

## Course Overview

**Government** (main emphasis of Semester 1) and **Economics** (Semester 2 emphasis) are related subjects that address many of the aspects of society you will be concerned with after you graduate from high school. In addition to learning to think like a political scientist and like an economist, the aims of this course include developing skills and knowledge that will help you be a more informed and active citizen. As seniors about to head to the workforce, or to college, or to the military, skills such as collaboration, communication, problem solving and critical thinking will become even more important for you in the near future. Therefore, we seek to develop these abilities, and to apply them to the study of topics in Government and Economics.

### Government Topics of Study

(based on Oregon state standards)

- **Intro to Government:** What is government and how do we know what we know about it? What should be its role?
- **Parties, Interest Groups & Media:** How do they affect the beliefs and behaviors of constituents? What are the limits of political labels?
- **The Constitution & Functions and Processes of Government:** How does the Constitution define the functions and processes of different levels of government? Which processes have developed beyond the Constitution? Which processes of our government serve us well and which could be improved, in your opinion?
- **The Bill of Rights, the Amendments and Court Cases:** What are our rights, and how are they defined?
- **Is All Politics Local?:** What would an engaged, active citizen do?

### Economics Topics of Study

(based on Oregon state standards)

- **Basics of Credit & Debt:** How can your credit rating affect your life? What is the distinction between “good” and “bad” debt? Where does post-high school education and training fit in this picture?
- **Microeconomics:** What are markets? What are markets good at? What are the limits of markets? Is there a role for government in markets? What should that role be?
- **Macroeconomics:** How do we best measure economic growth, inflation and unemployment? What is the difference between fiscal and monetary policy, and how have policymakers used these tools to try to accomplish national goals? Is the Phillips Curve obsolete, or is our current situation an anomaly? How significant is the trend of rising income inequality?
- **“Economics & State: Trade and Develop” simulation, and International & Developmental Economics:** What are the benefits and costs of trade? What are the stages of economic development? How might a nation’s stage affect its international economic strategy? How can a team collaborate effectively to solve problems and make decisions?

### Behavioral Expectations: Responsible, Respectful, Safe

1. **Be Present:** Be physically and mentally present while in class.  
NOTE: I usually take attendance during the first 2 minutes of class. After that time, I do not adjust attendance, since I am focused on instruction. In accord with revised school policy, students entering after a teacher has taken roll must report to the Attendance Office to get an Attendance Slip, and may then report to class.
2. **Everyone Talks, Every Day:** Each of you have your own voice and ideas that are essential to the progress of our class. You will talk, whether in partners, small groups, with teachers, or to the whole class every day.
3. **Eyes Open, Phones Away, Mind Open:** In order to create a productive and collaborative learning environment, students will be asked to limit phone use to the occasional (not guaranteed) tech break times (which usually last a minute, or perhaps two). Students using phones at other times will choose between brown-bagging their phone or placing it in a box placed in a locked cabinet until the end of the period.  
The research is clear: If you’re using a phone during class, you’re not actively listening and learning, because the process of learning new material (or refining recent material) is harmed by “multitasking.” To learn well, you need to “single task” on what is being learned. Some students may think that they can use their phones whenever the teacher is not directly instructing the class (such as during discussions, group work, videos, etc.) This is a misconception: Learning comes in many forms and your engagement in the process is the key to academic growth. This doesn't mean phones are bad (they are clearly useful for a enormous number of things). It means phone use has its time and place, and use in class disrupts the learning process (and may distract from the learning of other students as well).
4. **Respect:** Show respect for all members of our classroom and school community. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or any other hurtful comments will not be tolerated in our classroom community.
5. **Take responsibility for your learning:** If you have a question, ask. If you need further assistance, come see me. If you want your work checked, talk with your peers or myself. If you are acting in a way that is hindering your ability to learn (or someone else’s), change your behavior. If you have a bottle of water, place it on the floor when using a Chromebook. If you have food at times that are indicated as okay, be sure to clean up your desk and throw away any trash. When individuals take responsibility for their actions, few rules are necessary.

### Other Important Items

No credit will be given for work that is simply copied from another person or source of information, **unless** they are notes and I have specifically said it is okay. Additionally:

#### Reading Assessment Retakes:

☐ If you score below a 4 (Exceeds) on a reading standard assessment, you may come in after school to do one retake assessment on a completely new set of readings. *This must be completed before the end of the current quarter.* Scores up to 4 may be earned on reading assessment (not unit test) retakes.

