

United States and Arizona Government Syllabus

Course

US/AZ Gov Fall 11 .5 credit Mountain Pointe High School
Sections: SS0300-05,07,09 M-F, Periods 1-3-6 Room C205

Instructor: Mr. Lane Waddell

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Required textbooks

All readings related to the class can be found on the class website. <http://www.mrwaddell.com>

Course Overview

The United States/Arizona Government course introduces students to the requirements and demands of democratic citizenship. This course will help develop informed, responsible participation in American political life by competent citizens committed to the fundamental values and principles of American Constitutional democracy. Study of the historical backgrounds, governing principles, and institutions of the United States. The course studies the nature and function of political relationships: citizen to citizen, citizen to local community, citizen to state, and citizen to the nation. In short, United States/Arizona Government will act as a finishing course of the social studies, preparing students to take their rightful place as full, active, and responsible members of American society while simultaneously integrating in them an appreciation for the past as it relates to the present and preparing them for the possibilities of their future.

Course Objectives

There are four parts to the class. The first part will deal with the United States Constitution. The class will look at the articles of confederation, the constitutional convention, the development of the constitution, amending the constitution and powers granted by the constitution. The first part also looks at Federalism and the structure and functions of federalism. The last part of the unit will look at Arizona, the initiative and referendum process, three branches of Arizona government and Arizona today. The second part will look at the three branches of government. The students will understand the constitutional requirements for office, how a bill becomes a law, the structure and function of the dual court system, judicial review, the roles of the president. The third part will look at political socialization, political parties and their function, the media, campaigns and interest groups. The third unit also looks at how one is influenced to vote and how one votes. The last unit will look at public policy. Education, healthcare, economic, foreign and defense policies are studied and what are the challenges facing decision makers in regards to these policies.

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Course Requirements and Grading

Grades for this course will be determined by a combination of three factors: in-class examinations, projects, and class participation and preparedness.

There will be three fifty-minute exams during the course of the semester (including the scheduled final). These exams will consist of multiple choice and identification items, and will cover material from both readings and lectures. They will test both mastery of important concepts and the ability to integrate ideas discussed in class. Each will cover material from one major section of the course.

Students will also be responsible for four independent analytical projects during the course of the semester. Assigned project topics will be distributed at least two weeks prior to the due date for the projects. Projects will be expected to incorporate material from the assigned readings. These projects will be graded according to the soundness and intellectual rigor of their argument, their use of relevant class material (both from reading and lecture), and the quality of their written expression.

Finally, class participation is a very valuable part of the learning experience in this course. Questions are welcomed, and time will often be set aside for discussion. Students are expected to come to class prepared to share their questions, comments, criticisms, and insights with others. This course will be greatly enriched if people with views across the political spectrum voice their opinions on the important and often controversial issues that we will discuss. Simply showing up for class, while necessary for a good participation grade, is not sufficient. Additionally, to ensure that students are completing assigned readings in a timely manner, there will be *at least* 12 reading quizzes during the course of the semester. These should be very easy for those who have read, and very difficult for those who have not.

Grades will be assigned on the following scale:

Projects (point values vary)	120 points
Quizzes	240 points
Participation	100 points
Mid Term Exam	100 points
Final Exam	<u>140 points</u>
Total Points	700 points

The grading scale is as follows: A = (630 points or higher); B = (560-629); C = (490-559); D = (420-489); F = 419 and below. All assignments are due on the date posted. Assignments turned in after the due date will be marked down fifty percent. All assignments must be completed to earn a grade in the class, failure to complete all assignments will result in an incomplete for the course.

Assessment Procedures

A variety of exams will be used and may include multiple-choice, identification, short answer, essay outlines, and essays. Exams may be oral or written, and may require the use of a computer. Exams will be based on online readings, primary and secondary source documents, and discussions. Additionally exams may include vocabulary, geography, reading comprehension, numerical comprehension based on charts and graphs as well as other assignments.

