

Course Description
Basic U.S. Government

Course Description:

This course offers a study of the American government system. Studies include: the origins and development of the U.S. government, an overview of the constitution and other relevant historical documents, the law making process, fiscal policy, and the rights of citizenship. Curriculum for this course is designed for students who are reading 2-4 years below grade level and/or have English as their second language. Pre-requisite: U.S. History or concurrent. This course is typically taken in the 11th or 12th grade year. This is a one-semester course. 5 credits will be awarded with a passing grade.

Learning Objectives:

Students will have an understanding of the following:

- * Basic Types and Theories of Government
- * The Beginnings of the American Government
- * The Purposes and Basis of the Constitution
- * Individual Rights
- * The Political System
- * Voting and Elections
- * Public Opinion and Powers of Congress
- * The Law Making Process
- * Congress and Fiscal Policy

Curriculum:

Textbook: AGS, Unites States Government

Corresponding workbooks and answer keys are to be used.

Key Assignments:

- 1) Students will complete the following per chapter:
 - Section Review Questions as assigned by the IST
 - Chapter Review Tests per chapter
 - Corresponding Workbook pages as assigned by the IST

- 2) Students will select one of the following documents and read the “primary” source document for each. These can be found online or in a library. The students will review the document. They will then prepare a 3-5 page report which describes the purpose of the document, when it was written, list the primary authors, and summarize the contents.
 - The Declaration of Independence
 - The U.S. Constitution
 - The Bill of Rights

- 3) Students will complete supplemental reading as assigned by the teacher.

- All written assignments are to be typed or legibly written in ink.
- Each student will do a first draft followed by consultation and grading by the teacher.
- The student will then edit the paper and submit a second draft. The second draft may be the final submission or it may need additional editing. This process is to continue until the student and teacher are satisfied that the paper is worthy of submission for evaluation.
- The final paper, together with all drafts, will be submitted and the final essay will be graded. The teacher or a colleague of the teacher will complete the assessment. School approved guidelines for grading, commonly called rubrics, will be followed by the teachers in the grading of student writing assignments.

Methods of Assessment:

A variety of assessment tools may be used. Written work, as described above, will be corrected in collaboration between the student, teacher, and parent. Final papers and chapter tests will be graded by the teachers. Assessment tools include but are not limited to:

- Periodic review of work by the independent study teacher
- Portfolios
- Parent facilitator observation
- Graded assignments
- Written examinations
- Research projects
- Oral presentation

Course Grading Scale:

Weekly Chapter Assignments: 40%

Chapter Review Tests: 40%

Papers: 20%