



# Government & Civics



## ~Course Overview~

**Instructor:** Mr. Schaefer  
**Room #:** 508  
**Phone:** 596-7218  
**Email:** mschaefer@osd.wednet.edu  
**School/year:** Olympia H. S. Spring 2007

**About the course:** This senior social studies course is a study of American democracy and political processes. While learning about federalism, the separation of powers, and all levels of government, students will also become familiar with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute U. S. politics. Guest speakers such as politicians, journalists, civil servants, judges, activists, model citizens and others will be frequently requested to address and work with the class. While learning how to objectively analyze the media and public perception, students will also be given the opportunity to become actively involved themselves.

### Expectations:

1. Come to class *prepared* each and every day! This includes the completion of all written assignments as well as readings for class discussion/participation/quizzes and exams.
2. Late work **will not** be accepted unless you are ill or have been given prior permission from Mr. Schaefer. Partial credit is given for incomplete work but will only be credited to your grade after the assignment is returned to you, completed and resubmitted.
3. You are responsible for work missed during absences. If ill, you will have the number of days missed to make up the work. If you know you are going to be gone (for sports, music, etc.) your assignment is due before you go. **Exams and quizzes** may only be made up for excused absences and must be taken *the day you return*.
4. **Plagiarism** of any sort will not be tolerated and will result in a loss of grade and referral to the OHS discipline policy. This includes copying another student's homework. Be careful!
5. You are expected to refrain from the following in class:  
-Profanity   -character attacks   -use of cell phones, CD/MP3 players, video games, etc.
6. OHS attendance and discipline policies will be enforced! See your student handbook.

### Grading scale: (SCORES ARE NOT ROUNDED!)

A	= 93.33-100%	C+	= 76.67-79.99%
A-	= 90.0-93.32%	C	= 73.33-76.66%
B+	= 86.67-89.99%	C-	= 70.0-73.32%
B	= 83.33-86.66%	D+	= 66.67-69.99%
B-	= 80.0-83.32%	D	= 60.0-66.66%

*I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.*

*-Voltaire*

## **Government and Civics Assignments**

(Below is a general list of assignments given in this course.)

### **Civic Action Project -200 points**

*This assignment requires you to find an issue or cause that you can get involved with. (Examples will be provided) It is a semester long project with several due dates, a final “product,” and presentation. You will be permitted to work with a partner on this project.*

### **Media Analysis -150 points**

*Throughout the semester, you will complete 5 separate analytical components (political cartoon, liberal source, conservative source, “neutral” source, and a broadcast media comparison.) You will then write a comprehensive general media analysis reflecting on all of the sources and articles you covered.*

### **Thought Talk -100 points**

*This group (of 4) assignment puts you in the role of “teacher.” You will choose from a list of controversial current issues related to our topics of study. You will then research BOTH sides of the issue, and prepare a professional presentation for the class.*

### **Federal Budget Project -100 points**

*Serving as our “final assessment,” our class will become the federal Office of Management and Budget. You will apply what you have learned this semester while negotiating a balanced budget that reflects our class’s collective vision of America’s fiscal priorities. This assignment forces you to look at the issues from an economic perspective while teaching about government fiscal policy making.*

### **Reading & Unit quizzes -100-150 points**

*This should encourage you to take good notes! Just like a college course, you will be asked to recall and synthesize information in class and in reading assignments.*

### **Participation -100 points**

*Because this is a discussion based, seminar style course, approximately 10% of your grade will be based on class participation. Have no fear, as the frequency of verbal participation is NOT the sole determining factor of this grade. Each six-week grading period, you will be assessed based on a rubric that equally measures five categories;*

- 1) active listening, 2) willingness to participate, 3) preparedness,*
- 4) constructive communication, 5) effective/on-task group participation.*

### **Miscellaneous/Homework –approximately 100-150 points**

*Throughout the semester you will be required to complete a variety of thought provoking written assignments designed to enhance your comprehension*