

## **American Government and Civics**

This course is designed to help scholars understand the basis of our governmental system. There are standards, but there is usually a lot of time to discuss what is happening in the government and in our country.

In this course we will study the foundations of our system of government, how each branch of the government works, and how state and local governments operate and work with the federal government. We will also learn and discuss ways that you as citizens can and do participate in government and civic life.

There are handouts that I will post online for distance learners, but a lot of this is student centered. Scholars will be expected to do research, but also be able to pull information out of given texts to answer questions appropriately. Everything will be posted and can be turned in in Google Classroom.

Most of the text of the course can be found at:

<http://www.gavirtualearning.org/Resources/SSResources/SSShared/SharedAmericanGovernment.aspx>

Supplemental materials can be found at [www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org)

### **Course Units and Standards**

Unit 1: Foundations of American Government

Unit 2: The United States Constitution

Unit 3: The Federal System of Government

Unit 4: The Election Process and Civic Responsibility

Unit 5: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Unit 6: The Legislative Branch

Unit 7: The Executive Branch, Federal Bureacracy, and Foreign Policy

Unit 8: The Judicial Branch and Criminal Justice Process

Unit 9: Georgia Government and the State Constitution

**Georgia High School Standards of Excellence for American Civics and Government:**

<https://www.georgiastandards.org/Georgia-Standards/Documents/Social-Studies-Economics-Georgia-Standards.pdf>

## Classroom Procedures

1. Come in, get what you need for class out, and sit down.
2. There will be a question on the board that you will be expected to be able to answer for an opening discussion. There will be times you may be asked to write information down.
3. Classroom discussion and notes. Advisor will let you know what is going on and give any notes or direction that are needed. If you have a question pertaining to our government, this is the time to ask.
4. Work time. Scholars will be given time to work on the assignments. Unless specifically stated, scholars may work together and help each other out; but if too much talking occurs that prevents work, the advisor has the right to stop collaborative work.
5. Close the class with questions or further direction as needed. Advisor will ask for questions or may ask for a ticket out the door so as to help scholars with questions.

## Grading Weights

1. Class work and homework are worth 100 points. All assignments in a week will be divided up and be worth a fraction of 100 so that a perfect score on all of them will add up to 100 points.
2. Class projects, tests, and quizzes are weighted to be worth twice the amount. This means that a multiplier of 2 will be put on these scores.
3. Midterm exam is worth twenty percent of your first semester grade. The Midterm will cover all material presented in the first semester.
4. Final exam is worth twenty percent of your second semester grade. The Final will cover material presented over the course of the entire year.
5. The only extra credit allowed is by doing lessons in Khan Academy, and this is minimal.

## Grading Scale

90-100:	A
80-89:	B
70-79:	C
69 and Below:	F

The state of Georgia requires that all scholars pass this course in order to graduate from high school. If your final grade is between a 60-69 at the end of the year, you will be given the opportunity to complete Credit Repair to lift your grade to passing. If your final grade is less than a 60, you will have to either complete Credit Repair or retake the course in order to receive credit.

## Mr. Mournighan's Classroom Rules

1. No cell phones or personal devices. Per school policy, cell phones should not be turned on in the classroom. It is even better if they stay at home or in your backpack/bookbag if you have one. Personal devices for music will also not be allowed without advisor permission. If your parent needs to contact you, they need to contact the office and the office will pass on any messages. These are following school rules.
2. No chewing gum in my classroom. Tired of picking it up. If I have to consistently remind you, it becomes a matter of disrespecting the teacher and you will receive a home referral or an office referral.
3. The only outside food or drink allowed in my classroom is water. I have spent way too much time cleaning up trash and food particles left behind. This is also per school policy. You will get one warning. After that, I reserve the right to take it from you and throw it in the trash.
4. When I am talking to the class at the front of the room, it is rude to just get up and walk to the trash can or other places without permission. Most of the time you can hold on to it and wait until I am done. If you really need to blow your nose or your pencil broke and you need to sharpen it, just raise your hand so I know what you are doing.
5. Turn in your work on time. Some work will be graded for accuracy and some will be graded for effort (did you try to actually do it). Per the late work policy, work turned in after the due date will receive a point deduction. Work will not be accepted after the deadline date. You can turn in hard copies of assignments, but if you turn in work without a name, a five point deduction will automatically be taken from your score once it has been determined it was yours.
6. Each scholar will have two assignment passes per semester that they can use to be exempt from a missing assignment or an assignment with a low grade. These can not be used for tests, quizzes, and projects. It is the responsibility of the scholar to email the advisor which assignment they would like to use the pass for and why the assignment was not completed or done poorly. If the advisor does not receive an email from the scholar, then the assignment pass will not be applied.
7. I try not to have homework, but it will happen at times. Usually homework will be assignments that are not completed in class.
8. You will have to take notes yourself. No taking pictures of notes on the board (see rule #1) or communal notes.
9. Things that are on Mr. Mournighan's desk are for his use. Please do not grab things from my desk without permission.
10. Make sure you are doing your work. Consequences can be imposed if you are seen not working.
11. Don't worry about mistakes. That is how you learn.
12. Come in, sit down, and follow the procedures.

