**Mohawk High School 2019-2020 Course Syllabus – *United States* *Government***

**Location: Room H113**

**Instructor: Henry B. Stobbs, MFA**

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Ten reasons to study government and civics:

1. To understand the influence government has on your daily life.
2. To understand why the government produces the policies it does.
3. To understand and interpret current events in a rapidly changing world.
4. To understand how the United States attempts to resolve conflicts and seeks to establish order and security.
5. To develop the ability to solve problems and make good decisions when current events and economic and social issues affect you directly.
6. To apply your understanding when voting, petitioning, and speaking publicly.
7. To deal with the government effectively in your future profession.
8. To prepare for a career that requires a strong knowledge of government.
9. To use your understanding of government to participate and bring about change in your community or country.
10. To contribute to the success of a polity that depends on your understanding and active participation.

The fact that citizens of our nation govern themselves at national, state and local levels of government is the basis for this course, which will introduce you to the basic concepts of American government, the American political process, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. It is a yearlong course offered primarily to Junior students. It is aligned to the high school standards in American Government adopted in 2018 and is required for graduation (unless a substitute course is taken through College Credit Plus or online. The course includes a civic action component.

**Alignment**

This course addresses the following topics (see source document for content statement details):

* **Civic Involvemen**t: Students can engage societal problems and participate in opportunities to contribute to the common good through governmental and nongovernmental channels.
* **Civic Participation and Skills**: Democratic government is enhanced when individuals exercise the skills to effectively participate in civic affairs.
* **Basic Principles of the U.S. Constitution**: Principles related to representative democracy are reflected in the articles and amendments of the U.S. Constitution and provide structure for the government of the United States.
* **Structure and Functions of the Federal Government**: Three branches compose the basic structure of the federal government. Public policy is created through the making of laws, execution of the laws and the adjudication of disputes under the laws.
* **Role of the People**: The government of the United States protects the freedom of its people and provides opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process.
* **Ohio’s State and Local Governments**: The State of Ohio acts within the framework of the U.S. Constitution and extends powers and functions to local governments through its own constitution.
* **Governments and the Economy**: The actions of government play a major role in the flow of economic activity. Governments consume and produce goods and services. Fiscal and monetary policies, as well as economic regulations, provide the means for government intervention in the economy.

**Major Course Texts**

Arbetman, Lee, Megan L. Hanson, Richard C. Remy, Donald A. Ritchie, Lena M. Scott

And Megan L. Hanson. *United States Government*: *Our Democracy*.

Columbus: 2016, McGraw-Hill.

CivicEd.org. American Legacy*: The United States Constitution and other Essential*

*Documents*. Calabasas: 2015, Center for Civic Education.

Jarrett, Mark, James Killoran, and Stuart Zimmer. *Mastering Ohio’s American*

*Government Assessment*. Ronkonkoma: 2015, Jarrett Publishing.

**Additional Texts**

You will read the *Declaration of Independence*, *Constitution of the United States* and *Bill of Rights*, several critical essays from *The Federalist Papers and The Anti-Federalist Papers*, and other essential documents related to the foundation and evolution of the American regime.

You will read the 1851 *Constitution of the State of Ohio* and its amendments.

**Expectations for Students**

I expect you to understand that the business of learning is one that requires your full and active participation; I cannot open your head and pour knowledge into it. You will get out of this course what you put into it.

I expect you to complete all readings, to complete assignments in a professional manner, and to turn in your work on time. I will not accept late work, other than related to excused absences as outlined in Board policy, without first meeting with a parent or guardian (but, see homework policy). You may resubmit work one time during the quarter in which it was submitted. If it shows substantial improvement, I will re-grade it. I reserve the right to refuse for resubmission work that was not turned in on time or that was resubmitted in an unprofessional state.

I expect you to participate actively in the course, to make significant contributions to all lectures and seminar discussions, and to follow Socratic rules of discourse.

I expect you stay informed about current events.

I expect you to attend all classes to satisfy Mohawk attendance policy.

I expect you to maintain extensive e-mail communications with each other and with me, and to refer to the course web page frequently.

I expect you to use Chicago, MLA, or Turabian citation and formatting styles where appropriate and for you to properly and fully cite all statistics and ideas not your own.

