

Environmental Policy

Zoo Academy

Omaha Public Schools/Papillion La Vista Community Schools

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Term: Fall 2017
Meeting Time: A1, A2, A3, B3



I. **Class Description:**

This semester-long course examines the government of the United States, through a specific emphasis of how the government develops and establishes policies regarding the environment. The course begins with an overview of the guiding principles of the formation of the government, before examining the role of different governmental and non-governmental agencies in formulating policies and legislation. Students will also examine how the policy of the United States contrasts to international frameworks on the environment. The varying levels of government will also be examined to see how policy is implemented at state, local, national, and international scales.

II. **Content Objectives:**

- a. **Political Action:** Examine a public policy issue by defining the problem, developing alternative courses of action, evaluating the consequences of each alternative, selecting a course of action, and designing a plan to implement the action and resolve the problem.
- b. **Government Institutions:** Compare a variety of different content including political parties, forms of government, demographic groups, etc.
- c. **Political Trends:** Use data to make predictions and draw conclusions by conducting research on voting patterns, voter demographics, and examine Supreme Court decisions.
- d. **Political Process:** Identify how public policy is shaped by governmental and non-governmental institutions and political processes.
- e. **Core American Values:** Explain the current and historical interpretations of principles related to American core values (such as due process and equal protection of the law); synthesize why/how those interpretations changed over time.
- f. **Government Levels:** Demonstrate skills that enable people to monitor and influence state, local and national affairs. For example: Working with others; conducting civil conversations; articulating ideas and interests; negotiating differences and managing conflict with people or groups who have different perspectives; using parliamentary procedures; building consensus.
- g. **Political Bias:** Evaluate sources of information and various forms of political persuasion for validity, accuracy, ideology, emotional appeals, bias and prejudice.

III. **Readings and Study Materials:**

United States Government: principles in Practice, Fraga, Luis Ricardo, Holt McDougal, 2010.

Additional Readings and resources will be used throughout the course of the semester

IV. Unit Overviews:

a. Unit I – Principles of American Democracy (5 Weeks)

This introductory unit will begin familiarizing students with the most basic concepts and understandings of the United States Government. A special emphasis will be placed on the basic principles which the United States Government was formed around, and how those principles can be seen in the institutions and structures of the government.

b. Unit II – The Role of Government in Forming Policy (5 Weeks)

The second unit of study will focus on the structures of the national federal government. Through the examination of the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches, students will gain a better understanding at the powers of each branch, and how they are able to influence policy. Special influence will be added to the role of citizens, and how they are able to influence the decisions that the government makes about policies.

c. Unit III – Role of Non-Federal Entities in Forming Policy (5 Weeks)

In Unit III students will be examining how state and local governmental branches and non-government organizations are able to influence the creation and passage of policy and laws. Special emphasis is placed on how non-government agencies operate within parameters set by government, and how they are able to influence the government at different levels.

d. Unit IV – American Policy within an International Framework (3 Weeks)

Students will examine the role of the United States within a larger global context and examine how actions made by the United States government can have a wider global impact, but also how international agreements and governmental organizations can impact decisions made by the United States.

*This schedule is tentative and subject to change

V. Omaha Public Schools Evaluation

Omaha Public Schools students' coursework and assessments are judged based on the level of student learning from "below basic" to "advanced." This course will provide multiple opportunities to achieve at the "proficient" to "advanced" levels. Students are evaluated based on a proficiency scale or project rubric.

A final score for each reporting topic/standard will be determined using a trend score. A trend score looks at the progression of learning throughout the unit of study or the course and puts greater emphasis on the increased achievement at the end of learning. All coursework and assessments are important for student learning and should be completed to provide evidence of learning. If multiple assignments or major assessments (final exam) are not completed, zeros will be given and the grade for the topic/standard will be determined by averaging.

At the end of a grading period, trended scores for each reporting topic/standard will be averaged using assigned folder weights. This weighted average is converted to a letter grade using this grading scale for the 2016-2017 school year.

Proficiency scales for this course are available upon request (teacher will identify location such as parent portal, teacher website, attached, etc.)

VI. Grading Procedures

- a. Redoing/Revising Coursework: Students are allowed redos and revisions of coursework for full credit during that unit of study. Scores for student work after retaking, revising or redoing will not be averaged with the first attempt at coursework or assessment but will replace the original student score.
- b. Late Coursework: Students are expected to complete missing coursework. Late coursework is accepted for full credit until the end of the unit. Once late coursework is turned in, the zero will be replaced with the score earned by the student. Late work completed during the unit of study will not result in a reduction in grade. Work that is not turned in during the unit of study will receive a reduced score.

Missing Coursework: Work not turned in at all will receive a score of M. An M is weighted the same as a zero in the gradebook. Students have until the end of the unit to hand in any missing assignments. Accommodations due to extended illnesses are to be arranged with the teacher.

VII. Grading Scales

Omaha Public Schools	Papillion La Vista Community Schools
A = 3.51 – 4.00	A = 100% - 90%
A- = 3.01 – 3.50	B = 89% - 80%
B = 2.51 – 3.00	C = 79% - 70%
B- = 2.01 – 2.50	D = 69% – 60%
C = 1.51 – 2.00	F = 59% - 0%
D = 0.76 - 1.50	
F = 0.00 – 0.75	

VIII. Course Requirements

- a. Daily Warm-Ups: Each day of the class students will be required to do daily warm-up questions from the class forum that can be found at the bottom of the course website or by using the following link <http://www.mrtredinnick.com/environmental-policy-forum>. These daily forums will have questions to help connect the materials that will be covered in the day's lesson to the students' own personal pre-conceptions or ideas.
- b. Assignments: All assignments can be completed and handed in a variety of ways. They be completed by printing off the assignments from the course website and handing in physical copies to the teacher. Students can complete assignments and submit them digitally using the assignment form at the bottom of the course website. Or students can see the teacher for physical copies of the assignments that can then be handed in physically or digitally.
- c. Tests/Quizzes: Tests will be taken in class on a designated date. If a student is unable to complete the test during the testing time due to illness or other factors it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the instructor to come up with alternate arrangements for the test.

