

Kenyon Academic Partnership
Liberal Democracy in America
2009 - 2010 Syllabus
Mrs. Messick

Course Description: The goal of this course is to increase your understanding of the American political system and the historical foundations of this system. This course will meet the requirements set forth by Kenyon College to allow students to obtain credit for Kenyon's 200 level political science course per the KAP program. Along with this, the course will also discuss the United States Government system including the Constitution, Federalism, the three branches, media, political parties, interest groups, and the bureaucracy

Expectations:

1. You should purchase a notebook for this class. In this notebook you should keep all assignments and papers handed out for this class. Included in this are class notes, activities, in-class writings, and notes over your readings.
2. Be prepared for class, each day you should bring to class: notebook, textbook, paper, writing utensil, and homework if assigned. (see homework policy). Habitual un-preparedness will result in a lowering of your participation grade.
3. Reading for this class will be very important in order to hold discussions over the material. It is imperative that you keep up on your reading. Quizzes may be given at any time over the readings and may be unannounced. If you take notes on what you read and there is a pop quiz, I may let you use those notes as you take the quiz.
4. Grades will consist of tests, quizzes, homework, projects, papers and class participation.
 - There will be two term papers (one each semester) as well as a midterm and final exam.
 - A notebook will be used as a reading journal. In this notebook you will keep your notes over the texts that are assigned as well as a personal journal reflection entry over individual reading assignment. These reflections may also come from other reading handed out in class. The journal will be collected every few weeks for a grade.
 - As this is a college level course there will be fewer short term assignments/projects, but long term assignments so you will need to budget your time wisely and keep up with the readings as there will be fewer graded assignments per term.

Tardy Policy: All tardies are unexcused unless accompanied by a written pass from another teacher. If you accumulate three tardies within a nine-week period, your participation grade will be lowered. If you miss more than 15 minutes of a class, according to the school's attendance policy, it is considered an absence and will count on your seven-day absence policy. If you are tardy and it is unexcused you are unable to make up anything that was missed. This includes turning in homework for credit and taking quizzes.

Absence Policy: If you are absent it is your responsibility to get the information that you missed and make up any work. I will not seek you out; you must ask me or another student. You have as many days to make up the work as your excused absence; this includes tests and quizzes. It is your responsibility to schedule a make up time. Class notes should be obtained from another student. If the absence is unexcused, you may not complete the missing work for a grade – this includes tests and quizzes. Your participation grade will be lowered significantly for an unexcused absence and the absence will be turned in to the appropriate principal.

Homework Policy: No late work will be accepted for a grade. Homework is collected at the beginning of the period, once it has been collected, anything turned in after this will be for zero credit (see extra credit policy). This includes any homework turned in late due to unexcused tardiness.

Extra Credit Policy: There are minimal opportunities for extra credit. Extra credit will also only be available to students who have turned in all assignments. If you have not turned in all of your assignments, in order to become eligible for extra credit you must first make up the missing work for no credit. I will let you know when and if extra credit is available, please do not ask.

Each Friday that there is school you may bring in one current event, political cartoon, or editorial that relates to government or foreign affairs (in other words – no sports or weather articles). If you bring one in and **present it to the class on Friday** you will receive 2 points extra credit.

Texts for this course are:

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers*.

Alexis de Toqueville. *Democracy in America*. Vol. I

Abramson, Aldrich, Rohde. *Change and Continuity in the 2004 and 2006 Elections*. Washington D.C.: CQ Press 2007

David Mayhew. *Congress the Electoral Connection*. New haven, CT: Yale, 1974

Richard Neustadt. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York Free Press, 1991.

John Agresto. *The Supreme Court and Constitutional Democracy*.

Janda, Berry, Goldman. *The Challenge of Democracy Seventh Edition*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company 2002.

Unit Assignments

These are the reading assignments for the text and the books assigned for the course – there will be other assignments that will be handed out in class. These will be essays, court cases and debates that will correlate to the topics / discussions of the class.

Unit 1 – Democracy Foundations

Text: Chapters 1 and 2

Tocqueville: Intro, Chapters 1-4, 9, 13-18

Unit 2 – The Constitution

Text: Chapter 3

Tocqueville: 6

Federalist Papers: 1-3, 6, 8-10, 14, 23, 25, 27, 33, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 47-49, 51, 54, 58, 63, 64, 70, 73

Unit 3 – Federalism

Text: Chapter 4

Tocqueville: 5, 10-12

Federalist Papers: 15-17

Unit 4 – Public Opinion, Political Socialization and the Media

Text: Chapters 5 and 6

Abramson et al: Chapters 2, 5 and 7

Unit 5 – Participation. Political Parties and Interest Groups

Text: Chapters 7, 8 and 10

Abramson et al: Chapters 4, 8

Unit 6 – Nominations, Elections and Campaigns

Text: Chapter 9

Abramson et al: Chapters 1-3, 6, and 9

The following units will also include an in-depth look at the Articles of the Constitution and the Amendments to the Constitution that coincide with the Unit.

Unit 7 – Congress

Text: Chapter 11

Federalist Papers: 35, 52, 53, 62, and 63

Abramson et al: Chapters 10 and 11

Mayhew: Intro – Chapter 2

Unit 8 – The Presidency and the Bureaucracy

Text: Chapters 12 and 13

Federalist Papers: 70-72

Neustadt: Preface, Part I pgs. 3-55, 68-99, 122-144, and 150-163

Part II pgs. 167-169, 179-229, 269-294, and 308-318

Unit 9 – The Supreme Court, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Text: Chapters 14-16

Agresto: pgs. 9-40, 51-55, and 84-107

Unit 10 – Policy

Text: 17-20

Current Issues: One discussion topic will be assigned for each policy area of domestic, economic and international affairs – these will be based on current events.