U.S. Government and Citizenship

Course Syllabus

2015 – 2016

*“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance: And a people who mean to be their own Governors, must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives”*

*James Madison*

**Instructor**

**Ms. Amber Rogers Email:** amber.rogers@canyonsdistrict.org

**Room:** Portable 3 **Telephone:** (801) 826-6502

**Website Address:** socialstudiesrogers.weebly.com **Availability:** 7am-4pm; Email anytime

**NOT available Tuesdays or Wednesday**

**Course Description**

The direct impact of government on our daily lives is one of undeniably intense importance and relevance. Accordingly, a solid understanding this body of institutions, laws, and bureaucrats will allow us to better participate in the civic processes that can change our lives in tremendous ways. Moreover, as a senior-level course, these topics become much more applicable as many students will become eligible to actively engage with their representatives as registered voters.

This course will include a comprehensive analysis of government in the United States, incorporating ideas of citizenship, policymaking, political behavior, public opinion, campaigns, political processes, institutions, and fundamental democratic principles. Emphasis will also be placed on Utah government. Careful attention will be paid to relevant current events, and students should expect to engage in classroom discussions and formal debates, in addition to actively reading and writing (argument writing) on a regular basis.

**Course Goals**

1. For the student to be able to take concrete knowledge and move to abstract analysis.

2. For the student to learn to write in a clear and concise manner, and to learn to write analytically and argumentatively following a clear line of logic.

3. For the student to grapple with and begin to reason out their own ideas on moral and ethical issues as they relate to U.S. politics.

4. \*\*For the students to begin to delve into who they are and what it is they believe.

## Materials

* Spiral Notebook (use for taking notes and review)
* Organized Folder for handouts
* Writing Utensils (blue/black ink pen or pencil, and highlighters)
* Textbook (classroom set)

**Classroom Culture**

Students and the instructor will enter into a mutual understanding to build a classroom culture that promotes active learning. All parties agree to:

* **Be respectful.** Look for the best in others. Listen. Follow directions the first time given.
* **Be responsible.** Stay on task. Ask questions when necessary.
* **Be ready.** Come to class prepared to learn and participate. Bring materials.

## Grading

Grades will be broken down as follows: **40%** **Tests, 40% Quizzes, and 20% Assignments.** Grades are available on-line and are updated and posted every week. Please keep all of your graded assignments during the semester. If I have made a mistake in recording your scores and you have the scored/graded work, I will gladly correct my mistake. After grades for the quarter are recorded, if there is a perceived error, any grade change must be completed within the following quarter or by June 30 for fourth quarter.

Because I want you to be successful and understand the material given and tested on:

* You may retake any quiz or assignment for up to 90% credit. But the retake must be done before the next quiz or the unit assessment. NO EXCEPTIONS.
* YOU MAY NOT RETAKE ANY TEST.
* If you sluff on a quiz or test day, YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOW TO MAKE IT UP. NO EXECPTIONS.
  + I check your attendance everyday: beware.

**Participation**

You are expected to attend class, contribute to in-class discussions, and effectively participate in activities. Some sessions will be seminars or debates; in order for discussions to work, your preparation and participation is critical and essential to your class success. If short on sleep this is neither the time nor place to make it up. Please bring your positive attitude, your energy and inquisitiveness, and your terrific work ethic to class with you each day. Participation will be taken into consideration at the end of the quarter.

## Classroom Policies

**Citizenship:** This class complies completely with CCHS policy for tardies, absences, and truancies (refer to the student handbook.) If your behavior interferes with another student’s right to learn or my right to teach, then the following steps may be taken (although not every situation will allow for or necessitate all steps):

**1. verbal warning**

**2. student/teacher conference**

**3. phone call to parent/guardian**

**4. problem is referred to the principal’s office**

**Academic Honesty:** It is expected that students will use genuine, sincere, and fair means for the accomplishment of the tests, tasks, or projects from which evaluations of progress shall be determined. Students found plagiarizing, copying or cheating in any way will receive automatic zeros and have phone calls made to their parents. In addition, a write-up of the incident will be given to the student's counselor/dean. Flagrant or repeated offenses will result in a failing grade for the quarter or semester depending on the nature of the incident.

