

**American Government  
Class Syllabus  
Spring 2012**

TEACHER: Ms. Rachel Gunther

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is an in-depth examination of institutions, process, politics, and policies that are a crucial part of our government system, from its founding to present day at the national, state, and local levels. This course is the culmination of the civic and governmental content and concepts in conjunction with TEA objectives. Students learn major political ideas and forms of government in history. A significant focus of the course is on the U.S. Constitution, its underlying principles and ideas, and the form of government it created. Students analyze major concepts of republicanism, federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights and compare the U.S. system of government with other political systems. Students identify the role of government in the U.S. free enterprise system and examine the strategic importance of places to the United States. Students analyze the impact of individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media on the American political system, evaluate the importance of voluntary individual participation in a democratic society, and analyze the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Students examine the relationship between governmental policies and the culture of the United States. This course is current with international events and America's relationship and responsibility to other nations' governing. Incorporated in this course is the Christian world view as applied to the foundation of our government system and our responsibilities as Christian Americans today.

COURSE GOAL:

Student would show proficiency and understanding of our government's theory and practice. This course stresses student participation, prayer, responsibility and submission to and for our government.

COURSE SCRIPTURES:

II Timothy 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.*

Proverbs 21:1 *The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.*

Romans 15:4 *For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction,*

*so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*

**TEACHING STRATEGY:**

Students will be engaged in teacher focused lecture, classroom led discussions, Socratic seminar and a variety of hands on activities.

**BEHAVIOR:**

Students will spend the first class day creating a classroom government and a set of rules that will enhance and facilitate learning. These rules will be in addition to school policy in the school handbook. Any rules in direct violation of school policy will not be recorded for the class. At the end of the 9 weeks we will elect a new class government. Rules may be amended during class with a voting quorum using Robert’s Rules of Order. A copy of the rules will be sent home the second week of school as well as posted on Legacy’s Website under my name. As “Supreme Court”, I reserve the right to remove any rule that violates school policy.

**GRADING PROCEDURE:**

Semester grades will be determined on a percentage of the total number of points.

- A: 90-100%
- B: 80-89%
- C: 70-79%
- F: 0-69%

**The following is a list of point values for each type of graded assignment:**

- |                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| 1. Final Exam            | 200 points |
| 2. Class Led Discussions | 50 points  |
| 3. Chapter Tests         | 100 points |
| 4. Homework Assignments  | 30 points  |
| 5. Journal               | 50 points  |
| 6. Projects              | 100 points |
| 7. Semester Project      | 200 points |

**Grade Proportions Will be as follows:**

- |  |      |
|--|------|
| 1. Homework                            | 15%  |
| 2. Journals, Discussions and Classwork | 10 % |
| 3. Tests and Projects                  | 75%  |

**TEXTBOOK:**

United States Government: Principles in Practice – Holt McDougal  
There will be supplemental reading handouts throughout the course.

## REQUIRED SUPPLIES:

2" 3 Ring Binder  
3 Hole Notebook Paper – College Ruled  
Single Subject Spiral Notebook College Ruled – MLA Heading on front inside cover – to be used ONLY for government.  
Black Pens  
Red Pens  
Highlighters  
Pencils  
Tab Dividers:

Notes

Homework

Handouts

## HOMEWORK:

All homework and projects are to be turned in ON TIME. If a student is absent on the due date of an assignment or on a test date, the absence MUST be excused through the office. If the student has a scheduled absence, all homework is to be turned in PRIOR to the student's absence. Students are responsible for any missed assignments.

Late work is due within 24 hours for a maximum credit of 70%. Projects are not accepted late. If a student is going to be absent for any reason, projects MUST be turned in before the absence or a grade of zero will be recorded.

## EXTRA CREDIT:

Extra credit will be offered through the semester. All extra credit work will be graded on its merits. Late extra credit work will NOT be accepted.

## PROJECTS:

Semester projects are worth TWO test grades. All other projects will be worth ONE test grade.

## PARTICIPATION:

Students are expected to complete all homework, read assigned material and be engaged in classroom discussions. Round-table discussions will be assigned throughout the semester as homework grades. Students who do not actively participate will not receive credit for that homework assignment. EX: Students are assigned to bring two questions to the next class period regarding current readings. Students are expected to bring thought-provoking questions and be prepared to respond to the discussion. Students will be graded 50 points for the assignment – 15 points for 2 questions; 15 points for participating in the discussion regarding their question and 20 points for participating in another student's discussion. Students will receive full credit for fulfilling all obligations and deducted the points as assigned for not fulfilling all obligations. – If a student participates in all other student's discussions, but fails to bring their own questions, they will receive 20 points out of the available 50 (they cannot receive points for participating in their discussion of there is no discussion brought to class).

#### GOVERNMENT JOURNAL:

Most class periods we will spend 5 – 10 minutes answering questions in our Government Journals (Spiral Notebook). Students are to answer the Journal question at the beginning of class after the Focus. Students are to amend their answers after reading the readings covered. Journals will be turned in periodically throughout the semester as a Homework grade. Government Journals will be graded on the merits. Students who miss a Government Journal entry due to an absence are responsible for getting the Journal Entry from another student.

#### RENWEB:

I post all homework and reading assignments by 6 am Monday of the current week. RenWeb assignments are subject to change. I will note any changes to homework assignments, test dates, due dates, etc. as they occur by 4PM the date of change.

#### AVAILABILITY:

I am available for conference during periods A4 and B4 and also during Enrichment after school. Please feel free to contact me to schedule appointments. I can be reached via phone, text or email. You are welcome to call or text me on my cell phone with any questions or concerns you may have. Legacy's school number is 924.0500. My cell phone is 659.3151. My email address is [rgunther@legacychristianacademy.org](mailto:rgunther@legacychristianacademy.org).