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Readings

In this course, we will use a textbook and a collection of readings, supplemented frequently with additional materials from readers and online sources. All reading material is linked through the instructor's web site. Timely reading is critical both for achievement as an individual student in this class, and for the success of the course as a whole. The reading load in this course is reasonable—on average, assignments will run less than twenty pages per class session. As a result, students are strongly expected to come to class having read the material carefully, thought about it, and prepared to discuss it in class. Failure to do so will result in lessened comprehension of class lectures, poorer exam performance, and a lower participation grade. Conversely, dutiful attention to the reading will greatly enhance the intellectual experience of the course for the individual student, and enable him or her to contribute meaningfully to the class as a whole.

Attendance and Sweep

Excessive absences in this course will have a negative impact on your grade, as you are responsible for any material or work missed. You are allowed 10 absences (both excused and unexcused). You will be dropped on the 11th absence. You will be swept if not in class by the last bell. Returning to your locker to gather materials for class still counts as a sweep if not in class before the last bell. If you are tardy you will report to sweep.

Course Materials

The following materials are required in class each day: composition book, pen or pencil. No pass will be issued to obtain these materials. Students are expected to maintain a course notebook for study guides, handouts, readings and other course materials.

Assignments

All assignments are due on the date posted. Assignment's that are late will be marked down fifty percent. All assignments must be turned in for the student to earn credit. All work handed in must have your first and last name, date and class period. Assignments must be on 8 1/2" x 11" college lined paper (no spiral) and be neat and organized, complete with good penmanship, spelling and grammar. Any messy or unreadable work will not be accepted and must be redone.

Academic Integrity

The MPHS Student Handbook provides definitions of what is expected of your work. If you are found to be in violation of this policy, then corrective steps will be taken.

Honor

The students of Mr. Waddell are setting the standard for those who follow: We will not pass off another's work as our own, We will respect one another and our campus, We will take responsibility for our actions and accept the consequences. In short we will act with personal integrity because we choose to live a life of honor and success

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Academic Achievement

Every student wants to do well and it is expected that each student will achieve at and beyond their ability. There may come a point during the semester that the student is not meeting their expectations or those of the class. When that occasion arises, the student needs to be proactive. First, check the class website for information on grades and assignments. Next, contact the instructor and determine the best path for achievement. The instructor is there to help the student with academic achievement. This can take many forms, such as creating and maintaining study groups, meeting before or after school. The next step is to discuss the issues with the guidance department. They may have other achievement tools available to the student.

Method of Instruction

Structured as a series of lectures, readings, and exercises, the course proceeds for the most part chronologically, seeking to analyze and explain interactions between and among constitutional structures, practices and provisions, legal doctrines, and major historical events and issues.

Instruction is conducted predominately by lectures and assignments. Students should note that the instructor uses the Socratic Method, eliciting information and conclusions by questioning students during course meetings. The aim of such instruction is to see how students clarify problems and questions, work at thinking about the issues, and create understandings and solutions for themselves. Thus, class meetings are not conducted as one-way information delivery sessions but rather as interactive occasions for students to explore and explain their understandings of problems, questions, issues, and materials. More than conveying information, the course is designed to challenge students' thinking and to channel the refinement of that thinking and its articulation.

The method of instruction requires students to do readings and other assignments in advance of class meetings so as to be prepared to participate in class. The instruction proceeds that students each week will spend three hours of preparation for each credit hour of instruction.

Discussion Posts

The discussion posts are designed to share your thoughts and insights with your classmates. The purpose of the posts are to engage in a positive dialogue. This is an excellent way to enhance your own learning. Studying the Constitution allows for great discussion. Your posts need to reflect insights into the Constitution and probing questions that will enrich your own understanding of the documents. Replying to a classmate with an "I agree", will not garner you any points.

Projects

The projects are designed to show your mastery of a topic. Each project has a complete set of instructions and options for the final product. All work done on the projects needs to be your own. Cutting and pasting is not an option for a senior level class.

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Guest Speaker

Guest speakers add a very unique element to the class. The speakers bring knowledge and experience of the government. The students will be responsible for the guest speakers in class. Students will be responsible for making the speaker feel welcome and asking pertinent questions that will enhance the learning of all in the class.

Course Disclaimers

The sequence of material and speed at which we cover material is dependent on the interests and abilities of each class.

This class will provide reasonable accommodations for students who have special needs as documented by the Special Education department or Guidance Counselors.