**Extra Credit:** Extra credit opportunities will be offered to all students at any time that they become available. However, it may only be done if all other assignments have been turned in. It is designed to help make up for a poor score, not to make up for assigned work that was never turned in. DO NOT ASK FOR IT!

**Make-up and Late Work:** All assignments must be submitted within the same unit for which those assignments were given. Once a new quarter or unit has begun, late work from the previous quarter or unit will no longer be accepted. Also, assignments labeled with "Major Project" on Skyward must be submitted by the scheduled/assigned due date, ***regardless of a student's absence*** (including school-excused, sickness and family vacations). Students can arrange to submit electronically, when possible, or have someone else drop off the assignment to the teacher as needed. Late “major projects” will not be accepted for credit.

If you know you will be absent in advance (for athletics, trips, appointments, etc.), it is your responsibility to tell me, so I may make arrangements for you to receive your work and ensure you do not fall behind. Otherwise, late work will ONLY be accepted in the case of an excused absence. In these cases:

* You have **the number of days you were gone PLUS 1 DAY** to complete the assignments. For example, if you were absent 1 day, you have 2 days to turn in late work... 5 days absent = 6 days to turn in work... etc.
* Assignments given BEFORE you were absent are due the day you return.
* If you miss a quiz or exam, you will be expected to make it up **the day you return**, unless other arrangements are made. If you do not, you will receive a ZERO for that quiz/exam.
* I check your attendance everyday. If you are truant on a day you have a quiz or a test you will not be allowed to make it up.
  + **YOU MAY NOT TAKE ANY QUIZ OR TEST IF YOU HAVE AN “A” ON YOUR ATTENDANCE.**
* Assignments may be turned in late with a penalty of one letter grade for each day late. I return all assignments to “class box”.

***NO EXCEPTIONS TO THESE RULES WILL BE MADE. PLEASE, DON’T WASTE EITHER OF OUR TIME BY ASKING.***

**Videos:** As a rule, “extra credit” is not offered on an individual basis. However, from time to time there will be bonus assignments offered to the class. These opportunities will come throughout the term and may included things like reading a book, watching a TV program, or viewing a film or video. (Parental approval is required for film and video bonus) The bonus opportunities are not required and should not be needed to be successful in the class! Below are some of the titles of videos I have shown excerpts from in the past or plan to show this year:

**-TED Talks**

**-A More Perfect Union**

**-Law and Order: Gun Show**

**-The West Wing: Stackhouse Filibuster; The Short List; The State Dinner**

**-John Adams –HBO series**

**-Primary Colors**

**-The American President**

**-Runaway Jury**

I appreciate and respect any feelings of apprehension in the viewing of these videos. If you do not feel comfortable, please note so below and I will give an alternate assignment with which students can learn the subject matter and gain the full amount of points associated with the assignment. Your honesty is greatly appreciated.

I have found that dramatizations of events have the ability to connect students with the events we are talking about in a very unique way. Please know that I choose these videos carefully and show them with this end in mind.

**Electronics:** Electronic items are **NOT** allowed in class unless otherwise noted. This includes cell phones, iPads, radios, toys, or games. These items must placed inside your backpack or purse and placed under your desk (not in your lap). If not observed, these items will be confiscated and given to the offending student at the end of the class period. With the second offense, the confiscated items will require a parent to pick up the item. Your cell phone will also be used as your bathroom pass. If you want to leave my room you must give me your cell phone.

**---------------------------------------------Please return this page to Ms. Rogers--------------------------------------------**

Signing this page states that you and your parents understand the rules and classroom procedures. When you ask questions about grade, I will always have you refer to the syllabus.

Student Information:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Information:

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Best Contact Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I consent to my son/daughter viewing movies of PG or PG-13 rating with the teacher’s discretion and editing for inappropriate subject matter

I DO NOT consent to my son/daughter viewing movies of PG or PG-13 rating with the teacher’s discretion and editing for inappropriate subject matter and understand they will be given an alternate assignment instead

Special requests or considerations: