

History/Social Sciences

U.S. Government and Civics Syllabus



Course Description

The goal of this course is to help you become a better informed, more effective participant in the American political system. This course will help you acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding of America's political foundations and structures to be an effective citizen. You will read and learn about America's fundamental political, economic, and social values and principles. By the end of the course, you will understand the major philosophical foundations and privileges of American civics. You will also gain an understanding of the governmental structures, processes, and principles within which United States citizens participate and shape their government.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Course Materials

All the materials you need are included in the course. You do not have to buy any additional textbooks.



Course Outcomes

As students complete the course assignments, they will increase their knowledge, improve a 21st-century skill, and develop an attribute.



Knowledge: US Government & Civics

In this course, *knowledge* refers to the subject matter and content students will learn while completing the readings, practices, quizzes, and assignments.

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.
- Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations of democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.
- Evaluate, take, and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (that is, the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), if and how they are interdependent, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.
- Explain and analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.
- Summarize landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.
- Evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.
- Analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, tribal, and local governments.
- Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.
- Evaluate, take, and defend positions regarding the United States' role in the world, and U.S. foreign policy structures and objectives.



Skills

21st-Century Skill: Communications—Engaging in Conversation and Discussion

As students complete this course's assignments, they will gain skills in *Engaging in Conversation and Discussion*. This skill is part of Communications.



Attributes

Attribute: Responsibility

This course focuses on developing the attribute of *Responsibility* in the context of US Government and Civics.



Grading and Assignments

This course is divided into 16 modules. In each module, you will submit computer graded quizzes and may also have teacher graded assignments. Some of the teacher graded assignments include essays and a research paper. All of these assignments will be reflected in the grade book, so they will count toward your grade. Read the description for each type of assignment to learn more and to keep track of your learning experience. The letter grade in this course will be based on these assignments and exams.

Assignments and Exams

Assignment or Exam	Grading	Percent of Total Grade
Content Guides	Teacher-Graded	15%
Assignments	Teacher-Graded	35%
Module Quizzes	Computer-Graded	30%
1 Midcourse Quiz, 1 Final Exam	Computer-Graded	20%

Assignments and Content Guides

You will have the following teacher-graded assignments. Take the opportunity to apply what you have learned, and demonstrate your understanding of the lessons by analyzing and making comparisons. A rubric is included on each assignment page to help you review the requirements so that you include all the details in your assignment.

- Module 3: Independent Regulatory Commissions Assignment
- Module 4: Voting Record Assignment
- Module 6: First Amendment Assignment
- Module 13: Successfully Navigate Media Assignment

In each module introduction page students will find the download the content guides. Students will need to download each module's document at the beginning of the module and work on the document throughout each lesson until the student reaches the end of the module. The following is the submission schedule for your content guides.

Content Guide Submission Schedule

Modules Covered	Submission Module
Modules 1-4	Module 4
Modules 5-8	Module 8
Modules 9-12	Module 12

Modules Covered	Submission Module
Modules 13-15	Module 15

Module Quizzes

At the end of each module, you will submit a computer-graded quiz that will test your knowledge of the content for that module. These are open-note quizzes. You may use Content Guides to help on these quizzes throughout the course.

Midcourse Quiz

This computer-graded quiz will cover the material up to the midcourse quiz. The questions on the midcourse quiz will be similar in format to the questions on the final exam.

Essays

There is a research project and an argumentative essay for this course. These are part of your teacher graded assignments.

- Module 5: Judicial Branch Research Assignment
- Module 15: Argumentative Essay

Final Exam

The final exam consists of approximately 35 questions and is comprehensive, meaning it will include content from the entire course. It is closed book and notes.

Course Grade

The letter grade will be calculated according to these percentages.

Percent to Letter Grade Calculation	
A	100% – 93%
A–	<93% – 90%
B+	<90% – 87%
B	<87% – 83%
B–	<83% – 80%
C+	<80% – 77%
C	<77% – 73%
C–	<73% – 70%

Percent to Letter Grade Calculation	
D+	<70% – 67%
D	<67% – 63%
D–	<63% – 60%
F (fail)	<60% – 0%