

American Government



THE STUDY OF GOVERNMENT

“The government is merely a servant – merely a temporary servant. It cannot be its prerogative to determine what is right and what is wrong, and decide who is a patriot and who isn’t. Its function is to obey orders, not originate them.” – Mark Twain

“The purpose of government is to enable the people of a nation to live in safety and happiness. Government exists for the interests of the governed, not for the governors.” – Thomas Jefferson

“The government is us; WE are the government, you and I” – Theodore Roosevelt

What is government? You will be encouraged, hopefully inspired, to not only answer this question for yourself, but also motivated to start *actively* participating in government as a responsible citizen who knows your rights and values them leading you to be involved.

“A nation of sheep will beget a government of wolves.” – Edward R Murrow

This course is designed to cover the Constitution, Bill of Rights and other amendments, government’s effect on your lives as adolescents, the election process, federal, state, and local governments, and current, complex, controversial issues.

**This is your senior year!
Be here, be ready to learn, be ready to participate!**

STUDENT MATERIALS & EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to bring all course materials to class on a daily basis, a sunny disposition, , pen or pencil, the Chapter Packet we are currently working on, paper for note-taking which should be kept in a binder with all Government notes, and the Marauder’s text.

We Do Not Have a Class Set!

No cell phone or other electronic use unless pre-approved or requested by Sibby.

CELL PHONE PARKING LOT

Students are expected to place cell phones into the cell phone parking lot upon entering the classroom and pick their cell phones up in a timely manner at the end of the period.

Ms. Sibby bears no responsibility for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones and/or their accessories.

GRADING

All work will be assigned a point value. The student’s points will be added and given a percentage of the total points possible; assignments are not weighted. Tests are given at the end of each chapter and do factor into the grade. Students will be given several projects during the year, each of which has its own rubric or instructions to follow. The Final test may be worth between 10% of the total grade (point-wise) in addition to the above mentioned class work.

The following scale applies to grades (total possible points)

100%-90% A

89%-80% B

79%-70% C

Any score below this will receive an F

Citizenship grades are determined by the student's participation in the class, attitude, and work ethic. All F grades will receive an N or U in Work Habits as it pertains to work ethic.

COMMUNICATION

In an effort to better communicate with students and parents, I have a website through the TVHS website. This syllabus is available on my website along with a daily calendar of class work and homework. To access student's most current please use your Infinite Campus log in. 'Friday Progress reports', from the counseling office, will only be signed if student has a *documented IEP* with the Special Education Department or if the *Progress Report is signed by the parent or coach at the top of the document*. Feel free to contact me via e-mail at dmurray-sibby@tvusd.k12.ca.us I check my e-mail multiple times during the school day☺ *Students are expected to sign up for my Remind 101-parents are welcome to sign up for friendly reminders to important information as well.* Your signature on this syllabus indicates that you will be checking my website regularly and excuses the teacher from additional correspondence specifically *In Danger of Failing* reports.

ATTENDANCE & TARDIES

Participation is critical in any class particularly a discussion oriented class. Being in class on time and sharing dialogue is essential. When a student is absent, the student has as many days to make-up the assignment as they missed. Students will find out what they missed on my website (click on calendar) prior to their return to my class. For example, the work will be due the following day after return for a one day absence. *Please do not ask the teacher what was missed due to absence-the website takes a lot of time and effort to maintain, please use it.* If student does not have internet access from home, school computers are available in the media center before school, at break, and after-school. Student will need ID card for access.

Students with perfect attendance (no tardies or absences) will be given the opportunity to drop the lowest test score (including FINAL) from their grade.

No assignment make-ups are accepted in the last week of the semester.

EXTRA CREDIT

I do not give extra credit. Do the work as it is assigned. If you are completely dissatisfied with a score on a particular assignment and legitimate effort was put forth, assignments may be re-done (at the discretion of instructor). Also, any failed *Unit Test* may be re-taken until a passing grade is achieved either during intervention period or after school by appointment only.

1. Eating and drinking is allowed at the discretion of teacher based on cleanliness of each individual class.
2. Be in seat before tardy bell rings to avoid a tardy.
3. NO electronic use during class unless teacher directed.
4. Appropriate language must be used.
5. Late work is not accepted unless excused absence slip is rendered-student handbook outlines the allowed amount of time.
6. Come to class prepared in the physical and mental sense-no laying head down or sleeping.
7. Respect environment. Please do not write on desks, books, walls, etc. or throw trash anywhere but the receptacle.
8. Please use restroom before class. Passes will not be issued in the first ten minutes or last ten minutes of class.
9. Respect classmates and teacher at all times.
10. Do not line up at the door or pack up early. Dismissal will occur via teacher not the bell.

FILM

Movies typically shown in class are those pre-approved by the governing TVUSD board. At times, films, clips, YouTube videos, or excerpts may be used that have relevance to material covered in class, at the discretion of the instructor-signature below indicates approval of mentioned teacher discretion.

INTEGRITY

Due to the high volume of assignments given, designed to help students learn, and our commitment to immediate feedback for student benefit, peer editing is often used as a timely grading method, on notes and packet assignments. During this process both peers involved are held accountable for discrepancies. If discrepancies exist more than 5% of the total points for the assignment the discrepancy will be considered an act of cheating on both peers part and both will be given a zero grade on the assignment. Very specific directions are given and are easy to follow during the grading process. If any questions result while grading, it must be brought to the attention of the teacher before the assignments are handed in, otherwise, it will be considered an act of cheating and dealt with according to school policy located in the student handbook. Copying answers from another's work or plagiarizing from any source will result in a zero grade and "U" in citizenship for parties involved.

Both parent & student, please sign the spaces below and return to me your next school day. By signing this document all parties are agreeing to the spirit of the entire document as interpreted by the teacher. **Parents please make a copy of this for your records, if you wish. I do not hand back the syllabus.**
Thank you.

Parent Signature: _____ Student Signature: _____

Student *printed* name: _____

Mailing Street Address: _____

Zip _____

Mother Name & phone number _____ e-mail _____

Father Name & phone number _____ email _____

Student Cell number _____ e-mail _____

*Other Guardian Name & phone number _____
relation to student _____
(if applicable)