**Mrs. Stafstrom**

**United States Government**

Classroom E204

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**Course Information and Semester Calendar**

This course is designed to introduce students to American government and politics. The state-required Constitution Test is part of this class. This course is aligned to the National Standards for Civics and Government.

# *First Quarter*

# Principles of Government

Basic Concepts of Democracy

##### Origins of the Constitution

U.S. Constitutional Convention and Ratification

Federalism

*Second Quarter*

Political Parties, elections, voting

###### Legislative Branch

Executive Branch

#### Judicial Branch – Federal Court System

Bill of Rights

**Objectives**

By the end of the semester, the student will be able to:

* Discuss the philosophical and historical origins of the United States government.
* Identify the characteristics of federalism.
* Recognize and evaluate the composition and functions of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government.
* Describe and assess the operation of the system of checks and balances among the branches of government.
* Identify and evaluate the nature of civil liberties and civil rights.
* Develop and argue well-reasoned positions on issues of the day.
* Pass the Constitution test (Illinois state law requirement)

**Extra Help**

If you have any questions, need additional help or are trying to make-up a test, please come by either room E204 or the Social Studies office. I am typically available before school from 7am and after school until at least 4pm. In addition, I am available during 1 and 7/8 periods and FLEX. If none of these times work, then I am happy to arrange a time that is more convenient for your schedule.

**Course Materials**

Each day you will need:

1. Writing utensil (pen and pencil)
2. Notebook/paper
3. Textbook: William A. McClenaghan, *Magruder’s American Government*, Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 2009.

**Behavioral Expectations**

1. Respect yourself, others and your surroundings.

2. Be on time for class.

3. Be prepared for class. **Every day** you should bring your materials.

4. Check your grades on Skyward on a regular basis.

5. Use your passing periods effectively.

6. Achieve to the best of your abilities.

7. Be a DHS Barb.

**B**e Responsible

**A**chieve Academically

**R**espect self and others

**B**e Proud

8. Follow all other school rules per student agenda (i.e. dress code, food, drink, cell phone, etc.)

**Consequences of Misbehavior**

There are consequences for not following the rules. They will be assigned based upon the situation, severity of the violation and history of misbehavior. Possible consequences include, but are not limited to, a warning, a seat change, a referral to the Dean’s Office or removal from class.

**Absences and Make-up Work**

*Excused absences*- you have the total number of days you were absent to make up missed work. It is your responsibility to ask for and complete all make-up assignments. If you have a planned absence, please have the courtesy of telling me in advance that you will be gone.

*Field Trips –*are considered pre-excused absences and thus homework is due before you leave for the field trip.

*Unexcused absences*- you will not be able to make up any assignments, tests or in-class work completed on days for absences listed as unexcused in the attendance system.

\*\*\*ALL assignments will go into Skyward as a zero until the work is made up. \*\*\*

**Late Work**

All assignments are due at the beginning of the period. Any assignment turned in after I have collected them will be accepted up to **one day late with a 50% reduction off the grade earned**.

**Tests/Quizzes**

Tests and quizzes will be given throughout the course of the year to see what you have learned and what we may need to cover again. Tests will be announced at least one week in advance. Quizzes may or may not be announced.

*Absences the week of a test:*

* If you are absent one or two days the week of the test OR you are absent the day before the test, be prepared to take it on the scheduled date.
* If you are absent the day of the test, be prepared to take it immediately upon your return.
* In the case of extended illnesses, come and see me and we will arrange a time for you to make up the test.

Make-up tests and quizzes will be taken on the prescribed day unless other arrangements have been made with me in advance.

**Cheating/Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined as “stealing and passing off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own**;** use (of another's production) without crediting the source” (*Merriam-Webster* online.) Examples include copying homework assignments or “working together,” looking at another’s paper during a test, or including passages copied word-for-word from the Internet in a research paper without citing the source. Assisting a fellow student to cheat or plagiarize is also considered academic misconduct. A student who cheats or plagiarizes, or who assists another student in cheating or plagiarizing, will receive a zero on that assignment and both a referral to the Dean’s Office and the Athletic Office for additional penalties.

**Electronic Devices**

Any use or display of an electronic device may result in a referral to the Dean.

If your cell phone or any other electronic device is used or activated during a test or quiz, you will receive a zero on the test/quiz and a referral to the Dean’s Office.

**Grading**

The semester grade is based on points earned within the following categories:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Category | Percentage of Semester Grade |
| Constitution Test | 20% |
| Homework | 20% |
| Unit Tests | 20% |
| Projects | 15% |
| Culminating Activity | 10% |
| Quizzes | 10% |
| Class participation | 5% |

The grading scale is as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 100-90% | A |
| 89-80% | B |
| 79-70% | C |
| 69-60% | D |
| < 59% | F |

**Constitution Test**

As part of this class, students must take the State-required Constitution Test. The test is worth 20% of the semester grade and passing (60% minimum) is required to pass the class regardless of the student’s overall percentage. Students are allowed two attempts to pass the test, with the first test grade being recorded. I will give you more information several weeks before the test. The test is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 17, 2016.

**Self-Monitoring Checklist**

You are expected to access Skyward for up-to-date information on your current grade in the class.