**United States Government Syllabus**

**Ms. Kline/ Room 801**

 **850-916-4100**

**Course Description:** With this course, students will gain the understanding necessary to be engaged and responsible members of American society. Additionally, this class will prepare students for success in college level political science courses, by providing a deep understanding of the governmental processes and historical precedence of the American republic. More importantly, students will learn to apply these political foundations to relevant current events.

**Content:** The content of this course will include analysis of the primary documents which shape our political tradition, including:

* The Declaration of Independence
* The Articles of Confederation
* The Federalist Papers
* The Constitution of the United States of America
* The Bill of Rights
* Landmark Supreme Court Decisions
* Important Legislative Acts & Executive Orders

The course will also discuss and compare the three branches of American government, and the system of checks and balances necessary to ensure our government works as the founders intended. The class will cover the evolution of political parties, interest groups, and the media, and explore their roles in the electoral process. Lastly, the course will look closely as our nation’s quest to be

“a more perfect union,” with an examination of our path towards “liberty and justice for all.”

**Course Outline:** The following units will be covered during the semester. Students are required to bring the attached course schedule to class every day.

1. **Principles of Government**
2. **Origins of American Government**
3. **The Constitution**
4. **Federalism**
5. **Congress**
6. **The Presidency**
7. **The Bureaucracy**
8. **Financing Government**
9. **Political Parties**
10. **Voters & Voter Behavior**
11. **The Electoral Process**
12. **Mass Media & Public Opinion**
13. **Interest Groups**
14. **The Federal Court System**
15. **Civil Liberties: First Amendment Freedoms & Individual Rights**
16. **Civil Rights**

**Textbooks:**

Monk, Linda R. *The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution.* New York: Stone Song Press. 2015.

**Materials for this course**:

* Textbooks
* Paper, Pens (blue or black, and red)
* Large spiral notebook
* Pocket folder with brads or small binder
* Flash drive

**Grading for this course:**

Homework 10%

Classwork Assignments & Activity Participation 20%

Projects, Papers & Tests 30%

Quizzes 20%

Final Exam 20%

**ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE FINAL EXAMS! NO EXEMPTIONS!**

**Behavioral Expectations:**

1. **Be considerate!** In order for a democratic republic to function properly***, civil*** debate is necessary! Political debate helps us to understand differing points of view, but only if it is based in fact and rooted in respect. Inconsiderate or hurtful comments are counterproductive and will not be tolerated**. In other words, use your manners in this** **class!** Do not interrupt others while they are speaking, and raise your hand if you have something relevant to add to the discussion. Take time to listen before you speak. All GBHS rules of conduct apply to this classroom.
2. **Cell phones** should be locked in the secure classroom lockers immediately after the bell rings. Students who do not comply will be referred to Student Services.
3. **Be on time!** Class begins promptly when the bell rings. Your will receive warnings for the first two times you are tardy. Any future tardiness will result in a student referral.
4. **Be prepared!** Bring your supplies to every class, and make sure all your assignments are complete.
5. **Stay in your seat until the dismissal bell rings!**

**Contact Information:**

The best way to contact me is by email. My email address is:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I always check my email before and after school; however, I do not usually check my school email on weekends or after I leave school, so please do not wait until the night before an assignment is due to ask for clarification!

I have a class website; however, assignments on the website are tentative. Students are responsible for checking the assignments posted in class each day.

**United States Government Student Contract**

I fully understand the rules and expectations of Mrs. Kline’s (U.S. Government, Honors U.S. Government, Advanced Placement U. S. Government & Politics, and/or Advanced Placement Comparative Government) syllabus. I understand that in order to obtain the best grade possible, I must complete all my assigned readings, classwork, and homework. I also understand that my success will be determined by my dedication to test preparation, project assignments, and my participation in classroom activities and discussions. I understand that I must arrive to class on time, and that I must lock up my cell phone in the appropriate locker during class time.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature**

\*As a parent or legal guardian, I have read and understand the syllabus and expectations of my child for this course. **I understand the tardy policy, and the cell phone policy for Mrs. Kline’s courses.** I also understand that a referral to Student Services may bar my student from membership in most campus honor societies.

**Parents please check all that apply:**

My child has access to the internet at home: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My child does not have access to the internet at home: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My child has access to a computer and printer at home: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My child does not have access to a computer and printer at home: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My child has permission to view PG or PG-13 rated movies or movie clips relevant to the educational topics discussed in class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My child does **not** have permission to view PG or PG-13 rated movies in class: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature**

**\*Please return this completed/signed form to Mrs. Kline by Friday.**

**The completed form will count as a homework grade!**