U.S. Government is a state-mandated, one-semester course which explores the question: “What is effective engagement?” The nationally recognized hands-on 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 (letters, speeches, papers, 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, which means no weighted categories. Points can be earned by the activities listed above. Students who receive 100-90% of the possible points will earn an A, 89-80% a B, 79-70% a C, 69-60% a D, below 60% and F.

Students are also REQUIRED to show mastery on 8 assignments for the semester. To meet mastery an 80% or above is required. If a student completes the mastery assignment but does not meet the 80% mastery requirement, the assignment must be completed again and resubmitted until mastery is met. This is a requirement to pass the class, NO EXCEPTIONS!

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, check our Google Classroom and class mailbox for the assignments, and email me for any specific questions on missed work.

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
The school policy on tardies will be enforced. Please see the Student Handbook for tardies and consequences.

Homework
Sometimes events happen that will keep you from completing homework assignments. Therefore, you will be provided a Late Assignment 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.

Participation
This class is designed for you to be an active and engaged student in class to prepare you to be an active and engaged participant in our democracy. It requires you to not only be in class but to be a member of groups, to express your opinions, to share your knowledge, to discuss and debate topics and make informed decisions. Students will be required to follow specific etiquette for online and in class discussions and debate. This class also allows you to develop your leadership skills and you will be rewarded for it. You will be asked to reflect on your civic engagement following each unit of study.
Have a problem or need some assistance?
I am available during the school day during my prep periods and before and after school in the room 186 or Socal Studies Office Room 199. Please let me know if you are coming before or after school through my email cfikis@d94.org.

Expectations
I totally expect all students to act responsibly, come to class prepared mentally and physically, strive to do their best, interact respectfully with classmates and teachers and achieve personal growth and success during our time together. This is a hands-on and interactive course and I encourage active participation. Civil discourse is expected as we debate some controversial and personal topics. I strongly encourage all my students to take the opportunity to serve as leaders and develop their skills throughout this legislative simulation semester.

Technology
Every day you should have your Chromebook in class and charged as it will be used frequently. There is no need to use your phone in class, and it should be turned off and kept stored away during class time. Also, headphones (including wireless ones) should not be in your ears during class unless I specifically stated they can be used for educational purposes. Don’t let technology be a distraction and negatively impact your performance and participation in the class. Referrals will be written for students who do not follow this classroom expectation.

Binder
Every student is required to purchase a 1-2 inch 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 as evidence of completion of mastery assignments.

To ensure that you fully understand the expectations of this course, a course agreement must be signed by you and will be kept on file.

I look forward to an excellent and engaging Fall 2019 Semester!

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