IX. Academic Dishonesty/Cheating

Any students caught cheating, or attempting to cheat, will be given an automatic zero on the assignment. Further action may be taken depending on the situation.

X. Honors option

Students have the option to take the course as an honors class that would be labeled as such on their schedule/transcript. Honors students would have additional assignments which they would

have to complete along with the assignments of the normal class (unless otherwise stated). Honors classes help improve a student’s marketability when applying for colleges.

XI. Assessments and Weights

Assessment Type	Category Weight (%) OPS/PAPLV
Summative Assessment: assessments/assignments are major end of learning unit tests or projects, (e.g., a research paper, an oral report with a power point, science fair project). Summative assignments are graded for accuracy. Summative assignments assess the student’s progress on grade level standards.	65% / 70%
Formative Assessment: assessments/assignments are done for learning. They are minor assignments, (e.g., a three paragraph essay, written responses to guiding questions over an assigned reading, completion of a comparison contrast matrix). Formative assignments are graded for accuracy and descriptive feedback is provided. Descriptive feedback provides the student with the necessary information to improve their learning. Formative work is at the student’s instructional level and/or grade level standards.	35% / 30%

Multipliers: All assignments will be the standard x1 multiplier unless otherwise stated. Assignments will be listed in the gradebook with labeling as either a formative or summative assignment, and any special multiplier will be explained in the explanation of the assignment. All end of unit examinations will be counted as a Summative Assessment with a x2 multiplier.

XII. Targeted Learning Standards

SS12.1.1 *Students will analyze and evaluate the foundation, structures, and functions of the United States Government as well as local, state, and international governments. (Indicator 12.1.1a, 12.1.1b)*

SS12.1.2 *Students will address local, state, national or international issues and policies through meaningful civic participation. (Indicator 12.1.2 a, 12.1.2b, 12.1.2 c, 12.1.2e)*

SS 12.2.10: *Students will analyze the role and responsibilities of government in various economic systems (Indicator 12.2.10.d)*

SS 12.2.11 *Students will examine the government’s influence on economic systems through fiscal policy (Indicator 12.2.11 b)*

XIII. Grading Rubrics

Unit Discussion Board Grading Rubric				
	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Quality and Relevance	Thoughtfully supported argumentation (supported with facts, not opinions). Post stays on topic and cites specific readings to support argument.	Post mostly stays on topic but contains arguments that are not supported, or are personal opinion. Argument uses readings as basis for factual support.	Argument made with mention to articles, but not with specific mention. Argument attempts to answer question, but does not fully explain.	Argument confusing or disconnected to topic being discussed. Not supported with hard evidence. Only one post attempted.
Expanding on Discussion	Post references outside arguments made by outside sources (along with assigned readings), or other students. Multiple readings sourced in responses.	Post references outside source, or reading, or other student, but not combination of any two. Posts mostly references and all come from reputable sources.	Posts reference outside material, but does not source materials. Outside sources do not come from reputable sources.	Post does not reference outside materials, or contain reputable information or only contains personal opinion.
Timeliness	Student contributes promptly with at least one post made within the first week the thread was open. Posts made with enough opportunity for other students to respond.	Posts all completed on time, with time enough for students to make comments and respond. First post not made within first week of thread being open.	Posts completed on time, but not all with enough time for others to comment on. First post not made within first week of thread being open.	Posts completed, but not all posted until after designated completion date. Does not give other students enough time to respond.
Quality	Student posted 3 times (5 for honors) throughout course of unit (answering original questions or responding to posts made by other students). Posts contain appropriate level grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	Minor noticeable errors in mechanics. Student completed at least 75% of required amount of posts.	Noticeable errors making content difficult to understand, but message is still conveyed. At least 50% of posts completed.	Errors make comprehension of argument difficult. Less than 50% of posts completed.

Assignment Grading Rubric					
	No Evidence (0)	Attempted (1)	Basic (2)	Reaching (3)	Advanced (4)
Question Completion	Assignment missing, or none of the questions answered	Student at least attempted to answer one or more questions	At least 50% of questions answered, though some are incorrect or lack depth of thought	At least 75% of questions answered fully, and completely, but some questions are incomplete	All questions are answered correctly, showing clear depth of thought
Thought Questions	Assignment missing, or no proof of attempt to do assignment	Student attempted to respond, but failed to answer more than half of required tasks	Answers show basic understanding of concepts, though some are incorrect or incomplete	Answers show comprehension of ideas though might be lacking reasoning or evidence to support answer	Obvious mastery of ideas in answer shows that student understands concepts clearly and
Depth of Thinking	Assignment missing, or no evidence of attempt to do assignment	Some evidence that student understands, but answer is confusing or incomplete	Answer contains definition, but lacks analysis and higher order thinking	Question contains analysis, but some ideas need further explanation	Answers exhibit higher order thinking, <u>or answers questions as completely as needed</u>
Sources	No Sources Given	Student gives name of source, but no other information	Url given, but source not properly formatted, or source does not come from a credible site	Source is formatted, but some information missing. Information comes from a credible site	Source is properly formatted in MLA, APA, or Chicago, and comes from a credible news source