

## Course Description & Expectations

### American Government

Teacher: Brent Patterson

Throughout the length of this course students will complete various tasks using a number of methods that ensure each objective will be mastered. A tentative weekly plan has been sent for you to look over and become familiar with. Variations and modifications will obviously be made for things such as time and holidays, but this will serve as our guide as we progress. The weekly plan has been sent in hopes that it might provide more awareness to the student's activities and encourage conversation between the parent and student as well as the parent and teacher.

Aside from achieving the goals set out in the Alabama Course of Study and local curriculum guides, it is also important that each student achieve the life skills that are required to become effective and responsible members of the community. While most of those skills are taught by the parents, the high school setting is also instrumental in creating some of those characteristics and polishing others. It will be the goal throughout this course to foster positive qualities as well as master the educational objectives. Each student will be expected to be present and on time, fully prepared for the tasks of the day, responsible and self-disciplined (work handed in on time, aware of all assignments, able to prioritize, etc.), and show a respect for themselves and others at all times. When needed, parents will be notified when the student is falling short of the objectives in either category. Parents are encouraged to write or call to keep a close check on the progress of their child. By calling the school office, parents may leave a message or get a number where I can be reached directly. Correspondence between parent and teacher often corrects, if not alleviates, problems before they start.

#### Grading/Make up work

Grades will be determined by the point system. Tests (vocabulary and chapter) will make up about 50% of the six weeks' grade. Internet assignments, classroom assignments, quizzes, homework, journals, reading assignments, projects, and various other assignments will constitute the remaining portion.

While grading will always fall on the discretion of the teacher and be on a case-by-case basis, late work will generally result in a score of zero. Students are expected to make themselves aware of due dates and adhere to them strictly. It will be the responsibility of the students to make themselves aware of any missed assignment, notes, announcements, etc., in the event of an absence. Policies regarding grades and absences may be found in the CHS handbook.

Make-up tests will be taken in the mornings. Times and due dates for make-up tests and make-up work will be determined by CHS policy and dates and times for make-up tests will be verified by the teacher and student.

#### Internet Usage

Activities and assignments using the computer and the Internet will be used frequently throughout the length of the course. Students and parents should have an understanding that **ANY** unrelated use of the Internet or the computer will result in a score of **zero** on the specific assignment as well as any related assignments. Any student in violation will be asked to leave the computer immediately and will be removed for disciplinary action. Parent notification of any unauthorized use of the Internet during this course will follow.

If it is the desire of any parent to deny their child the use of the Internet, please indicate by checking the blank and signing appropriately.

\_\_\_ DO NOT allow my child to access ( / / ) \_\_\_\_\_  
the Internet

\_\_\_ My child may access ( / / ) \_\_\_\_\_  
the Internet (date) parent signature

### **Assigned Books for Reading**

Books and articles will be assigned for reading throughout the course. Any books assigned will be preceded by a permission slip to the parent. If any conflicts arise, please contact me at your earliest convenience.

### **Materials Needed**

- Three-ring binder with paper
- Pen/pencil
- Assigned book for reading (when applicable)

### **Objectives For This Course**

- Identify origins and purposes of government.
- Analyze purposes, organization, functions, and principles of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights
- Explain how the federal system divides powers between national and State governments, including areas of taxation, revenue distribution, federal grants, distribution of entitlements, regulation of interstate commerce, and enforcements of contracts
- Describe specific functions, organization, and purposes of state and local governments
- Trace the expansion of suffrage and its effect on the political system of the U.S.
- Describe the development and functions of special interest groups
- Trace the development and impact of the media on the political process and public opinion in the U.S.
- Identify roles political parties play in the functioning of the political system of the U.S.
- Identify constitutional provisions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the U.S.
- Contrast rights and responsibilities of citizens in a representative government
- Explain the foreign policy of the U.S. and national security interests as they pertain to the role of the U.S. in the world community

I have read and am aware of the expectations of my child in this course.

( / / ) \_\_\_\_\_  
date parent signature student's name

