



Delmar School District Course Syllabus & Outline

Faculty: Jessica Howell-McPhail

Course Title: Civics/Geography

Grade Level: 9th

Method of Contacting Teacher:

Preparation Period: 1st & 2nd

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Course Description

Civics - Civics directly addresses citizenship education within the context of political systems. Students study the assumptions upon which governments are founded, and the organizations and strategies governments employ to achieve their goals. With specific respect to the United States, students learn the underlying principles of representative democracy, the constitutional separation of powers, and the rule of law. They need to comprehend that an essential premise of representative democracy is the willingness of citizens to place a high premium on their own personal responsibility for participation in social decision-making. Students develop the skills which citizens must possess in order to discharge those responsibilities while protecting their rights and the rights of others. The study of civics prepares students to translate their beliefs into actions and their ideas into policies.

Geography - Citizens should possess a knowledge of geography and an ability to apply a geographical perspective to life situations. All physical phenomena and human activities exist in space as well as time. Geography studies the relationships of people, places, and environments from the perspective of where they occur, why they are there, and what meaning those locations have for us. Citizens with the knowledge and perspectives of geography understand the environmental and human processes that shape the Earth's surface, and recognize the culturally distinctive ways people interact with the natural world to produce unique places. An appreciation of the nature of their world and their place in it will better prepare citizens for a physical environment more threatened and a global economy more competitive and interconnected.

Course Rationale/Objectives

This course is designed to make the student a more informed citizen of the United States and the world. Students will learn skills that will help them to become lifelong participants in society.

Major Learning Goals/Standards

1. Civics Standard One: Students will examine the structure and purposes of governments with specific emphasis on constitutional democracy [**Government**].
 2. Civics Standard Two: Students will understand the principles and ideals underlying the American political system [**Politics**].
 3. Civics Standard Three: Students will understand the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of United States citizens [**Citizenship**].
 4. Civics Standard Four: Students will develop and employ the civic skills necessary for effective, participatory citizenship [**Participation**].
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5. Geography Standard One: Students will develop a personal geographic framework, or "mental map," and understand the uses of maps and other geo-graphics [**MAPS**].
 6. Geography Standard Two: Students will develop a knowledge of the ways humans modify and respond to the natural environment [**ENVIRONMENT**].
 7. Geography Standard Three: Students will develop an understanding of the diversity of human culture and the unique nature of places [**PLACES**].
 8. Geography Standard Four: Students will develop an understanding of the character and use of regions and the connections between and among them [**REGIONS**].

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will analyze the ways in which the structure and purposes of different governments around the world reflect differing ideologies, cultures, values, and histories.
2. Students will examine and analyze the extra-Constitutional role that political parties play in American politics.
3. Students will understand that the functioning of the government is a dynamic process which combines the formal balances of power incorporated in the Constitution with traditions, precedents, and interpretations which have evolved over the past 200 years.
4. Students will understand that citizens are individually responsible for keeping themselves informed about public policy issue on the local, state, and federal levels; participating in the civic process; and upholding the laws of the land.
5. Students will understand the process of working within a political party, a commission engaged in examining public policy, or a citizens group.
6. Students will identify geographic patterns which emerge when collected data is mapped, and analyze mapped patterns through the application of such common geographic principles as hierarchy, accessibility, and diffusion.
7. Students will apply the analysis of mapped patterns to the solution of problems.
8. Students will understand the Earth's physical environment as a set of interconnected systems (ecosystems) and the ways humans have perceived, reacted to, and changed environments at local to global scales.

9. Students will understand the processes which result in distinctive cultures, economic activity, and settlement form in particular locations across the world.
10. Students will apply knowledge of the types of regions and methods of drawing boundaries to interpret the Earth's changing complexity.

Primary Textbook

There is currently no text book used for this course.

Additional Texts

All reading materials will be provided by the instructor.

References and Resource Materials

- All additional reference and resource materials will be provided by the instructor.

Technology

- Students will be utilizing computers (laptops & desktops), iPads, iPods, and/or personal electronic devices AT THE TEACHERS DISCRETION. If a student's device is visible the instructor has the right to confiscate the phone according to Delmar School Districts cell phone use policy.
- Schoology – Every student should know how to log on to Schoology. I use Schoology often to post assignments, provide extra materials, and most importantly, turn in assignments. You can reach the districts Schoology page by visiting the Delmar School District webpage and following these directions:
 - Click on the “Students & Parents” tab
 - Click on the “Schoology” tab at the bottom of the drop down menu.
 - Log in: Username = first.last name (Example: Jessica.howell) Password = student ID number
- **Google Account** – Every student is required to have OR set up a Google Account. You will need access to Google Docs and Google Slides for some lesson tasks (LT) and Culminating Performance Tasks (CTP). There are two reasons for this... First, you never have to save anything using these two programs. Every time you make any change (even if its just a period), the changes will be saved! Nice, huh? Second, you won't ever have to worry about where you saved your work. You can access your google account from ANYWHERE at ANYTIME!

