

Virginia and United States Government Course Overview & Syllabus

(Per the Virginia Department of Education Standards: www.doe.virginia.gov)

Standards for Virginia and United States Government define the knowledge that enables citizens to participate effectively in civic and economic life. Students will apply social science skills as a foundation to examine fundamental constitutional principles, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the political culture, the policy-making process at each level of government, and the characteristics of the United States economy. The standards emphasize an understanding of the duties and responsibilities that facilitate thoughtful and effective participation in the civic life of an increasingly diverse democratic society. The standards also reflect the evolving political and economic roles of Virginia and the United States in the global community.

Civic education also must emphasize the intellectual skills required for responsible citizenship. Students will apply these skills as they extend their understanding of the essential knowledge defined by the standards for Virginia and United States Government.

Skills

GOVT.2 The student will apply social science skills to understand the political philosophies that shaped the development of Virginia and United States constitutional government by

- a) describing the development of Athenian democracy and the Roman republic to differentiate between a democracy and a republic;
- b) explaining the influence of the Magna Carta, the English Petition of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights;
- c) evaluating the writings of Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu;
- d) explaining the guarantee of the “rights of Englishmen” set forth in the charters of the Virginia Company of London;
- e) analyzing the natural rights philosophies expressed in the Declaration of Independence; and
- f) evaluating and explaining George Mason’s Virginia Declaration of Rights, Thomas Jefferson’s Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, and James Madison’s leadership role in securing adoption of the Bill of Rights by the First Congress.

GOVT.3 The student will apply social science skills to understand the concepts of democracy by

- a) recognizing the fundamental worth and dignity of the individual;
- b) recognizing the equality of all citizens under the law;
- c) recognizing what defines a citizen and how noncitizens can become citizens;
- d) recognizing majority rule and minority rights;
- e) recognizing the necessity of compromise; and
- f) recognizing the freedom of the individual.

GOVT.4 The student will apply social science skills to understand the Constitution of the United States by

- a) examining the ratification debates and *The Federalist*;

- b) evaluating the purposes for government stated in the Preamble;
- c) examining the fundamental principles upon which the Constitution of the United States is based, including the rule of law, consent of the governed, limited government, separation of powers, and federalism;
- d) defining the structure of the national government outlined in Article I, Article II, and Article III; and
- e) analyzing and explaining the amendment process.

GOVT.5 The student will apply social science skills to understand the federal system of government described in the Constitution of the United States by

- a) evaluating the relationship between the state government and the national government;
- b) examining the extent to which power is shared;
- c) identifying the powers denied state and national governments; and
- d) analyzing the ongoing debate that focuses on the balance of power between state and national governments.

GOVT.6 The student will apply social science skills to understand local, state, and national elections by

- a) describing the nomination and election process, including the organization and evolving role of political parties;
- b) examining campaign funding and spending, including the impact of Supreme Court decisions, the nationalization of campaign financing, and the role of issue groups;
- c) analyzing the influence of media coverage, campaign advertising, public opinion polls, social media, and digital communications on elections;
- d) investigating and explaining the impact of reapportionment and redistricting on elections and governance;
- e) describing how amendments have extended the right to vote; and
- f) analyzing voter turnout in local, state, and national elections.

GOVT.7 The student will apply social science skills to understand the organization and powers of the national government by

- a) examining the legislative, executive, and judicial branches;
- b) analyzing the relationships among the three branches in a system of checks and balances and separation of powers; and
- c) investigating and explaining the ways individuals and groups exert influence on the national government.

GOVT.8 The student will apply social science skills to understand the organization and powers of the state and local governments described in the Constitution of Virginia by

- a) examining the legislative, executive, and judicial branches;
- b) examining the structure and powers of local governments (county, city, and town);
- c) analyzing the relationship between state and local governments and the roles of regional authorities, governing boards, and commissions;
- d) investigating and explaining the ways individuals and groups exert influence on state and local governments; and

- e) evaluating the effectiveness of citizen efforts to influence decisions of state and local governments by examining historical or contemporary events.

GOVT.9 The student will apply social science skills to understand the process by which public policy is made by

- a) defining public policy and determining how to differentiate public and private action;
- b) examining different perspectives on the role of government;
- c) describing how the national government influences the public agenda and shapes public policy by examining examples such as the Equal Rights Amendment, the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, and Section 9524 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965;
- d) describing how the state and local governments influence the public agenda and shape public policy;
- e) investigating and evaluating the process by which policy is implemented by the bureaucracy at each level;
- f) analyzing how the incentives of individuals, interest groups, and the media influence public policy; and
- g) devising a course of action to address local and/or state issues.

GOVT.10 The student will apply social science skills to understand the federal judiciary by

- a) describing the organization, jurisdiction, and proceedings of federal courts;
- b) evaluating how the Marshall Court established the Supreme Court as an independent branch of government through its opinion in *Marbury v. Madison*;
- c) describing how the Supreme Court decides cases;
- d) comparing the philosophies of judicial activism and judicial restraint; and
- e) investigating and evaluating how the judiciary influences public policy by delineating the power of government and safeguarding the rights of the individual.

GOVT.11 The student will apply social science skills to understand civil liberties and civil rights by

- a) examining the Bill of Rights, with emphasis on First Amendment freedoms;
- b) analyzing due process of law expressed in the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments;
- c) explaining how the Supreme Court has applied most of the protections of the Bill of Rights to the states through a process of selective incorporation;
- d) investigating and evaluating the balance between individual liberties and the public interest; and
- e) examining how civil liberties and civil rights are protected under the law.

GOVT.12 The student will apply social science skills to understand the role of the United States in a changing world by

- a) describing the responsibilities of the national government for foreign policy and national security;
- b) assessing the role of national interest in shaping foreign policy and promoting world peace; and
- c) examining the relationship of Virginia and the United States to the global economy, including trends in international trade.

