**U.S. GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS**

**BLUE VALLEY WEST HIGH SCHOOL**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:**

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**TEXTBOOKS:**

-MacGruder’s American Government

**Course Goals:**

1. Build and maintain a positive classroom learning environment.
2. Discover how political decisions are made and how they affect students.
3. Explore issues of concern in today’s society.
   1. Increase awareness of current events and connect with classroom concepts.
   2. Research issues of concern and policy change.
4. Become an informed citizen capable of forming intelligent opinions on current issues.
5. Become an engaged citizen that participates in our democracy.

**SKILLS:**

* College Level Reading
* Deep Topical Inquiry
* Deciphering data

**COURSE GRADING:**

100-90= A 89-80=B 79-70=C 69-60=D 59-Below= F

Course grade is calculated on a cumulative point basis. (The weighted % is a rough estimate and subject to change.)

* Formative Assessments (30%)
* Unit Tests (40%)
* Daily Class Activities (10%)
* Final Exam (20%)

**Course Units**

1. Introduction to Government, Constitution and Federalism (Weeks 1-4)

1.1-Principals of Government (Pages 2-11)

1.2-Types of Government (Pages 12-18)

1.3-Basics of Democracy (Pages 19-26)

2.2- Independence (Pages 46-54)

2.3- Articles of Confederation (Pages 55-59)

2.4- Creating the Constitution (Pages 60-71)

3.1- Constitution Overview (Pages 78-89)

3.2- Amendments (Pages 90-98)

3.3 and 3.4- Federalism (Pages 99-120)

1. Linkage Institutions and Political Parties (Weeks 5-8)

10.2- Right to Vote (Pages 432-439)

10.3- Voting Trends (Pages 440-449)

10.4- Voting Process (Pages 450-457)

10.5- Public Opinion and Polling (Pages 458-470)

10.6- Mass Media (Pages 471-479)

10.7- Interest Groups (Pages 480-495)

11.1- Purpose of Parties (Pages 502-517)

11.2- Nominations (Pages 518-527)

11.3- Electing the President (Pages 528-544)

11.4- Campaign Finance (Pages 545-554)

1. The Legislative Branch (Weeks 9-12)

4.1- Congress Overview (Pages 128-136)

4.2- House vs Senate (Pages 137-146)

4.3 and 4.4- Congressional Powers (Pages 147-169)

4.5- Committees (Pages 170-181)

4.6- How a Bill Becomes Law (Pages 182-194)

12.3- Taxation (Pages 580-588)

12.4- Spending and Borrowing (Pages 589-597)

1. The Executive Branch (Weeks 13-15)

5.1- President Overview (Pages 200-206)

5.3 and 5.4- Powers of the President (Pages 211-229)

6.1- The Bureaucracy Overview (Pages 236-241)

6.2- Cabinet (Pages 242-250)

6.3- Independent Agencies (Pages 251-260\_

1. The Judicial Branch (Weeks 16-18)

7.1- Judicial Overview (Pages 298-305)

7.2- Supreme Court (Pages 306-312)

7.3- US Court System (Pages 313-319)

8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7- Civil Liberties (Pages 324-384)

**Controversial Issues:**

During the course of this class, we will cover many topics and issues that are considered controversial. It is the expectation that these issues will be covered with an open mind and with respect of all opinions and beliefs. Students are expected to follow this rule as they express their individual opinion on these topics.

**CHEATING:**

* Any academic dishonesty or plagiarism will result in the student receiving a zero on the assignment and administrator referral.

**ATTENDENCE:**

* It is crucial that you are in class every day as a lot of the material will be explored during class time. Any days missed will result in far more work than if you actually attended class.

**LATE WORK:**

Make –up work is defined as the actual schoolwork or homework assigned on the day of the student’s absence or an alternate assignment equal in purpose.  It is the responsibility of the student to complete assignments, which are missed when the student is absent from class.  If a student misses the given deadline for any assignment, they can turn it in for up to 50% credit until the unit test. After the unit test, no credit will be given for assignments.

Extenuating circumstances may apply, which may result in full credit given.