Course Outline/Curriculum Map:

**Units outlined below include both Civics AND Geography.*

Unit 1: Structure of Government

Unit 2: Politics

Unit 3: The Three Branches of Government

Unit 4: Participation in Government

**End Civics – Start Geography (January 2019)*

Unit 5: Maps & Regions

Unit 6: Human-Environment Interaction

Unit 7: Sustainability and Climate

Learning Activities:

Students will access the course material through a variety of learning activities including:

- Reading Assignments, Videos/Video Clips, Interactive Games, Interactive lectures, Demonstrations, and/or debates.

Homework Policy:

Most of the work for this course will be completed in class. However, if a homework assignment is given, the student is expected to complete the assignment prior to the next class.

Assignments, projects, expectations:

Students' understanding and comprehension of course objectives will be assessed using a variety of methods:

1. **Vocabulary assignments**
2. **Participation** – Simply showing up and trying your best is a great way to help earn some extra points throughout the marking period! You can earn participation points a variety of ways. First, “take responsibility for the energy you bring into OUR space.” Try to come to class each day with a positive attitude. We ALL have bad days – including me – and you will probably know RIGHT away if Mrs. Howell-McPhail isn't her normal self; but this doesn't give us the right to treat others with disrespect. If you are having a bad day, communicate that to me or your classmates and we will help you through ☺ Second, you can earn participation points by ‘turning in’ your cell phone at the beginning of each class. Delmar has moved to a “Zero Tolerance” policy for cell phones and electronic, so no one should have them. Now, we KNOW you will still have them on your person or in your book bag. In an attempt to ‘unplug’ you can turn in your phone at the beginning of each class to earn participation points. We want you all to use technology in a responsible and productive way. Learning to ‘let it go’ is the first step to breaking your addiction to your screen.
3. **Warm-up / Cool Down Assignments** – Daily warm-ups will consist of students watching CNN Student News and writing two short summaries. Each day student's will be responsible for ACTIVELY LISTENING to the news and recording the most important details on their warm-up sheets. CNN News Warm-up's will be collected every 2 weeks. If you do your warm-ups every day, it will really help to boost your grade at the end of each marking period. If you do not do your warm-ups... It can impact your grade in a negative way. It is easy and informative, so let's do it right! ☺

4. **Summarizing Activities** – Sometimes we will do short summarizing activities in your interactive notebooks OR you will use a scrap sheet of paper. Summarizing is important for learning because it gives you the chance to review and reflect on what you have learned in your own words.
5. **Notebook Checks** – We will be creating and utilizing an Interactive Notebook for this course. In your notebook we will record vocabulary activities, take notes, create graphic organizers and summarize important concepts. I will periodically check your notebooks to not only make sure you are participating in class, but that you also have a good understanding of what we have been learning. Sometimes I will check specific entries (like a paragraph summary, for example) but other times, I will grade your notebook as pass/fail. For example, if I am grading the section of your notebook where we covered types of government and you have 4 out of 6 entries, you will pass your notebook check. Finally, I sometimes allow you to use your notebook to help you on quizzes. This is a great incentive for you to complete all activities!
6. **Lesson Tasks (LT)** – Lesson tasks will consist of a variety of different real-world applications. You will keep your graded lesson tasks in the “Lesson Tasks” section of your binder.
7. **Culminating Performance Tasks (CPT)** – At the end of each unit you will have the opportunity to work on larger assignments/projects that pull together information and concepts. Some examples of CPT’s include: Creating your own political party and Planning a Trip/Vacation.
8. **Quizzes/Tests** – Quizzes will be given at the end of each lesson and usually consist approximately 10 multiple choice questions, matching, and/or fill in the blanks. Quizzes are then compiled into your Unit Test. There will not be any questions on a unit test that you have not seen already in the form of a quiz or writing prompt from previous lesson tasks. Hopefully, that helps reduce any test anxiety you may have! Finally, you may RETAKE ANY QUIZ up to three times to earn a higher grade. You may NOT retake quizzes during my planning, your study hall or while I have another class. After school on Tuesday or Thursday’s is when you may retake quizzes. You may not retake tests!

Grading, Assessment, and Evaluation Procedures:

All assignments will be graded out of total points. Students will be assessed through the assignments outlined above.

Delmar Middle & High School Grading Scale

Grade	Percents	Grade	Percents	Grade	Percents	Grade	Percents
A+	98 – 100	B+	89 – 91	C+	80 – 82	D+	71 – 73
A	95 – 97	B	86 – 88	C	77 – 79	D	68 – 70
A -	92 – 94	B-	83 – 85	C-	74 – 76	D-	65 – 67
						F	Below 65

Materials provided by Teacher

All reading materials will be provided by the teacher.

Materials provided by Student

1. A Three-ringed binder (1 – 1 ½ inches)
2. Composition OR Spiral Notebook
3. Loose leaf paper
4. Dividers
5. Plenty of #2 pencils
6. Highlighters (*optional*)
7. Colored Pencils & hand held sharpener (*optional*)