

American Government* – Credit Recovery

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

American Government is the study of the historical backgrounds, governing principles, and institutions of the government of the United States. The focus is on the principles and beliefs upon which the United States was founded and on the structure, functions, and powers of government at the national, state, and local levels. The principles of popular sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, republicanism, federalism, and individual rights will be examined as will the roles of individuals and groups in the American political system. Students will compare the American system of government with other modern systems and assess the strengths and problems associated with the American system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the various forms of government found around the world
- Compare and contrast the workings of a direct and representative democracy
- Understand the structure and contents of the Constitution
- Analyze the six major principles of the Constitution
- Research a failed evaluate whether it could pass in modern times
- Understand the structure of Congress and how Congressional elections work
- Analyze the structure and functions of the executive branch of government
- Understand the structure of the federal court system
- Analyze the civil liberties granted to Americans in the Bill of Rights and the impact it has
- Understand the role political parties play in the American electoral system
- Evaluate the workings of a two party system and the role of minor parties in that system
- Explain the steps a candidate must go through to gain his/her party's nomination and become a presidential candidate
- Explain the workings of the Electoral College and determine how a candidate can win the popular vote and lose the election
- Analyze the impact of the media on presidential elections
- Evaluate the role interest groups play in American politics
- Explain the differences between communism, capitalism and socialism
- Explain the role of the Federal Reserve in determining monetary policy
- Explain where federal revenue comes from
- Understand the expenditures within the federal budget

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE LENGTH: One semester

REQUIRED TEXT: None

* = One semester (.5 credit) course

American Government* – Credit Recovery (continued)

COURSE OUTLINE:

UNIT I: Introduction

- Section 1 - What is Government?
- Section 2 - Philosophy of American Democracy
- Section 3 - Order before the Revolution
- Section 4 - Establishment of our First Government

UNIT II: Constitutional Principles

- Section 1 - Structure of the Constitution
- Section 2 - Principles of the Constitution
- Section 3 - Judicial Review
- Section 4 - Making Changes to the Constitution

UNIT III: Legislative and Executive Branches

- Section 1 - The Structure and Powers of Congress
- Section 2 - The Structure and Powers of the President
- Section 3 - Departments and Organization of the Branches
- Section 4 - How a Bill Becomes a Law

UNIT IV: The Judicial Branch and Civil Law

- Section 1 - Structure of the Court System
- Section 2 - History of the Supreme Court
- Section 3 - Civil Liberties (include case law)
- Section 4 - Civil Rights (include case law)

UNIT V: Political Participation

- Section 1 - Political Parties
- Section 2 - Nominations and Campaigns
- Section 3 - Elections
- Section 4 - Individual Political Participation

UNIT VI: Economics and International Relations

- Section 1 - Economic Systems and the U.S. Economy
- Section 2 - Revenue and Expenditures
- Section 3 - Budget Making Process
- Section 4 - Foreign Policy

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