

# Government

Government continues the three-year Social Science sequence in Grade 12. Students have the option of selecting from two course levels – College Preparatory (CP) and Advanced Placement (AP) -- for each of the required courses leading to graduation.

Careful consideration should be given to course selection. Take in to account your interests, other courses and the time required for these courses and extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, since the course content for the CP Government course differs significantly from AP Government, once the decision has been made to attempt an AP course, it may not be feasible to transfer out of the course later in the semester.

## College Preparatory Government

CP Government is a one-semester high school course that providing an in-depth study of the operations and principles of American democracy with a basic overview of state and local institutions.

### Summary.

- The Constitution and the Bill of Rights;
- The Courts and the governmental process;
- Government today: The Legislative and Executive branches;
- Federalism: State and Local government;
- Comparative Governments
- Contemporary Issues in Government

### Textbooks:

- West's American Government
- American Government:: Readings and Cases, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Woll
- American Political Dictionary, 11<sup>th</sup> ed. HBJ, Plano

### Homework:

- Typically, students in CP Government can expect about 1 hour homework per class period.
- Projects may necessitate extra time and may add an additional 1-2 hours study time to an assignment.
- Students are expected to read the newspaper and to stay current on events that will allow them to apply lessons in a way that makes government relevant.
- Approximately 1-2 documents a week
- Approximately 10-15 terms and concepts a week

### Exams And Quizzes:

- Approximately 1 quiz a week
- Approximately 5-6 Unit Exams during the semester
- Exams are a combination of objective, essay, and ID (identification)

#### **Samples Exam Questions:**

- The purpose of the Bill Of Rights is to
  - a) Guarantee important people their positions.
  - b) Protect minority rights from the will of the majority.
  - c) Protect the national government from the States
  - d) Help the majority effect its will.

**Essay:** Presidential approval ratings fluctuate over the course of each presidential administration.

- (a) Identify two factors that decrease presidential approval ratings, and explain why each factor has that effect.
- (b) Identify two factors that increase presidential approval ratings, and explain why each factor has that effect.

**ID:** Define and discuss the significance for each of the following:

- (a) Balancing Doctrine
- (b) Judicial Review

#### **Projects**

- One project each quarter:
- Position Paper
- Book critique
- Debates Bill writing
- Letter to the Editor/Editorials

#### **Student Expectations:**

- Attend class and participate daily
- Make-up assignments on their own when absent
- Ask questions and self-advocate when confused
- Analyze and think critically

**Student profile.** It is our desire to see you and your parents make the most informed decision regarding their selection courses in the Social Science Department. Please review the following comparisons and ask yourself, **"Which column best describes me/my student now?"**

### **College Preparatory Government**

- May or may not have a strong interest in the curricular area
- Primary interests lie in other curricular areas—Science, Math, Arts, English
- Reading and writing proficiency at or below grade level
- Shows competency or requires guidance in drawing connections across time and problems involving complex, critical thinking and non-routine problems.
- Does not read material with a critical eye and lacks interest or has difficulty formulating questions that express critical understanding of material.
- May read for pleasure, but generally only reads subject-related material when assigned for class.

\*To succeed in AP classes, students should consider additional factors. Many students are driven to attempt advanced courses for the wrong reasons, e.g., “My friends are in the class,” or “I must have this class to get into college,” or “I need to boost my GPA,” etc. They suffer undue stress and have difficulty managing their homework and activities. Because of the difference in courses, students may not be able to change their schedule after the drop period and may stay in the AP class and earn a low grade. Please review these recommendations and be prepared to make a commitment for an academic year.