer to the entire class. Take advantage of it as it is available. (I do **NOT** give extra credit when you have not been doing the work and suddenly need help before the end of the quarter.)

During the course of the year grades will be determined by the following requirements:

1. **Homework (30%):** Homework; Current Events Notebook; Quizzes; Class Participation
2. **Tests (70%):** Chapter Tests; Projects



Homework Requirements:

- 1) Students should keep all old tests, notes, worksheets, etc. throughout the course of the year. These will be valuable sources from which to study come finals time.
- 2) **All homework must be turned in at the beginning of class when it is asked for.** Any homework turned in after it is collected will receive a late grade of 50% off. In other words...do not try to finish an assignment quickly at the beginning of class and turn it in 10 minutes after class starts – it will still be counted late. No late work will be accepted after the end of the quarter during which it was assigned.
- 3) If you are absent on a day when an assignment is due, please turn it in on the day you return. You are responsible for turning in the work. I will NOT be chasing you down asking for it - that is your responsibility. If for some reason you were unable to complete the assignment, please speak with me when you return.
- 4) All homework, projects, etc. must be turned in on a clean sheet of paper. I will not accept work written on the back of past assignments, notes, worksheets, handouts, etc.
- 5) Students will be required to take notes during class lectures. **We will be taking a lot of notes in this class and test questions will come mainly from those notes.** It is very important to keep up on your note taking. If you are absent you will need to copy the notes of someone you trust, or talk to me and I will give you a copy of my notes. **Do NOT** have someone take notes for you – it is hard for them to listen to the lecture while taking two sets of notes. You can copy your own notes later! Be considerate!
- 6) **Talk to me if there is an emergency situation and an assignment could not get completed on time. I have no way of knowing the circumstances unless you communicate with me! Together we can decide what to do.**
- 7) Class discussions are an important part of social studies classes. Be ready to discuss views and opinions in class. This can be the most fun part of class - if **you** make it that way!
- 8) If you have questions outside of class please feel free to see me before or after school, make an appointment to meet with me sometime, or call/text me at home **(507-848-6863)**. I don't mind helping you – it's my job! ☺

Why Study History:

- 1) History helps students be better citizens by enabling them to understand what causes what in society.
- 2) History helps students become critical thinkers by learning *the study of the writing of history* (historiography).
 - Helps develop organizational skills & research skills.
- 3) History is power.
 - Students who do not know their own history or how to think critically about historical assertions will be ignorant and helpless before someone who does claim to know it.
- 4) History helps students become less *ethnocentric* (belief that one's own culture is the best & other societies/cultures should model ours).
 - An ethnocentric person finds it hard to learn from another culture already knowing it to be inferior.
- 5) History contributes to moral understanding.
 - History teaches by example. It gives us heroes – great men and women, but also ordinary people, who provide lessons in courage.
- 6) Declares God's glory.
 - The Bible makes extensive use of history. We can see God's hand throughout history.