

# GOVERNMENT

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Class web sites: [Google Classroom](#) and [blendedgov.weebly.com](http://blendedgov.weebly.com) ♦ Current grades & comments at: [JupiterEd.com](http://JupiterEd.com) (updated on StudentVUE every 2 weeks)

## Course Overview

Governments, as well as economic systems (which we'll study in semester 2) have enormous influence over the lives you lead beyond high school. This course will examine issues and knowledge relevant to being an informed and engaged citizen. There will be several state content standards taught in each unit, but the two most centrally focused upon in each unit are listed below:

### Topics of Study: GOVERNMENT (1st semester focus and 0.5 credit)

- **PART I: Informed Citizens:** *How do we know what we know about government? How do political parties, interest and community groups and mass media influence the beliefs of citizens?*
  - HS.7: Analyze political parties, interest and community groups, and mass media and how they influence the beliefs and behaviors of individuals, and local, state, and national constituencies.
  - HS.10: Explain the roles and responsibilities of active members of a democracy and the role of individuals, social movements, and governments in various current events.
- **PART II: Lawmaking in American Government:** *What are your rights and how are they defined and defended?*
  - HS.4: Examine institutions, functions and processes of United States government.
  - HS.11: Examine the pluralistic realities of society recognizing issues of equity and evaluating the need for change.
- **PART III: Rights, Courts and Amendments:** *What are your rights and how are they defined and defended?*
  - HS.1: Analyze the impact of constitutional amendments on groups, individuals, institutions, national order.
  - HS.12: Examine the power of government and evaluate the reasoning and impact of Supreme Court decisions on the rights of individuals and groups.

## Classroom Expectations

1. **Be here:** I usually take attendance during the first 2 minutes of class. School policy states that students entering after a teacher has taken roll will report to the new Main Office to get an Attendance Slip, and may then report to class. If you ARE absent, you can usually find makeup work and resources on Google Classroom, JupiterEd, or the Blended Economics site. Check those, get caught up, study for any missed tests, and let me know if you have any questions.
2. **Participate in learning:** Some students mistakenly believe the only time learning is occurring is when a teacher is directly instructing them. Actually, your active participation is important to the learning process, whether it takes the form of discussing, viewing, writing, taking notes, retrieving from memory, or reading. These activities and assignments help me determine what you do and do not understand, and which areas I may need to clarify or reteach. To learn, you need to *do* something *with* what we are studying. That is why all parts of a lesson matter.
3. **Phones and personal devices away:** The research is clear: using smartphones to text or play games that are not related to the lesson reduces your ability to learn due to the distraction caused by *task switching*. So, put away smartphones and other personal electronic devices (whether a Nintendo Switch, personal Mac or PC laptop, etc.), unless I specifically ask you to use it as part of a lesson. You can charge your phone up front (if you have a cable), or pack it away in your bag; otherwise, it goes to me until the end of class.
4. **Be respectful and keep this a safe place for learning:** Show respect for the ideas and feelings of all members of our classroom and school. Sexist, racist, homophobic, or any other hurtful comments will not be tolerated in our classroom community.
5. **Do your own work on individual assessments:** Submitting the work of another TuHS student (past or present), or from a paper mill, etc. - as detected by [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) or other indications - is a serious violation of academic integrity that will be addressed with the student, parents and administrators, with the real possibility of significant consequences to the course grade. The same goes for those who give their papers or assessments to other students to use.
6. **Please let me know if you have concerns or would like help with something:** I am here because I want to help you learn and see you succeed. You can see me before or after class, send me an email requesting a time to meet, or set up a time for before or after school. While all teachers are busy, you are my top priority: one way or another, I will find a time when I can listen, or help you study, or review, or provide feedback.

## Grading

### **Process** = 40% of the grade

This category includes classwork assignments, occasional homework assignments, participation in a variety of discussion formats and simulations,, and most aspects of individual or team projects or presentations.

### **Performance** = 35% of the grade

This category includes all writing and reading assessments, as well as some aspects of team; students may submit revisions until the final deadline in early January; if you would prefer to do a retake of a written assessment, you can do so for one assessment during the semester (after scheduling to take it after school).

### **Midterm and Final Exam** = 25% of the final grade

This category includes the cumulative Midterm score, and the cumulative Final Exam score. If the Final Exam score is higher than the Midterm score, then it will *replace* it (as long as the Midterm was taken). If it is lower, then the average of the two will stand. All other quizzes are practice quizzes that prepare you for the Midterm and Final Exam. You get "Process" (assignment credit) for completing them, but they otherwise do not affect your grade.

**The grade scale is modified** to make sense of a standards-based system in which most scores are reported as a 4 (Exceeds the standard), 3 (Meets the standard), 2 (Nearly meets the standard) or 1 (Beginning to address the standard). Here's the issue: to a computer grade book, a student who gets all 3s would have a percentage of 75%, which would be assigned as a C on the traditional grade scale, but we (as a Social Studies department) believe a student who meets all standards should earn a grade of B (to give just one example). As a result, here is the adjusted scale for this class:

**A:** 87.5-100%

**B:** 70-87.4%

**C:** 50-69.9% OR the student had a higher percentage but never completed 1 core assessment (including the final exam)

**D:** 40-49.9% OR the student had a higher percentage but never completed 2 or more of the core assessments (including final)

**F:** Below 40% OR the student had a higher percentage but never completed 3 or more of the core assessments (including final)

**Important:** By default, you will be expected to make up any **assessments** you have missed during class, *within 1 week of your return from the absence*. You would need to make up any missed work from that day of class. If you would rather not miss class time by doing the makeup assessment, then you may arrange any time I have available before or after school, or on an A day, within one school week of the absence in order to make it up. Once you make up an assessment, the grade will be updated to reflect the fact that it is no longer missing.

**TAG Statement:** 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 (on the principle of "different work" not "more work"), in order to ensure that students designated as "Talented as Gifted" (TAG) receive academic instruction that is appropriate for their rate and level of learning.