

Mohawk High School
Kenyon Academic Partnership 2014-2015 (Revised 08/14/2014)
Course Syllabus – *Political Science 200: Liberal Democracy in America*
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You have been accepted into this course based on your past academic performance, your demonstrated desire to learn, your leadership, and your service to the community. Please remember that although you are attending a public high school, you are now **college students**, as well. I will treat you as such, and expect you to comport yourselves accordingly.

Course Description

Mastered by Professors Dr. John Elliott, Dr. Pamela Camerra-Rowe, and Dr. H. Abbie Eler of Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, this course explores the guiding principles, major institutions, and national politics of the American system of government. The Founders' view of liberal democracy and of the three branches of our government will provide the basis for consideration of the modern judiciary, presidency, bureaucracy, congress, news media, political parties and elections, and will conclude with a broad overview of American democracy and its efforts to reconcile liberty and equality. This course will be exemplified by references to current political issues, events and personalities, and will include civic service and research components. This course satisfies the high school American Government requirement.

Alignment

This course is closely aligned with the June 2012 Government syllabus published by the Ohio Department of education, which addresses the following eleven topics (see source document for details of benchmarks):

- **Civic involvement:** 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.
- **Public policy:** Federal, state and local governments address problems and issues by making decisions, creating laws, enforcing regulations and taking action.
- **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.

Required Readings (Books will be issued; additional readings may be assigned):

Agresto, John. *The Supreme Court and Constitutional Democracy*. Ithaca: Cornell, 1984.

Collier, Christopher and James Lincoln Collier. *Decision in Philadelphia: The Constitutional Convention of 1787*. New York: Ballantine, 2007.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*. Edited and translated by Henry C. Mansfield and Barbara Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale, 1974.

Nelson, Michael, ed. *The Elections of 2008* Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2009.

Neustadt, Richard E. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*. New York: Free Press, 1974.

Patterson, Thomas. *We the People: a Concise Introduction to American Politics*, 6th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

The Federalist Papers. Edited by Cynthia B., Johnson. New York: Pocket Books, 2004.

Student Responsibilities

I expect you, as KAP students, to complete all readings prior to class, to complete all assignments in a professional manner, and to turn in work on time.

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

I expect you stay informed about current events by reading a major print or online newspaper (*The Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, or Christian Science Monitor, etc.*).

I expect you to attend all classes. **You must also satisfy Mohawk attendance policy (90% attendance to receive credit).**

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 have established a closed Facebook Group page that is reserved exclusively for discussions related to the course.

I expect you to use CHICAGO citation style and for you to properly and fully cite and footnote as appropriate.

I expect you to maintain your textbooks for the next generation of KAP students, or to purchase them. I strongly encourage you to purchase “keeper” sets of *Democracy in America* and the *Federalist Papers* for future reference and study.

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

Instructor Responsibilities

I will plan and teach the course in agreement with Kenyon College requirements.

I will provide you the text books you require for the course.

I will set aside as much time as possible in the lab for you to read, write, and conduct research.

I will provide you the information you need to meet course requirements. I will publish homework assignments and due dates in a lesson plan / course calendar to be published every two weeks and revised as needed. I will publish this plan on the course web site and will post it in the lesson plan book.

I will assign you an objective (to the extent that I am able), rubric-based grade on your assignments. I will mentor and guide you toward success.

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.

Academic Honesty

As a KAP student, you are bound to the academic policies outlined in the Kenyon College and Mohawk High School handbooks and board policy. Work you submit must be your own, and must be properly cited. See me if you have any doubts.

Plagiarism: You are subject to the Kenyon College code of academic ethics regarding all aspects of this course. The Kenyon definition of plagiarism is rather extensive and detailed. Please read it (“Academic Honesty and Questions of Plagiarism,” Kenyon College 2011-2012 Course of Study):

Learning from other scholars, artists, or fellow students is an essential element in the process of education. However, this process is undermined and becomes plagiarism whenever the words, projects, performances, reports, or ideas of another person or source are presented as if they were the original contributions of the student presenting them. Such work is also plagiarism whether or not the misrepresentation was an intentional attempt to deceive.

Such misrepresentation is always plagiarism no matter what kind of work is involved. Plagiarism may occur in oral or graphic work as well as in written work; it may occur in artistic work as well as in analytic work. Plagiarism can involve tests, examinations, laboratory reports, research results, papers, creative projects, and Senior Exercises; nor is this an exhaustive list. Because of the seriousness of plagiarism and academic dishonesty, and because proper methods of indicating indebtedness may vary from one discipline to another, you must consult your instructors if you have any questions about the proper attribution of sources in particular courses of study.

That it is dishonest to give or receive illicit aid on a test or an examination is obvious. The submission of a purchased or borrowed paper as your own work is also obviously a flagrant example of plagiarism. (Bibliographical research services, other than those offered by libraries or university research centers, should not be used without the instructor's approval.)

More generally: When you put your name on a work of any kind--a paper, a work of art, a laboratory report, a computer program, etc.--and submit it in a course of study, you thereby certify that the content is your own except where you have made specific and appropriate acknowledgment that some parts of the work have been borrowed from other sources. Again, learning from another artist, scholar, or fellow student is commendable, but to use the ideas or the phraseology of another person without such acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism.

Please note further: work in which your indebtedness to other sources is only partially or only insufficiently acknowledged is no different from work in which there is no such acknowledgment at all. They both equally constitute plagiarism. ("Partial or insufficient acknowledgment" does not refer to a failure to follow with meticulous precision the formalized details by which sources are identified--details such as those set forth in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*--but to a failure to use such basic things as quotation marks to indicate the true extent of your indebtedness to other sources.) It is crucially important to provide accurate and complete footnoting of all sources, and to use quotation marks accurately and completely in order to indicate all passages which are not of your own creation.

