



**MURRY BERGTRAUM HIGH SCHOOL, DR. ANDREA LEWIS, PRINCIPAL
RENATO DA SILVA, SOCIAL STUDIES AP**

C

H7–Government

Dear Parents and Students:

Welcome to Government! This course focuses on the study of U.S. Government in a participatory manner. A particular emphasis is placed on the institutionalization of Democracy at a federal, state and local level. In order to both pass this course you will need to complete a course portfolio based on the course goals at a proficient level, which will be further explained below.

In addition to teaching facts about our government system, this course will further develop critical and analytical thinking skills. My hope is that students will develop a lifelong appreciation of their unique role in and relationship with history and the world they live in. My expectation is that students will do their best to learn the material and leave the class a better informed citizen. As the instructor of this course, I will provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment, standards based instruction, and a commitment to each student's success.

All students will be expected to be on time and prepared for each class. Students are responsible for assignments and notes that they missed during their absence. Please exchange phone numbers with at least one person in the class.

COURSE OUTLINE

**Unit 1: Constitution and Foundations
of Government
Principles of Government
The Constitution
Federalism**

**Unit 2: Political Behavior and
Participation
Political Parties
Elections and campaigns
Political Participation/Voter Behavior
Public Opinion and Mass media**

Unit 3: Institutions of National Government
Congress and the Legislative Branch
The Presidency
Courts and The Judicial Branch

Unit 4: State and Local Government
Structure of State and Local Government
Policies and Finances of State and Local Government
Taxing and Spending

Unit 5: Public Policy
Formulation of Public Policy

MATERIALS

- 1. 1 lined, college-ruled notebook which will hold:**
 - Class handouts (which you will be given)**
 - Class notes & reflections**
- 2. A binder or folder that will contain your course portfolio**
- 3. Blue or Black pens and pencils**

GRADING POLICY

This course is characterized by a series of goals that students need to accomplish by the end of the term.

Goal # 1:I will understand how the American system of government works

Goal # 2:I will understand how the three branches of government work

Goal # 3:I will understand opinions, interests and organizations shape our government's decisions

Goal # 4:I will understand the social policy making process.

Goal # 5:I will understand who has power in the American democratic system

The course grade measures the degree to which students have acquired the skills and knowledge inherent in these course goals. Learning is a continuum and grades should reflect this principle. The first and second marking period grades are considered to be an indication of progress. The final grade is based on the evidence that the student has achieved the goals of the course. Therefore, if at the end of the term it is evident to the teacher that the student has achieved the goals of the course; the student should pass the class. Grades are not simply about "doing the work." Grades are about acquiring skills and knowledge.

Grading Elements:

- 1. 30 % Exams and Quizzes**
- 2. 30% Projects/Term Papers**
- 3. 30% Classwork and Participation**
- 4. 10% Homework**

EXPECTATIONS

To ensure each student's success it is imperative that all students respect and honor the classroom expectations at all times. Students who fail to honor the expectations of the classroom will have one or more of the consequences listed below imposed. Disruption of the class and the academic process will not be tolerated.

- NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND ARE TO BE USED OR SEEN DURING CLASS.
- ALL STUDENTS MUST BE RESPECTFUL OF EACH OTHER AT ALL TIMES.
- NO DEROGATORY LANGUAGE IS TO BE USED IN THE CLASSROOM.
- STUDENTS MUST NOT ENGAGE IN ANY BEHAVIOR THAT DISRUPTS THE CLASSROOM.
- NO LATENESS-Every unexcused lateness will be recorded and will affect your course grade

CONSEQUENCES

- 1) verbal warning
- 2) written warning and phone call home
- 3) referral to dean and or assistant principal
- 4) at school conference with parent and an administrator

I look forward to getting to know each student and parent this semester. We can all work together to make this a successful school year. If you need to contact me, I can be reached at:

Sincerely,

Student's signature: _____

Parent 's Signature: _____

Parent's email: _____

Parents's phone number: _____