U.S. Government is a state-mandated, one-semester course which explores the question: “What is effective engagement?” The course is structured to promote your interaction with other members of the class as you examine political materials, methods, and problems. You are expected to show growth in your knowledge, understanding, and application of the subject matter and to demonstrate your problem-solving, decision making and critical thinking skills.

Central Questions for the Course:

1. What is the role of government in a democratic republic?
2. What are the rights of citizens in a democratic republic?
3. How is conflict addressed in a democratic republic?
4. How is power distributed in a democratic republic?
5. What is effective engagement?

Course Units/Questions:

1. **The Political Spectrum**: What is the balance between individual rights and the common good?
2. **Elections**: How does my vote count?
3. **Legislating Change**: Who has the power and why?
4. **Democracy in Action**: How can abuse of power be avoided?
5. **Final Project**: Effective Engagement-What are the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions of an effective engager in a democratic republic?

Process Objectives:

By the end of the course, you will have demonstrated your ability to:

1. Ask questions and evaluate political resources.
2. Do research and identify resources.
3. Organize and present material.
4. Identify and examine values and value conflicts.
5. Explain cause and effect relationships.
6. Recognize and propose inferences and generalizations.
7. Know and be able to apply a decision making model to problem solving.
8. Resolve conflicts/problems in a logical manner.
9. Analyze and interpret maps, graphs charts and tables.
10. Work with others in a responsible, cooperative manner.

Activities:
The major activities of the course include:

1. Writing (journals, newspaper articles, essays, etc.)
2. Critical reading
3. Speaking
4. Research
5. Simulations, debates, role-playing
6. Class discussions
7. Multi-media analysis
8. Quizzes, tests and performance evaluations
9. Lecture and note-taking
10. successful completion of portfolio

Evaluation:
Students are graded on a total point system. Points can be earned by the activities listed above. Students who receive 100-90% of the possible points will earn an A, 89-80% an B, 79-70% a C, 69-60% a D, below 60% and F.

Attendance and Make-Up Work
Because a large portion of your evaluation is in-class performance, absences will hurt your progress and final grade. Each student is wholly responsible for completing work which can be made up. Please see me before or after school for the assignments. Upon return, a student has five days to turn in any missing work for full credit. Any work turned in after that time is worth half-credit and can only be turned in until papers are passed back.

Tardiness
I do not expect that tardiness will be a problem. The school policy is two tardies, parents are notified, three or more, referral to the Dean’s office.

Homework
I realize that sometimes events happen that will keep you from completing homework assignments. Therefore, you will be provided a Business Card that will allow you to be late (at no penalty) for five assignments. You can use the Late Assignment Card for late assignments, but these assignments must be turned in at the end of the specific grading period (every 4.5 weeks) they were assigned in. If you do not to use the pass, you will be awarded 5 points extra credit for each late assignment NOT used. So plan wisely and do not lose your card because they are irreplaceable and non-transferable.

Have a problem?
I am available during the day and before and after school in the room 185. Please let me know if you are coming before or after school through my email jchisholm@d94.org.

Expectations
I totally expect all students to act responsibly, strive to do their best, interact respectfully with classmates and teachers and achieve person growth and success during our time together.

Binder
Every student is required to purchase a 2 inch minimum hardcover binder specifically for this class. You will keep the majority of your work in this binder. You will also keep all your portfolio assignments in your binder.

John Chisholm, US Government Teacher
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Room: 185