

Civics

The fundamental test of a democracy is its capacity to “elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, (and) to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for all.”

Abraham Lincoln

The study of American Government is an essential component of democracy. Students in their senior year of high school are preparing for graduation and their formal introduction into the adult world. In an effort to prepare them, this course has been created. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the purposes, structure and functions of the American Government as it relates to the federal, state and local levels
- Understand the structure and purpose of constitutions as a means to limit power of government
- Understand the importance of citizenship and their rights and responsibilities as it relates to this privilege
- Understand how all members within a democracy has a duty to be involved in order to ensure the success of the nation
- Understand the complexities of the role the United States plays in Foreign Affairs

Course Content:

Civics is the 2nd course in the American Government class sequence. As such, students will find some repetition of basic concepts and information. However, this repetition is to secure a foundation of the basic structure of government and to broaden their knowledge base as it relates to local and state government. The course curriculum is based on the Michigan Civics Content Expectations. Course instruction is based on a variety of materials, no textbook will be used.

Units:

- Limited Government – MC3 curriculum, American Government Text Ch.24-25, other materials as created by instructor
- Citizenship in the United States – American Government Text Ch. 19-21, materials created by instructor
- United States Government in World Affairs – American Government Text 17,22 and 23, materials created by instructor
- Service Learning Project – Student created and implemented

Student Service Learning Project: All students must **complete this project in order to earn credit** in the course. Its purpose is to reinforce the concept that each citizen has responsibilities to their community, state, and country. Students will engage in tangible applications of this concept; how can a student give back to his/her community, and/or what responsibilities do they have as voters. Further information will be provided on another sheet.

Grading: It is my expectation that all work will be completed in this course. Assignments are created to teach students the information that is needed to succeed in this course. Failure to

complete assignments may inhibit students from acquiring the information that they need to be successful. To this end, students should be present in class. Although I will provide work for absent students, the discussion based structure of this course can't be recreated and delivered to absent students.

All work is graded using a point system, and then is weighted using the following system:

- ✓ Assessments (tests, quizzes, projects, papers) = 65 percent
- ✓ Final Exam = 20 percent
- ✓ Homework/Classwork = 15 percent

The grading scale is as follows:

Letter grade	Percent		Letter grade	Percent
A	93.5%		C	73.5
A-	89.5		C-	69.5
B+	86.5		D+	66.5
B	83.5		D	63.5
B-	79.5		D-	59.5
C+	76.5		E	0

Activities/Projects:

- Current Events: Students will be expected to complete a current events sheet each day. This sheet is picked up on Monday and turned in on Friday. Students will either hear about current events from other students or the CNN Student News show. It is then their responsibility to summarize the event and write a reaction. Students must also participate in class. Each week students are required to keep track of at least two ways they have participated in class. These are recorded on the back of the CE sheet. An extra participation can be done each week.
- Students will also be required to submit a current event into a drop box on Moodle each week on Monday. This article must be taken from one of the following newspaper websites (Detroit News, Detroit Free Press, USA Today, New York Times, Washington Post, Livonia Observer, etc). Submission is the website link.
- Service Learning Project: This project will be due by November 12, 2015 (NO EXCEPTIONS)
- Blogging: While this is still in development, I will from time to time post articles or topics/questions for which you will be required to respond.
- Unit Projects and Activities: Each unit has several projects/activities (bill writing, power points, neighborhood maps, letter to your representative)

Classwork/Assessment policies:

- ❖ Students are responsible for all work. If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to obtain and complete any assignments missed in a timely fashion. Work that is turned in late will be penalized with a reduction of 10 percent for each day it is late, with a maximum of a 40 percent reduction.

- ❖ Only one test may be retaken. Students should prepare for tests prior to the test date.
- ❖ Students should monitor their progress on Student Connect. Parents should use Parent Connect. All assignments are announced, and written on the whiteboard. All work should be kept in a folder by unit. These assignments and notes taken in class are a pseudo book and should be viewed as such. Any discrepancy between reported grades and a student's work should be brought to the teacher's attention immediately.

Teacher availability:

My workday is from 7a.m. to 3p.m. I am available to work with students before and after school. I also can be available by appointment. If you need to contact me do so at one of the following: cynthia.raby@clarenceschools.org ; (248)919-0408 ext.5123; 20155 Middlebelt Rd. Livonia, MI 48152.

Supplies needed:

1. A pen or pencil: (everyday) any color or type as long as I can read it and it is neat.
2. A notebook or binder: This will be used to create a textbook of sorts
3. A great attitude: school is what you help to make it. If you want to have fun while learning we will work together to achieve this goal.
4. A vision for your future: Start to plan now, it will be here soon.