I expect you to maintain the books I lend you for the next generation of government students, or to purchase them. This means that books must be covered and stored carefully.

I expect you to speak boldly, honestly, professionally, and respectfully about your concerns. This is a very serious course and if, once or twice, your emotions get the better of you, I will understand – just remember, that I am human, too.

I expect you to comport yourselves as upperclassmen and Mohawk Warriors.

I expect you to respect learning, others, self and property.

**Instructor Responsibilities**

I will endeavor to provide you a safe and meaningful learning environment.

I will plan and lead the course to the best of my ability and in compliance with Board of Education policy and State of Ohio requirements.

I will help you develop your skills as an entrepreneurial, self-directed learner.

I will assign your work an objective (to the extent that I am able), rubric-based grade.

I will provide you the information you need to meet course requirements. I will publish homework assignments and due dates in a lesson plan to be published at least every two weeks and revised as needed. I will publish this plan online as well as in the lesson plan book.

I will hold you to a challenging but fair standard of academic professionalism that will allow you to achieve the level of success for which you are willing to work.

I will make myself available to you by phone, e-mail or conference appointment to discuss your work.

I will return graded or reviewed assignments and formative assessments to you within a reasonable amount of time.

I will treat you as a colleague in learning, to the extent that you demonstrate academic and emotional maturity.

I will be honest with you about the quality of your work.

**Homework**

It is not possible to achieve a meaningful level of success in this course without devoting at least two hours each week to study. On the other hand, you as **an entrepreneurial, self-directed learner** are in the best position to determine when, where, how, and what to study. Toward that end, I will not assign specific homework except in an emergency. But you must earn a minimum of fifty self-directed learning points each quarter (weighted 2.5), of which no more than ten may be earned in the last week of the quarter. There is no limit to the number of points you may earn. You may not complete self-directed learning assignments in the government classroom without my express permission. I will provide you a list of standing opportunities for self-directed study, and I will regularly use the lesson plan to offer one or more suggestions. You are free to complete one, all, or none of these assignments. If you ask, **I will offer you advice** based on your academic strengths, weaknesses, and interests. I will as promptly as possible grade work that is turned in in the correct format, professionally completed, and that supports course standards. **I will not accept work** that is folded, torn, illegibly written, missing a header, untitled, or with evidence of it being torn from a spiral binder (those ugly little tags on the edge). I will return it to you ungraded. Failure to meet your quota will likely result in a grade of ‘F’ for the quarter. I will modify self-directed learning quotas for students with learning differences based on the advice of their learning coaches.

**Major Course Requirements:** Inaddition to your regular course work, you must earn at least 63.5 of one hundred (weighted x 2) possible **Civic Action Project (CAP) points**. There is no upward limit on the number of points you may earn. Points will be awarded in the semester they are earned. The cutoff for all projects is the Friday closest to May 1st. **Because this component is directly tied to state standards, failure to complete this requirement will result in course failure, regardless of your grade**. Points may be earned in a variety of ways. Here are some possibilities:

