

American Government CR

COURSE DESCRIPTION: American Government is the study of the historical backgrounds, governing principles, and institutions of the government of the United States. The focus is on the principles and beliefs upon which the United States was founded and on the structure, functions, and powers of government at the national, state, and local levels. The principles of popular sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, republicanism, federalism, and individual rights will be examined as will the roles of individuals and groups in the American political system. Students will compare the American system of government with other modern systems and assess the strengths and problems associated with the American system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

After completing the course, students will be able to:

- ◆ Explore the various forms of government found around the world.
- ◆ Analyze the structure and contents of the Constitution.
- ◆ Identify the powers of Congress.
- ◆ Examine the roles of the President.
- ◆ Describe the power of the Supreme Court.
- ◆ Analyze case law protecting civil liberties.
- ◆ Evaluate the workings of a two party system and the role of minor parties in that system.
- ◆ Examine the role interest groups play in American politics.
- ◆ Examine the process of creating the federal budget.
- ◆ Identify the impact of the foreign policy agenda of the United States.

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE LENGTH: One semester

REQUIRED TEXT: None

COURSE OUTLINE:

UNIT 1: Our American Government

- ◆ Section A- What is Government?
- ◆ Section B- Origins of American Government
- ◆ Section C- Structure and Principles of Government
- ◆ Section D- Amending the Constitution

Unit 2: Legislative and Executive Branches

- ◆ Section A- The Structure and Powers of Congress
- ◆ Section B- The Structure and Powers of the Executive Branch

- ◆ Section C- Departments and Organization of the Executive Branch
- ◆ Section D- How a Bill Becomes a Law

Unit 3: The Judicial Branch and Civil Law

- ◆ Section A- Structure of the Court System
- ◆ Section B- The Supreme Court
- ◆ Section C- Civil Liberties
- ◆ Section D- Civil Rights

Unit 4: Political Participation

- ◆ Section A- Political Parties
- ◆ Section B- Nominations and Campaigns
- ◆ Section C- Elections
- ◆ Section D- Individual Political Participation

Unit 5: Economics and International Relations

- ◆ Section A- Economic Systems and the U.S. Economy
- ◆ Section B- Revenue and Expenditures
- ◆ Section C- Budget Making Process
- ◆ Section D- Foreign Policy