Further, it is fully as important to give appropriate acknowledgment of any indebtedness to fellow students, as it is to give appropriate acknowledgment of any indebtedness to scholarly or professional sources. And take especial note: faculty may assign students to work together collaboratively on projects. In such cases, make certain that you understand what the faculty member assumes will be the limits of such collaboration--e.g., is the final report or paper to be written collaboratively, or separately?--and that you understand how each student's specific contribution to the collaborative enterprise is to be acknowledged.

To reiterate: Whenever you have submitted, under your own name, work of any kind in which it can be proven that some portion of that work is not of your own creation or formulation, yet in which there is no formal acknowledgment of that fact, you have committed plagiarism. And you have committed plagiarism whether or not there was an intentional attempt to deceive.

Submitting the same work for more than one course also constitutes plagiarism, although of a special kind. Kenyon faculty members assign papers, research topics, and other work in order to facilitate students' academic development, and they expect to receive original work in return. Submitting the same work in whole or in part for two separate courses without prior consent of both instructors circumvents this aspect of your education. And such conduct is manifestly unfair to other students, who will receive an equal amount of credit for doing substantially more work. In a particular case in which you nevertheless feel it is justified to use all or part of a work for one class in another, you must first obtain permission from the instructors of both classes.

Accommodations

It is your responsibility to notify me in private if you require accommodation for a learning difference.

Communications

Please feel free to call or text me between the hours of 4:00 PM and 9:00 PM with course-related questions that cannot be handled by e-mail and cannot wait until the next class to resolve. I also have established a course Facebook presence, and would be happy to communicate with you that way. I expect, however, that you first reach out to one another and to seek to discover your own answers.

Socratic and the Dialectic of Civic Engagement

This is a second year college course, and classroom discussions may deal with serious current political and societal issues. I expect candor, honesty, and courtesy to be the rule of the day in seminar, and 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 do not attempt to hide those; 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 – where that leads you is not my concern, except that I want you 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. I will discuss with you during the early days of the course more exactly what all this means and how we will agree to conduct ourselves during discussions.

Course Requirements and Grades

Major assignments for this course include:

- Journalized summer reading of a significant book that will prepare you for the rigors of the course.
- Two major analytical papers (one due in the last two weeks of each semester).
- A reflection-supported civic service project
- A visually-supported Supreme Court case briefing
- Numerous one- to two-page responses to course readings
- On-line and print Government quizzes

- Unit quizzes
- Successful completion of semester final exams. Both exams will include essay requirements that may be assigned for take-home completion.
- Government pre- and post- end of course exams

All major assignment documents, except for the handwritten summer reading journal, must be typed in double-spaced 11-arial font. I encourage you to type *all* your submissions (except as noted). I will not accept papers that are not professionally prepared. Your papers should be well-written, logically argued, and self- as well as peer-edited.

Late work, where accepted, will be subject to a penalty of up to 75% of its assigned value, and I reserve the right to reject work that is substantially past-due.

In addition to these major requirements, I may periodically administer both announced and unannounced oral and written quizzes over the readings. I may also ask you to write short reflective essays on current events and their relationship to course readings.

I will grade you on seminar participation using a rubric that accounts for the frequency, scholarship, and usefulness to the class of your contributions.

Your final grade for the course will be based on points earned and will be determined as follows:

- Summer reading journal: 50 points (weighted 1)
- Seminar Participation: 10 points per week (not present, no points!), taken quarterly
- Civic service project and reflection: 100 points (weighted 2). You must complete a minimum of ten hours of service at 5 points per hour; the reflection is worth 50 points; hours in excess of ten may be used to offset up to lost points on the reflection up to fifteen points.
- Paper # 1: 100 points (weighted 1)
- Paper # 2: 100 points (weighted 2)
- USSC Briefing: 100 points (weighted 1)
- 1st Semester exam: 100 points (percentage basis, see school policy)
- Final Exam: 100 points (percentage basis, see school policy)

The grade I submit to Kenyon College will be the grade you receive on your high school transcript, except that because Kenyon College grants the 'A+' grade, truly exceptional work on your part may result in an "A+" on your Kenyon transcript.

You are responsible to submit a transcript request to Kenyon College. Forms may be obtained at www.kaphelp.org.

Extra Credit

I may from time to time offer extra credit for such things as attending public lectures and Saturday discussions, participating in citizenship awareness activities, tutoring, doing additional reading, or for exceptional scholarship. Extra means just that; in order to earn extra credit, you must be in good standing ('C+' or better course work).

Tentative Course Calendar Highlights: August 20, 2013 to May 29, 2014

Quarter 1, 8/20 – 10-24: Foundations of American Liberty & the Legislative Branch

- **Wednesday, September 17: Constitution Day / Week**
- **Civic Service planning: 2015 elections**
- September 1 – Labor day
- September 11, 12 – Fair days

Quarter 2, 10/27 – 1/16: The Legislative & Executive Branches

- **Election Day 11/4**
- Veterans Day Assembly 11/11
- November 26 – December 1: Thanksgiving break
- December 22nd – January 4: Holiday break
- **Major Paper # 1 due January 9.**
- January 19: MLK Day
- First Semester Exams

Quarter 3, 1/20 – 3/20: The Executive & Judicial Branches

- February 13 – No school
- February 16 – Presidents' Day

Quarter 4: 3/23 – 5/28: The Judiciary & “The Fourth Branch”

- April 2, 3 & 6: Spring break
- Senior class trip TBD
- Primary election 05/05
- **Civic service project reflections due 5/11– No late acceptance**
- **U.S. Supreme Court case presentations 5/11 – 15**
- **Paper # 2 due 5/18 – No late acceptance**
- Final exams – 5/23 – 26

