Government

Instructor: Mr. Vanderhorst

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**Available Time:** Monday-Friday: 7:45-8:10 AM

 Monday-Friday: 4th Period

 Monday- Friday: After School

**Course Description:**

 Our study of Government begins with development of the United States and provides an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. This course involves the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S politics and the analysis of specific case studies. The course begins with the origins and development of the U.S. constitution; structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; federalism; democratic theory, political participation, and the national election process. We also will look at current elections in Iowa and on the national level. Finally, we will discuss the role of local government in the United States. This course will help the students to better understand their own lifetime.

**Course Benchmarks:**

1. Identify the purposes of national, state, and local governments in the United States, describe how those governments organize themselves to accomplish their purposes, and assess their effectiveness.

 2. Understand landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.

 3. Analyze the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems across time, with emphasis on the quest for political democracy, its advances, and its obstacles.

 4. Explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.

 5. Evaluates issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.

**Classroom Rules & Expectations:**

**RULES**

1. Please be on time. That means in the classroom when the second bell rings.
2. Come to class prepared. Always bring textbook, notebook, and writing utensils to class.
3. Raise your hand to speak unless called upon.
4. Do not use profanity or vulgar language.
5. Respect a person’s ideas or beliefs. Do not criticize anybody’s ideas.
6. Stay in your seat until the bell rings.

**EXPECTATIONS**

1. Come to class with a positive attitude. Bad attitudes are not accepted.
2. Be active in the classroom. This is a classroom where students are expected to participate whether it is discussion, group work or individual work.
3. If you are given time to work on assignments, use it. Work up to the bell.
4. Be kind and courteous to your fellow classmates and the teacher.

**Instructional Procedures:**

 Methods:

1. Lecture
2. Discussion
3. Cooperative Learning
4. Simulations
5. Group Presentations
6. Audio-Visual and multi-media instruction

**Student Activities & Expectations:**

 **Homework:**

This is a high school class that will expect to show good quality of homework and completed on time. Homework will be mostly done outside of class but there will be times when they will be able to work on it at the end of the class period. Homework is expected to be completed on the due date. Students will lose 10% each day on that assignment that it is late. All work must be completed before the end of the semester in order to receive a final grade.

**Participation:**

The student is expected to come to class prepared to participate. That means be involved in classroom discussion, group work, or individually. Always work until the bell rings. Students are not to pack up their belongings until the teacher has instructed them to do so.

**Absences:**

If a student is absent from class, it is his/her responsibility to contact the teacher about missed work and assignments. The student will have two days to complete the assignment in order to receive full credit. **On assignments given in advance**, the student is expected to get the work turned in by the assignment date even if he/she is gone that day.

**Language:**

Appropriate language is appreciated. That means no profane, vulgar, derogatory, or discriminative language will not be tolerated towards other students, the teacher, or just in general. A detention will be given if teacher believes it is necessary.

**Substitute Teachers:**

From time to time, a substitute may be called in. As respectful members of the community, students are expected to honor the substitute’s position and their instruction in the classroom in accordance with the classroom and school rules. Failure to do so will result in a detention. NO EXCEPTIONS!!

**Cheating:**

If cheating occurs on assignments, quizzes, tests, papers, projects, etc… the grade will result in a zero for both parties involved whether a willing participant or not.

**Chromebooks:**
Students are expected to bring their Chromebooks with them to class each and every day. That doesn’t mean they will be used every class period, but just like a textbook or writing utensil, students are expected to have the books with them. The teacher will have a specific rules related to the usage of the Chromebooks posted in the classroom.

**Time Allotments:**

 **Approximate breakdown of the instruction time:**

 Lecture & Discussion: 40%

 Cooperative Learning & Simulation: 40%

 Audio-Visual & Multi-media: 10%

 Individual Study Time: 10%

**Evaluation:**

The student will be evaluated on a total point system throughout the semester. Here are the total points usually for each category:

 Tests= 50-100 points each

 Review Articles=40 Points

 Quizzes=10-40 Points each

 Homework=Varies

 Projects=75-150 Points

 Participation=75 Points

**Grading Policy:**

The final grade at the end of the semester will be accumulated by three separate weighted grades. They are:

Semester Grade=80%

Semester Test= 20%