

# U.S. Government & Civics Syllabus

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**Course Outcome:**

*Students will study the purposes, principles, and practices of American government as established by the Constitution. Students are expected to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens and how to exercise these rights and responsibilities in local, state, and national government. Students will learn the structure and processes of the government of the state of Tennessee and various local governments. The reading of primary source documents is a key feature of United States Government and Civics standards.*

<http://knoxschools.org/cms/lib7/TN01917079/Centricity/Domain/1013/2015-16%20Revised%20United%20States%20Government%20and%20Civics%20Curriculum.pdf>

**Instruction:**

The following topics will be covered:

<b>Topic: Principles of United States Government</b>	<b>Percent of time: 15% (6 Days)</b>
<i>Overview: Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of the American government as expressed in the Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.</i>	
<b>Topic: Branches of Government</b>	<b>Percent of time: 10% (4 Days)</b>
<i>Overview: Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the Constitution.</i>	
<b>Topic: The Supreme Court and the Constitution</b>	<b>Percent of time: 10% (4 Days)</b>
<i>Overview: Students summarize landmark United States Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.</i>	

<b>Topic: Federal Power</b>	<b>Percent of time: 10% (4 Days)</b>
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students analyze the scope and function of federal power.</i>	
Topic: Elections and the Political Process	Percent of time: 15% (6 Days)
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.</i>	
Topic: Influence of Media	Percent of time: 5% (2 Days)
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students evaluate the influence of the media on American political life.</i>	
<b>Topic: Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens</b>	<b>Percent of time: 5% (5 Days)</b>
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students evaluate the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.</i>	
Topic: Fundamentals of a Free Society	Percent of time: 5% (2 Days)
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students evaluate the fundamental values and principles of civil society, their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.</i>	
<b>Topic: Civil Rights</b>	<b>Percent of time: 7.5% (3 Days)</b>
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students analyze the development and evolution of civil rights for women and minorities and how these advances were made possible by expanding rights under the Constitution.</i>	
<b>Topic: Federal Government and the Economy</b>	<b>Percent of time: 10% (4 Days)</b>
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students analyze the influence of the federal government on the American economy.</i>	

<b>Topic: TN State and Local Government</b>	<b>Percent of time: 7.5% (3 Days)</b>
<b>Overview:</b> <i>Students identify and explain the structure and functions of government at the state and local levels in Tennessee.</i>	

**Materials Needed for Course:**

It is important that you come prepared to class every day! You will need pens, paper, a 1 ½ inch 3 ring binder, & tab dividers for your notebook.

Kleenex, hand sanitizer, and Clorox wipes are always appreciated!!

**Course Fees:**

There is a \$5.00 fee for materials used during the course.

**Resources:**

- ❖ Magruder’s **American Government and Civics** (Textbook)  
**\*\*Any student who checks out a textbook will be held financially responsible if that textbook is not returned by the end of the course.**
- ❖ Primary and Secondary sources; both print and internet
- ❖ Video clips to supplement the textbook
- ❖ Clips from news stories

**Alternate Assignments/Activities:**

If you do not approve of a specific resource listed in this syllabus, please make your request to me in writing and an alternative assignment and/or materials will be provided. The request should include your name, the child’s name, and specific activity/materials in which you do not want your child to participate or to which you do not want them exposed, and the nature of your objection.

## Assessment

### Skills Assessment

In this course, we will be covering a number of topics pertaining to world history & geography. You will be tested over each of these topics throughout the course. Testing, or formal summative assessments, may include unit tests, quizzes, or writing assignments. In addition to these formal assessments, I conduct informal or formative assessments through in-class assignments (group work, individual assignments, etc.), class discussions, and class participation.

### Grading:

Grades are calculated using total points. Rubrics will be used for essays and projects (both individual and group projects). These will be provided to the students when the assignment is given.