Classroom Rules and Procedures

There are few classroom rules. You may do those things that promote your learning and the learning of others. As young adults, I expect you to act accordingly. This means:

- Be on time - that is something you can take care of.
- Be prepared - bring your materials as required.
- No talking at inappropriate times (such as during instruction), out-of-turn, or while another has the floor.
- Texting, sleeping, or any other disrupting activity will not be tolerated.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Follow all directions the first time they are given.
- Respect yourself, others and their property and their opinions; we will not engage in putting people down.
- Be ready to participate - make eye contact and be fearless when it comes to your opinion or your turn to come forward.
- Have your homework done - if you are supposed to read something, then read it so we can have intelligent discussions.
- School rules prohibit gum, food, ipods, mp3's, and active cell phones.
- Work to your best potential.
- Discipline procedures follow the three-step correction process:
 1. One-on-one counseling with you.
 2. Phone call or meeting with your parents.
 3. Referral to school administration.Be careful, all three procedures could be used on the first offense if it serious enough.

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The readings and assignments for the course are set out below. The readings can be challenging and it is, therefore, imperative to keep up with the readings. You will find the readings on the class web site.

Week 1: Introduction to the course, to the faculty, and to the students. Discuss the procedures for the class. What are the expected goals for learning.
Reading, Syllabus, Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights.

Week 2: United States Constitution
The Great Compromise, the Federalist Papers and amending the Constitution.
Reading, Pages 28-61
Project- Political Thought Project is due.

Week 3: Federalism and State Government
The development of Federalism and separation of powers and the framework for state government.
Reading, Pages 90-100 and Arizona Readings
Quiz-Reading Quiz #1

Week 4: State Government and Civil Liberties.
The three branches of government for the state and the origins of Civil Liberties.
Reading, Arizona Readings and Pages 148-185.
Quiz-Reading Quiz #2

Week 5: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights.
The development of Civil Rights through court cases and actions by the government.
Reading, Pages 186-225
Quiz-Reading Quiz #3

Week 6: The Legislative Branch
The qualifications, compensation and election process. How a bill becomes law.
Reading, Pages 226-263
Quiz-Reading Quiz #4

Week 7: The Executive Branch
The qualifications, compensation and election process. The history and roles of President,
Reading, Pages 264-295
Quiz-Reading Quiz #5

Week 8: The Judicial Branch
The organization of the Federal court system. History and function of Supreme Court.
Reading, Pages 322-361
Quiz-Reading Quiz #6

Week 9: Mid Term Exam
Work on Three Branches Project and the Mid Term Exam.
Reading, Pages 28-361
Exam-Mid Term
Project-Three Branches Project is due.

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Week 10: Public Opinion and Socialization

Public opinion research, conducting polls, forming political opinions.

Reading, Pages 362-385

Quiz-Reading Quiz #7

Week 11: Political Parties

Roots of the two-party system, organization of parties, activities of parties and minor parties.

Reading, Pages 386-417

Quiz-Reading Quiz #8

Week 12: Elections and Voting

American elections such as the presidential, congressional and patterns in voting along with voter turnout.

Reading, Pages 418-449

Quiz-Reading Quiz #9

Week 13: The Campaign Process

Assembling a staff, raising money, and reaching voters.

Reading, Pages 450-479

Quiz-Reading Quiz #10

Week 14: The News Media

Current media trends, how the media covers politics.

Reading, Pages 480-507,

Project-Voting and Political Parties Project.

Week 15: Interest Groups

Development of interest groups, what groups do, and regulating groups.

Reading, Pages 508-533

Quiz-Reading Quiz #11

Week 16: Domestic Policy and Economic Policy

Evolution of health policy, education and challenges in policy. Fiscal and Monetary policy

Reading, 534-567

Quiz-Reading Quiz #12

Week 17: Economic Policy, Foreign and Defense Policy

Fiscal and Monetary Policy. The US as a world power, decision making and challenges in policy

Reading, Pages 602-639

Project-Annotated Bibliography due.

Week 18: FINAL EXAM

The final exam for the course will be a cumulative exam. The exam will be given on the dates assigned by the school for this course. Each student is responsible for writing Instruments. No other items may be brought to the final exam. There will be no early exams. Students not present for the final exam will be given an grade of Incomplete.