## Essays:

❑ **Essays must be submitted electronically to Turnitin.com (and JupiterEd) in order to be graded for credit.** This process will be explained and demonstrated in class. *No passing grade will be awarded for work that exceeds a 40% match on Turnitin*, and the match must be less than 5% to earn a 4 (Exceeds) on a product. Fortunately, *you may revise your work* to paraphrase more completely and cite sources more accurately, and thus improve your grade. Note: *Late essays will not receive personalized comments*. See me for specific feedback if you have questions.

❑ You may revise essays to attempt to raise any writing standard score (the three areas are: Arguments, Evidence, Organization) if it is below a 4. Depending on the score and situation, you might only need to make a few additions or revisions to raise a given score, or the paper may need to be thoroughly rewritten. Check JupiterEd and Turnitin for specific feedback and see me with any questions. There is a Semester Cutoff for turning in essay revisions (usually 2-3 weeks before the end of the semester). Listen closely for this information in class.

## How the Self-Paced Core of Knowledge works:

❑ These lessons, assignments and formative quizzes unfold in a specific sequence, posted on my web site.

❑ Each step in the sequence is called a "gate."

❑ You may work on gates individually or with a partner (except for quizzes and tests).

❑ You may not move to the next gate until you satisfactorily complete the previous one.

❑ When you satisfactorily complete a gate, a check mark will be entered in JupiterEd for that step. Gates that are blank in JupiterEd have not yet been completed by the student.

❑ There are formative quiz gates that appear throughout the Self-Paced Core unit. These serve as a check for understanding. If you score below 70% on a formative quiz gate, I will meet with you to review any material about which you have questions, and you will study before retaking that quiz. If you score above 70%, you may move on to the next gate. The raw scores for formative quizzes are entered in JupiterEd, but they do not directly affect the grade. They are posted for informational purposes.

❑ When you have completed all of the gates in a self-paced unit, you are eligible to take the Unit Test during the next available Self-Paced chunk of time in class.

❑ Most Unit Tests have 3 parts:

1) an *electronic multiple choice / matching test* - If you score 3 or 4 on the electronic test, you move on to the written test; if you score 1 or 2 on the electronic test, you will check in with me for review, then re-study and retake the electronic test;

2) a *written test of understanding and application* - a score of 1 or 2 leads to restudy and a retake, while a 3 or 4 leads to . . .

3) a *student-created "extension" project or written piece* that demonstrates the student's understanding of the topic by exploring a related question or problem of interest to the student - this, too, is scored on a 4-3-2-1 rubric.

❑ The scores of the three parts of the Unit Test will be combined for one overall Self-Paced unit score. So, if you score a 3 on the electronic test, 4 on the written test and a 3.5 on the extension part of the test, you will receive a 3.5 for the overall unit. Unit scores are rounded up and down to the nearest .5 unit (so, 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, etc.)

## What "NC" means when it shows up in JupiterEd:

NC means "Not Completed." This means the student missed an assignment or an assessment in class, and needs to make it up. This will apply to Literacy Assessments and 21st Century Skills assignments. If you want to see how far a student is in a Self-Paced Core unit, look for check marks and raw scores for quizzes and tests. If a Self-Paced Core assignment is blank, it means the student has not yet completed that "gate." This may be quite reasonable if it is early in a unit. If I ever mark "NC" for a Self-Paced Core assignment, it means the student is not on pace to finish the unit. In this situation, the student should arrange to work with me before or after school to get caught up

## An important note about TAG:

To ensure that students designated as "Talented and Gifted" (TAG) receive academic instruction that is appropriate for their rate and level of learning, the curriculum and instruction of this course may be differentiated to include specialized groupings, compacting of curriculum, accelerated pacing, and providing of extension/challenge activities (this will be different work of a complementary nature and NOT extra work on top of existing assignments). At any time, TAG students are encouraged to meet with me if they feel the rate or level of learning in the class does not meet their needs. If you can do it quickly and easily, you are not building the neural pathways that will help you later in life.

**Students:** Your education matters to me. I will strive to treat you fairly, act with compassion, and also to uphold my classroom expectations and policies that I believe will help all of us find success this year. If at any time you have questions, concerns, or comments please come see me, or send me a message, and I will do the best I can to assist you, even if we have to schedule a time that works for both of us. **On A days, you can find me in the main office** (enter from junior hall and go to the first office on the right hand side). I truly look forward to working and learning with each of you this year.