➤ Homework/daily work	<b>20%</b>
➤ Formative Assessments (This includes section tests & quizzes)	<b>25%</b>
➤ Summative Assessments (This includes unit tests & projects)	<b>30%</b>
➤ EOC	<b>25%</b>

### Grade Scale:

This course follows the Knox County Grading Scale:

93-100	A
85-92	B
75-84	C
70-74	D
69 and below	F

### Makeup Work:

Students are responsible for making up work they have missed while they have been out of class. Absences include illness, family emergency, field trips, sporting events, and any time spent out of class. Knox County policy states that students have three days after returning to school to inquire about missing work. Students will have one week to submit missing assignments due to an absence.

**Late Work:**

Homework and daily work is due on the dates that are given when assigned. Late work will receive a 10% penalty for each day that it is late.

**Aspen Posting:**

Grades on Aspen will be updated weekly. I encourage parents to check Aspen frequently and feel free to discuss any concerns regarding their child's grades.

**General Expectations:****Student Expectations**

**Attendance:** Attendance is extremely important! If you are not present, you are missing out on valuable learning opportunities. In order to do well in the class, you must be here!!

**Bathroom Policy:** Once the first bell rings and class has started, students will not be allowed to leave the classroom during the first 15 minutes of class nor during the last 15 minutes of class. This is an Austin-East policy and is strictly enforced. Bathroom passes may be used for EMERGENCIES only!! Students are expected to use the restroom during class changes, not during class. A nurse's note is required for students who need to use the restroom frequently.

**Tardy Policy:** To assist in lowering student tardies, AEHS has created an additional warning bell set to ring one minute before classes start. Students who are not in the room AND seated in their seats when the second bell rings will be considered tardy. Three tardies constitutes as a write up.

**Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices:** Students are permitted to use their cell phones and other electronic devices during non-instructional times between classes and lunch. For this reason, a strict "Out of Sight, Out of Hearing" policy has been created to protect the learning environment. There will be no exceptions or any further warnings.

**Ms. Watson's Expectations:**

1. Respect me.
2. Respect yourself.
3. Respect each other.

\*\*\*All Austin-East school rules and procedures will be fully enforced in addition to these basic expectations. Further class expectations will be explained in detail.

### **Consequences:**

Austin-East has a well-defined discipline plan and will be followed as written.

### **Teacher Expectations**

*Communication:* The best way to reach me is through my email jenna.watson2@knoxschools.org. I check my email multiple times throughout the day and will respond as quickly as possible. You may also call the school phone at **594-3792** and leave a message for me. If you would like to schedule a conference, please set that appointment up through the guidance department.

*Tutoring/Extra Help:* I am available for extra help after school if notified in advance. Please bear in mind that I have 2 small children and will probably not be able to stay late without having advance notice.

### **Honor Code/ Plagiarism Policy**

*Hodges Harbrace Handbook*, 15<sup>th</sup> edition:

“Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else’s ideas, research, or opinion as your own without proper documentation, even if it has been rephrased. It includes, but is not limited to the following:

1. Copying verbatim all or part of another’s written work
2. Using phrases, figures, or illustrations without citing the source
3. Paraphrasing ideas, conclusions, or research without citing the source
4. Using all or part of a literary plot, poem, or film without attributing the work to it’s creator.”

### **Consequences of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a form of stealing and academic fraud. Students who are found guilty of plagiarism will have the option of either redoing the assignment within a specified time period and accepting a grade letter drop or taking a zero on the assignment. Parents should be involved in making the decision.

**Board Policy I-431 Issued: 7/95 Revised 6/08**

The Board affirms that it is essential that the teaching about religion—and not of a religion be conducted in a factual, objective, and respectful manner in accordance with the following:

Music, art, literature, or drama with a religious theme or basis are permitted as part of the curriculum for school-sponsored activities and programs, provided it is essential to the learning experience in the various fields of study and is presented objectively; The emphasis on religious themes in the arts, literature, and history shall be only as extensive as necessary for a balanced and comprehensive study of these areas. Such studies shall never foster any particular religious tenets or demean any religious beliefs; and KCS C & I Department PK-12 Syllabus/Parent Communication Guidelines Page 3 of 3 Student-initiated expressions to questions or assignments which reflect their beliefs or non-beliefs about a religious theme shall be accommodated. For example, students are free to express religious belief or non-belief in compositions, art forms, music, speech, and debate.