

VA and United States Government

Fall 2022

Teacher: Mr. Brad Miller

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Room: 216

Canvas: <https://madisonschoolsva.instructure.com/login/canvas>

Welcome to Virginia and United States Government, you will be studying how our government was founded along with the structure of government. You will be learning how the government affects us everyday through different linkage institutions that have been created by the Constitution and by custom. You will discover your political ideology and research the opposite side. We will investigate the differences between our state and local governments with our national government. Finally, we will participate in a class community service project and discuss our volunteering benefits the community.

Topics studied include:

- Foundations of American Government
- The Constitution
- Federalism
- Legislative Branch
- Executive Branch and Bureaucracy
- Judicial Branch
- State and Local Government
- Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
- Political Beliefs and Behaviors
- Public Policy

Classroom Values:

Behavior expectations in this class are simply summarized in the following statement: My classroom is a safe space in which everyone is learning and is RESPECTFUL of one another. If further clarification is needed, see below:

- “Safe Space” refers first and foremost to the physical safety of both individuals and their property, but also to social and emotional safety. This does NOT mean that we will avoid controversial issues or that we will be placing undue limits on free speech; it DOES, however, mean that such issues will be approached respectfully, and that the right of free speech will be exercised productively and responsibly, that the classroom is and should always be a welcoming social environment, and that bullying or intentionally making others feel unwelcome or uncomfortable will not be tolerated.
- “Everybody is learning” means not only that you enter the classroom each day prepared both physically and mentally to learn, but also that you refrain from any activity that might distract from your learning or the learning of others.
- *To be sure we are on the same page in terms of these expectations, here are a few guidelines that will help make the classroom a safe space where everyone is learning:*
 - Students are expected to be in their assigned seats on time at the beginning of every class period, with the necessary materials to begin class.
 - Students are expected to participate actively in class, which means listening attentively to the individual speaking (whether a student or the teacher), and making comments and asking questions at the appropriate times.

- **Students are expected to avoid distracting or disruptive activities, including (but not limited to) consuming large quantities of food, or using personal electronic devices for non-academic purposes.**
- **Students are expected to use academic and classroom-appropriate language, and to speak respectfully to and about their peers and teachers.**
- Students are expected to respect the personal space and property of others, and to avoid doing anything that might intentionally or unintentionally cause harm to a person or their property.
- And perhaps most importantly, **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO MAKE MISTAKES**, but also to **own up to them** and to be **willing to work to fix them**.

GRADING POLICY

Nine Weeks Grade

- Classwork and Homework –40%
- Tests and Projects—60%.

Final Grade–

- First nine weeks –45%
- Second nine weeks-- 45%
- Cumulative learning experience--10%

- Students are encouraged to check PowerSchool to keep track of their grades.

LATE WORK POLICY

Any person who does not turn in an assignment the day it is due will receive 10 points off for **each** day it is late up to **5 days**. After 5 days, the work will not be accepted for credit.

If absent, please make sure you check in Canvas for the work that you have missed.

Suggested Supplies:

- 3 - Ring Notebook 1 ½ inch
- College Ruled Notebook Paper
- Dry Erase Marker and Eraser
- Colored Pencils or Markers
- 3 pieces of Poster Board

Canvas Info: Canvas will be updated daily for students to review or retrieve information from the class.

Textbook Info: Shea, Daniel M. (2018). Magruder's American Government. Pearson Education Inc.

Communication:

The best way to contact me is via email. I will do my best to respond within 24 academic hours. The best time to reach me by phone is from 12:30 to 1:30 or after 3PM.