

John F. Kennedy High School

Government Course Syllabus

This course is a required course for graduation from high school.

Instructor: Mrs. Triebes

Room 204

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Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to introduce the fundamentals of American government and politics, particularly the major institutions and processes. Further, it aims to develop skills and abilities in analyzing and evaluating issues and public policies in American politics. On the one hand, this course wants to stimulate interest in American politics and impart tools that can be of use to all life-long students of politics. On the other hand, this course hopes to develop critical (that is, analytical) citizens, so that each of us will have examined reasons for the choices we make as we act in the public interest for the common good.

Course Objectives:

Students will grasp the historical background of the American political system and understand the current political basis of the United States. They will be able to delineate explain the differences in federal, state and local governmental structures and powers. Students will be introduced to some major case law and will (time provided) participate in a mock trial towards the end of the semester. They will know and understand common political and legal terms such as habeas corpus, quid pro quo, etc. Students will use a critical analysis approach to examine, discuss and write about social and political issues as they relate to the political process. Students will be able to recognize the value of dissent and the preciousness of consensus within our system and why some methods work while others are less effective. They will understand how conflict has defined and shape America society. Critical thinking skills will be honed through exploring past policies and views compared and contrasted with present issues and policies. Students will gain knowledge about the historical events that influenced US foreign policy from the end of World War II to the War on Terror.

Instructional Material: The text for this course is AGS United States Government as well as supplemental materials to meet students IEP related accommodations.

Student Materials: Students should come to class with the proper items everyday. Pencils, notebook or binder with loose-leaf paper, & colored pencils ***** **students choosing to use pen for their work MUST HAVE WHITE OUT**

Instructional Methods:

1. Lecture and note taking from power points
2. Independent student reading from books, periodicals, newspapers, and primary sources
3. Socratic method (discussion amongst students/debates)
4. Cooperative method
5. Films and news strips

Student Evaluation: The grading for the course will be weighted as follows:

15% - Quizzes & Tests

50% - Participation/class work & homework when assigned

20% - Semester Final

1. Quizzes will be given on a regular basis over class readings.
2. Critical Thinking Questions are used for most reading assignments.
3. Tests will be given at the end of each unit. These tests will be in multiple choice & short essay format.
4. Students will complete one essay for this class regarding government or a famous person from our readings.

Course Expectations:

Professionalism:

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times within the classroom. Students are expected to follow all school and class rules as listed below. Students must come to class prepared to learn, with all work completed, organize and neat. Students must be respectful of others and their right to learn while in this class. This means students will be punctual and will actively participate in all class activities and discussion.

Academic Honesty and Responsibility:

Academic honesty is expected of all students. Dishonesty in any form (including copying from a friends paper) on any project or examination will not be tolerated. Student grades will be reduced by 30% for the first infraction with further infractions resulting in a zero on the exam or project.

Late Work:

Students are expected to turn in all assignments on time. Students who do not have the assignment ready for turn in will complete a "LATE WORK" sheet explaining their dilemma and indicating a date they are able to meet with the teacher to discuss the reason no work was completed. Assignments are left in the file box at the front door ALL MONTH LONG so there should be no excuse for not having the papers.

Make-Up Policy:

If a class is missed because of an excused absence, students may turn in assignments on the first day they return. If students have an excused absence on the day of an exam or quiz they will have the opportunity to take that exam or quiz at a later date. That date will be determined by the teacher and will depend on the length of the absence.

Attendance Expectations:

Students are expected to attend every class meeting. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of an absence and to bring appropriate readmit slips to class. Students are expected to be to class on time. The consequences for consistent tardiness will be per school policy, Saturday school or detention.

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones may never be used in class for any reason, including checking the time or date. If a cell phone is out during a class period the teacher will hold the phone until the end of the class period. If the student continues to have his/her cell phone out, parents will be notified and the student will be referred to the principal or discipline office.

Behavior expectations/consequences:

Students will be given two warnings about their behavior. Referrals for none compliance to school rules and classroom rules will be given upon the third offense for the day. Should a students behavior impede the learning of others the student will be given a referral and sent out of the room immediately as other students have a right to a distraction free learning environment.

***** Please sign and return this portion to teacher*****

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_____	_____
Student Signature	Date
_____	_____
Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
<input type="checkbox"/> I give permission for you to contact me via email concerning information about my student, including sending grades and progress reports.	
My current email address is: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not have access to email. Please call me at the following phone number(s) instead:	
