

***Saddlebrook Preparatory School***  
***American Government***

**Saddlebrook Course Number: 38**

**Subject Area: *Social Studies***

**Florida DOE Course Number: 2106310**

**Course Title: *American Government***

**Credit: 0.5**

**Will meet graduation requirement for American Government:**

**A. Major Concepts/Content.**

The purpose of this course is to enable students to gain an understanding of American government and political behavior that is essential for effective citizenship and active involvement in a democratic American society.

The content should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Interrelationship between American government and the American economic system.
- Documents that shape our political traditions, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Federalist Papers.
- Functions of the three branches of government at the local, state and national levels.
- Florida government, including the State constitution.
- Municipal and county government.
- The evolving role of political parties and interest groups in determining government policy.
- How rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democratic state have evolved and been interpreted.
- Contemporary political issues.
- Career opportunities available in government services.
- Importance of civic participation in the democratic political process.

- Role of women and diverse cultural groups in the development of our political system.

This course shall integrate the Goal 3 Student Performance Standards of the Florida System of School Improvement and Accountability as appropriate to the content and processes of the subject matter.

**B. Special Note.** Students earning credit in this course may not earn credit in American Government Honors.

**C. Course Requirements.** These requirements include the benchmarks from the *Sunshine State Standards* that is most relevant to this course.

**D. Course Goals.** Successful performance in the course will enable the students to:

- Understand values of the American Constitution and Democracy.
- Understand how the political processes affect the daily lives in United States.
- Learn how to get involve in the political process, and how this participation can help shape government decisions.
- Learn how to apply critical thinking skills, writing and debating about domestic and international issues.

**After successfully completing this course, the student will:**

**1. Compare the structure and functions of government at all levels: National, state (Florida), municipal and county.**

- understands the nature of political authority and the nature of the relationship between government and civil society in limited governments (e.g., constitutional democracies) and unlimited governments (e.g., totalitarian regimes).
- understands the ideas that led to the creation of limited government in the United States (e.g., ideas of natural rights philosophy, and the concept of popular sovereignty).
- understand how the overall design and specific features of the Constitution prevent the abuse of power by aggregating power at the national, state, and local levels; dispersing power among different levels of government; and using a system of checks and balances (e.g., federalism).

**2. Analyze the basic principles of political organization embodied in the Constitution of the United States and the State Constitution of Florida.**

- understand how the overall design and specific features of the Constitution prevent the abuse of power by aggregating power at the national, state, and local levels; dispersing power among different levels of government; and using a system of checks and balances (e.g., federalism).

**3. Compare the decision-making process at all levels of the three branches of government.**

- understand how the overall design and specific features of the Constitution prevent the abuse of power by aggregating power at the national, state, and local levels; dispersing power among different levels of government; and using a system of checks and balances (e.g., federalism).

**4. Examine the influence of individuals and interest groups in the governmental decision-making process.**

- understands the development of federal civil rights and voting rights since the 1950s and the social and political implications of these events.
- understand the role of special interest groups, political parties, the media, public opinion, and majority/minority conflicts on the development of public policy and the political process.

**5. Trace the evolution of the relationship between majority rule and individual rights.**

- understands significant aspects of the economic, political, and social systems of ancient Greece and the cultural contributions of that civilization.
- understands the significant features of the political, economic, and social systems of ancient Rome and the cultural legacy of that civilization.
- understands transformations in the political and social realms from the Age of Absolutism through the Glorious Revolution to the French Revolution.
- understands how personal, political, and economic rights are secured by constitutional government and by such means as the rule of law, checks and balances, an independent judiciary, and a vigilant citizenry.

**6. Analyze the effectiveness of our federal system of government in addressing domestic and foreign problems.**

(**Note:** In this course, major historical events will be used to illustrate important political decisions and policies.)

- understands the political, military, and economic events since the 1950s that have had a significant impact on international relations.
- understands the significant political events that took place during the early national period.
- understands significant events leading up to the United States involvement in World War I and the political, social, and economic results of that conflict in Europe and the United States.
- knows the origins and effects of the involvement of the United States in World War II.
- understands the political events that shaped the development of United States foreign policy since World War II and know the characteristics of that policy.
- understands the development of federal civil rights and voting rights since the 1950s and the social and political implications of these events.
- knows significant political events and issues that have shaped domestic policy decisions in contemporary America.

**7. Examine the relationship between American political traditions and the American way of life (i.e., social, economic and religious ideals).**

- understands social transformations that took place in the 1920s and 1930s, principal political and economic factors that led to the Great Depression, and the legacy of the Depression in American society.
- understands how cultural and technological characteristics can link or divide regions.
- understands the argument that personal, political, and economic rights reinforce each other.
- understands how government taxes, policies, and programs affect individuals, groups, businesses, and regions.

**8. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of participation in community service and political activities.**

- develops and defines his or her own political beliefs and tendencies.
- assesses the role that his or her own political behavior plays in determining the flow of power through our political system and for resolving conflicts in a pluralistic society.
- understands issues of personal concern: the rights and responsibilities of the individual under the U.S. Constitution; the importance of civil liberties; the role of conflict resolution and compromise; and issues involving ethical behavior in politics.
- understands the distinction between citizens and non citizens (aliens) and the process by which aliens may become citizens.
- knows the points at which citizens can monitor or influence the process of public policy formation.

**9. Examine career opportunities and requirements in government service.**

**10. Apply research, study, critical thinking, and decision-making skills and demonstrate the use of new and emerging technology in problem solving.**

- evaluates conflicting sources and materials in the interpretation of a historical event or episode.
- use chronology, sequencing, patterns, and periodization to examine interpretations of an event.
- use mental maps of physical and human features of the world to answer complex geographic questions.
- select and use strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read, including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.
- refines vocabulary for interpersonal, academic, and workplace situations, including figurative, idiomatic, and technical meanings.
- select and use appropriate study and research skills and tools according to the type of information being gathered or organized, including almanacs, government publications, microfiche, news sources, and information services.

- analyzes the validity and reliability of primary source information and use the information appropriately.
- synthesizes information from multiple sources to draw conclusions.
- write text, notes, outlines, comments, and observations that demonstrate comprehension and synthesis of content, processes, and experiences from a variety of media.
- organizes information using appropriate systems.
- selects and uses a variety of electronic media, such as the Internet, information services, and desktop-publishing software programs, to create, revise, retrieve, and verify information.

#### **E. ESOL Modifications.**

- Small group and one on one ESOL instruction and content support from ESOL teacher.
- Extended time on assignment and assessments.
- Use of bilingual dictionary or glossary where appropriate (i.e.: not on a definitions test)
- Content read and reworded, adapted to the student's proficiency level.
- Questions read and reworded.
- Separate testing location.
- Proficiency level taken into account on assessment of grammar and mechanics on written assignments; however progress is expected over the course of the year.