* Participate in a small group to plan and carry out projects for Constitution Week (16 – 20 September). **Worth up to 25 points.**
* Attend a School Board meeting. Document your attendance and compose a substantial reflection paper describing what happened and how it ties into what you have learned in class. **Worth up to 25 points.**
* Become involved as an activist. One example is the current controversy regarding wind energy in Seneca County. Document your participation in a scrap book and reflection paper. Obtain verification of your efforts from someone in the group. **Worth between 25 and 100 points**, depending on your efforts and the quality of your documentation.
* Prepare and deliver a presentation to the school board. This may be done in conjunction with a school organization. Document your experience in a substantial reflection paper. **Worth up to 50 points.**
* Volunteer to work for a candidate. Complete at least five hours of confirmed service (letter or certificate). Compose a substantial reflection documenting your experience. Worth between **25 and 100** points, depending on number of hours worked and scope of duties, as well as on the quality of your reflection paper.
* Work to assist either the Wyandot or Seneca County Board of Elections. Complete at least four hours of documented service (letter or certificate). Compose a substantial reflective essay documenting your experience. Worth between **25 and 50 points**, depending on hours worked and scope of duties.
* Volunteer alone or in a small group for a local civic agency (government or NGO) to do work that enhances the community. Some examples include cleaning parks, cleaning and restoring cemeteries, cleaning bodies of water and adjacent shores, doing yardwork for senior or disabled citizens, serving local veterans’ organizations, volunteering to help at Senior care facilities, serving at a soup kitchen, etc. Document your service in a scrap book, compose a reflection paper, and obtain feedback from the agency you served. **Worth between 25 and 100 points, depending on the scale and scope of the project.**
* Coordinate the visit to Mohawk High School an elected official. Document the process in a substantial reflective essay. **Worth between 25 and 100 points**, depending on the status of the visitor and how much work was involved (Governor, President or Vice President of the United States = 100 points).
* Serve as an elected officer in a school service organization. Document your leadership and civic service accomplishments in a reflection paper of two or more pages. **Worth up to 50 points**.
* Serve on a committee in a school service organization. Document your service in a one- to two-page, achievement-focused reflection paper. **Worth up to 25 points**.
* Read and evaluate a book of political science, political commentary, political biography, or governance. Document your reading in a daily reading journal. Critically evaluate the work in a substantial evaluative essay of two or more pages. **Worth between 25 and 50 points**.
* Prepare and present a standards-based lesson in civics and government to students in grades K-6. Coordinate with the elementary school principal and teacher. Document your project in a portfolio that includes a reflection paper, lesson plans, and project checklist. Recommendation: coordinate this as early in the school year as possible. **Worth up to 50 points**.
* Engage alone or in a small group in a successful fundraising or informational campaign targeting a community problem such as homelessness, hunger, drug abuse, etc. Coordinate with both government and non-government agencies. Document your efforts with a reflection paper, scrapbook, and testimonial letters. Worth between **25 and 100 points**, depending on the scale and scope of your efforts, your success, and the quality of your documentation.
* Participate in class field trips and related in-class activities. **Worth up to ten points.**
* Make a substantial (at least $100) financial contribution to a not-for-profit entity that is working to solve a substantial social problem, such as homelessness. Document in a substantial reflection why you chose that entity, how your contribution will help, how much personal sacrifice your donation required, and what you gained by donating the money. **You must obtain written parental permission to do this**. **Worth up to 50 points**, depending on the quality of your documentation.
* Using a standard format and form, evaluate current events within the context of what you have learned about government. **Worth up to ten points each up to 50 points**.
* Think of something and negotiate in writing the terms of your proposal.
* I will from time to time present opportunities for you to earn points.

**Academic Honesty**

As a Mohawk Warrior, you are bound to the academic policies outlined in the Mohawk academic handbook and board policy. Work you submit must be your own, and must be properly cited. See me if you have any doubts.

* **Plagiarism:** I will not tolerate for plagiarism. To avoid any confusion about what constitutes plagiarism, I have laid out a comprehensive and detailed guideline based on the academic codes of three institutions: Kenyon College, Goddard College and Tiffin University. Please read it, share it with your parents, and step up with any concerns you have:

Education is a process of learning from others. However, this process is undermined and becomes plagiarism whenever a student misrepresents the intellectual property of others – including homework, exam papers, projects, original research, or ideas of another person or source, whether oral, graphic or written, as if they were that student’s own work. This misrepresentation is plagiarism whether or not the plagiarism was intentional.

It is also plagiarism to give or to get unauthorized assistance on homework, a quiz, a test or a project. Submitting a purchased or borrowed paper as your own work is also plagiarism, as is copying the work of others.

When you put your name on a work of any kind and submit it for a grade, you are certifying that the content is your own except where you have made specific and appropriate acknowledgment (in the form of notes, citations and bibliographies) that you have borrowed some parts of the work from other sources.

When you include the ideas of others in your own work, you are indebted to them and are obligated to acknowledge that indebtedness. Work in which a student only partially or insufficiently acknowledges that debt is no different from work in which there is no such acknowledgment at all – both are forms of plagiarism. It is critical that you provide accurate and complete footnoting of all sources and that you use quotation marks accurately and completely. You must also include notations, citations and corresponding bibliographies that accurately and completely reflect the sources to which you are indebted.