GOVT.13 The student will apply social science skills to understand how world governments and economies compare and contrast with the government and the economy in the United States by

- a) describing the distribution of governmental power;
- b) explaining the relationship between the legislative and executive branches;
- c) comparing and contrasting the extent of participation in the political process; and
- d) comparing and contrasting economic systems.

GOVT.14 The student will apply social science skills to understand economic systems by

- a) identifying the basic economic questions encountered by all economic systems;
- b) comparing the characteristics of traditional, free market, command, and mixed economies, as described by Adam Smith and Karl Marx; and
- c) evaluating the impact of the government's role in the economy on individual economic freedoms.

GOVT.15 The student will apply social science skills to understand the role of government in the Virginia and United States economies by

- a) describing the provision of government goods and services that are not readily produced by the market;
- b) describing government's establishment and maintenance of the rules and institutions in which markets operate, including the establishment and enforcement of property rights, contracts, consumer rights, labor-management relations, environmental protection, and competition in the marketplace;
- c) investigating and describing the types and purposes of taxation that are used by local, state, and federal governments to pay for services provided by the government;
- d) analyzing how Congress can use fiscal policy to stabilize the economy;
- e) describing the effects of the Federal Reserve's monetary policy on price stability, employment, and the economy; and
- f) evaluating the trade-offs in government decisions.

GOVT.16 The student will apply social science skills to understand that in a democratic republic, thoughtful and effective participation in civic life is characterized by

- a) exercising personal character traits such as trustworthiness, responsibility, and honesty;
- b) obeying the law and paying taxes;
- c) serving as a juror;
- d) participating in the political process and voting in local, state, and national elections;
- e) performing public service;
- f) keeping informed about current issues;
- g) respecting differing opinions and the rights of others;
- h) practicing personal and fiscal responsibility;
- i) demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that foster the responsible and respectful use of digital media; and
- j) practicing patriotism

Online Resources

<https://www.virtualvirginia.org/>

Google Classroom

IXL

HMH

ZOOM

Google Slides

Google Drive & Chrome

Google Meets

Google Hangouts

Required Materials

- Notebook
- Internet Connection
- Laptop, Tablet or smart phone

Student Expectations for Virtual Learning

Students will continue to be held accountable to the BCPS Code of Conduct during this time of online learning, as they would if they were attending face-to-face instruction. However, it is important to identify specific circumstances that should be highlighted when working in a digital environment.

- Attend all meetings on time and attend to your daily schedule.
- Complete and submit all assignments on time.
- Participate daily in all activities.
- Work to the best of your ability.
- Communicate with your parents and teachers for additional support.
- Remain respectful. Use proper language at all times, dress like you are coming to school, and practice good hygiene.
- Choose an appropriate place for virtual learning that is free of distraction.
- Ensure that all devices are taken care of, charged, and ready for virtual learning.
- Keep all passwords and login information easily accessible and secure.
- Student is expected to log-in to virtual session within 10 minutes of class starting

- Student's video will remain on at all times during live virtual sessions.
- Speak clearly, concisely and slowly
- No eating or drinking during the session
- Do not use cell phone (unless it's being used for the virtual session)
- Keep the mute button accessible
- Photos, videos, and/or screenshots of class sessions are not allowed

Parent Expectations

- Choose an appropriate place for virtual learning that is free of distraction.
- Ensure that all devices are taken care of, charged, and ready for virtual learning.
- Check assignments and due dates daily to ensure participation and that all activities have been completed.
- Offer assistance as needed and requested during active virtual sessions.
- Keep all passwords and login information easily accessible and secure.
- Reach out to faculty and staff for assistance with virtual learning difficulties, concerns, and/or questions.
- Ensure that students adhere to daily schedules and complete all assignments and activities on time.
- Sign off on all assignments and activities.
- Parents are expected to supervise and monitor their student's progress throughout the duration of the course, just as you would in a regular learning setting. This can be accomplished by accessing the parental account periodically to monitor student progress.
- Parents should support Academic Integrity. Academic Integrity is one of our core values and one of the most important areas of focus as a learning organization. Students with Academic Integrity make decisions based on ethics and values that will prepare them to be productive and ethical citizens.
- You may contact your child's teacher directly via email and/or Google voice to answer questions about the course that you may have. When a parent/guardian has a concern about the child's performance or behavior, the parent/guardian should set up a conference with the child's teacher.

Attendance

We will track attendance for face-to-face instruction using normal procedures. We have to also track attendance for virtual learning.

1. Verification of physical existence/physical attendance (taken daily).
2. Students attend and participate in the virtual classroom daily.

3. Completion of daily assignments will be used to determine attendance.
4. Tardies to virtual class
 - a. Consequences:
 - i. 1 tardy- warning
 - ii. 2 tardies- call home
 - iii. 3 tardies- referred to administration
5. Absences
 - a. Parents will notify the teacher in writing about their child's absence from the virtual setting on the day of the absence (email or Remind text)
 - b. Teachers will notify parents if their child does not attend and the teacher was not notified by a parent.

Due to different family situations, some students may not be able to participate in recorded or live virtual sessions at the designated times. Students are still expected to sign-in to class each day via an electronic attendance sheet (Google Form) and complete the assignment for the day. If the child experiences internet difficulty and is unable to complete the assignment, a parent should notify the teacher of the situation.

Grading

Due to the changes for this upcoming year, we have modified the grading practices to put less emphasis on tests and assessments.

Categories and Weights

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| 1. | Tests, Projects, Presentations of Learning,
Research Products, Major Assessments | 25% |
| 2. | Classwork, Daily Assignments, Quizzes | 75% |