Submitting the same work for more than one course also constitutes plagiarism. It is an unfair act that penalizes other students, who will receive the same amount of credit as you while doing far more work. If you wish to use some or all of a work that you have done for another course, you must ask my permission, as well as the permission of the teacher in whose course you completed that work, before you do so.

If I believe that you have plagiarized, I will give you a grade of zero on the assignment. If it is your first offense or appears to have been accidental, I will allow you to resubmit the work by the end of the quarter in which it was assigned. If you are a repeat plagiarist or if it appears obvious that you deliberately attempted to deceive me, I will not give you the opportunity to resubmit your work. I will also refer you to the principal for academic discipline.

* **Other Academic Dishonesty:** I will not tolerate cheating of any kind. Some examples of academic dishonesty other than plagiarism include: using crib notes during an assessment; using a cell phone without permission during an assessment; looking at someone else’s paper during an assessment, revealing answers to an assessment … this is not a comprehensive list. If I believe that you are being academically dishonest, I will give you a zero on the relevant work, and I will refer you to the principal for disciplinary action.

**Accommodations**

If you are a student with an IEP or 504 learning plan, you have been assigned an intervention specialist to serve as your **learning coach**. Your accommodations are only as good as your determination to learn and to work with me and your learning coach to help you succeed. Please do not hesitate to discuss with me your concerns: I will work with your learning coach to adopt your assignments to your accommodations.

**Communications**

Please feel free to call or text me between the hours of 4:00 PM and 8:00 PM with course-related questions that cannot be handled by e-mail and cannot wait until the next class to resolve. I expect, however, that you first reach out to one another and to seek to discover your own answers.

**Internet and Computer Technology**

Much of the content for this course is web-based. The school has a variety of means of accessing the Internet, and public and university libraries also offer online access. You may be required to register for several online services. It will be helpful to you, if you have a current public or university library card. Keep copies your access user names and passwords in your binder, as well as at home.

**Daily Requirements**

Bring with you every day a dedicated course binder, loose-leaf paper, a course notebook, assigned reading, and a pen. The first document in your binder should be this syllabus. All submissions must be typed or written in blue, black or purple ink. Pencil may be used only for assessments.

**Socratics and the Dialectic of Civic Engagement**

Our classroom discussions may deal with serious current political and social issues such as abortion, minority rights, “gun control,” and other so-called “hot topics.” I expect candor, honesty, and courtesy to be the rule of the day in our discussions, and I insist that tolerance, respect and empathy be given to all opinions and ideas. I have had a lot of time to form my own political opinions and positions, and I will not attempt to hide those from you. On the other hand, it is not my place to try to “sell” you my beliefs. I do, however, expect that, as a result of this course, you will have begun to form your *own* political and civic identity. Toward that end, I will from time to time employ Socratic methods to make you uncomfortable and to get you to think about issues in a civically responsible and politically concerned way and to become active participants in American civic and political life. I will also guide you through at least one exercise designed to coax you toward a tentative civic and political self-identity, so that when you become eligible to vote, you will have a reasoned basis for choosing who will represent you in government

**Course Grading**

Course grades will be based on:

* Civic Action Project points (weighted 2)
* Self-directed Learning (weighted 2.5)
* Numerous quizzes (weighted 1.5)
* Unit tests (weighted 2)
* Final exams (straight-weighted)

**Extension Credit**

I may from time to time offer you the opportunity to earn points for such things as attending public lectures and Saturday discussions, meeting with an elected official, participating in citizenship awareness or political service activities, civics tutoring, and additional reading and writing. You may also propose extension work. You must have a passing grade in order to be eligible for extension credit. Once you contract to complete an extension assignment, you may not change your mind**. I will offer no other form of extra credit.**

Updated: August 8, 2019

**Notes and Amendments**

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**Student Affirmation: This document must be signed in black, blue, or purple and returned prior to the beginning of the second full week of classes; it is a ten-point assignment.**

I have read and understand this syllabus, or have asked questions to clarify my understanding.

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Section \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Affirmation**

I have read and discussed this syllabus with my student.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent contact e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent preferred contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Questions/Concerns: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_