## Grades 9-12 Late Work Guidelines

All assignments, including In-class, homework and large projects will be due on the assigned date **during** the class period for which it is assigned.

Full credit will be given for work submitted by the assigned date. Scholars may earn partial credit for assignments submitted past the assigned date/class period based on the following:

- Up to 3 days after the due date/class period - 10% deduction for **each** day past the assigned date
- Work missing beyond 3 days/class periods will not be accepted and will be marked as receiving a zero (0)
  - Example: Due on Monday and turned in on Thursday = no higher than 70%, 10% off Tuesday, 10% off Wednesday, 10% off Thursday
  - Another example: Due on Monday and tried to turn in on Friday = zero - not accepted
- Missing Work Form must be completed and turned in with late work

### How Absences Affect Late Work:

#### **Excused Absences**

Full credit will be given to scholars with excused absences for work submitted by updated due dates based on our handbook, page 15.

- Extension to due dates equal to number of days absent
- Upon returning to school, complete Missing Work Form to update due dates with advisor

#### **Unexcused Absences**

Full credit will be given to scholars with unexcused absences for work submitted by original due dates, or upon their return to school, when original due dates occurred during absences.

## PLAGIARISM AND SCHOLAR WORK

Plagiarism is the act of claiming the work of others (ideas or words) as your own. It is academic dishonesty and, like other forms of cheating, hurts the scholar who engages in it. Also, it diminishes the efforts of scholars who did the hard work of learning and creating to then have their ideas and words stolen. Scholars must always cite their source material. When advisors are concerned that scholars have committed plagiarism, they may submit scholar work to an anti-plagiarism website such as Turnitin.com. At Furlow, scholars must write original papers, letters, articles, poetry, scripts, and any other assigned written communication. Any writing assignments from any class (not just ELA) must be at least 67% original and contain no more than 33% cited material. Any work turned in which contains paraphrased or quoted material must have the proper citations using MLA or APA guidelines. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in no academic credit and additional disciplinary action. The minimum penalty for plagiarism is a zero for the work. Advisors may request resubmission of the assignment with original work. Scholars who willfully disregard the plagiarism policy may be disciplined subject to the discipline schedule. Repeated offenses over the scholar's academic career may result in further actions by the administration. All instances of plagiarism will be recorded in Infinite Campus. Cheating will not be tolerated at Furlow; scholars who cheat will be disciplined subject to the discipline schedule.

## ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Furlow prohibits the use of the following electronic devices on the school campus unless explicitly directed by advisors: cell phones, iPods, iPhones, iWatches, CD players, digital cameras, electronic games and toys, laser pointers, laptop computers, tablets, iPads or any other electronic devices (unless a child's I.E.P. requires the use of such a device).

**CELLPHONE POLICY** Cellphones in the classroom can be fabulous tools for advisors and scholars alike; however, they can also be a significant distraction from learning and a source of discipline issues. Cellphone use by scholars is prohibited at Furlow unless the scholars are directly instructed by their advisors to use their phones for educational purposes.

In order to protect the integrity of the educational environment, scholars are specifically prohibited from using any cell phones during school hours. School hours are defined as beginning with the scholar's arrival on campus and ending when the scholar has left for the day. Scholars shall turn off and secure their cell phones in their book bag or other area designated by their advisors (door hanger, box, cubbies, etc.) during the school day. Scholars should not "show" their phones to their peers or pull them out for any reason (i.e. checking the time). The school will not be held responsible for lost or damaged student cell phones. If it becomes necessary for a scholar to use the cell phones for any reason, the child must get permission from school personnel and use the phone in the presence of school personnel. If a parent needs to contact you during the day, they should call the front office of the school.

If a cell phone is seen or heard, it will be confiscated. The guidelines for cell phone or other electronic devices violations are as follows:

1st offense: Student must pay \$6.00 at the end of the day (or the following day if it is taken up after 11:00am).

2nd offense: Student must pay \$7.00 after phone is kept for a week.

3rd offense: Student must pay \$10.00 after phone is kept for two weeks.

After 3rd offense: Discipline will be at the discretion of the administrators.

If a student refuses to give a cell phone or electronic device to an advisor, advisor may write the student up on a discipline referral. Administrator may assign up to five days in ISS for non-compliance.

Administrator will then take up the cell phone and it will be held for one month.

**TECHNOLOGY USE** It is the belief of the Furlow Governing Board that the use of technology for the purpose of information acquisition and retrieval is an important part of preparing children to live in the 21st century. The Governing Board further believes that a "technology rich" classroom can significantly enhance both the teaching and learning process. This technology includes computer hardware, software, local and wide area networks, and access to the Internet. Due to the complex nature of these systems and the magnitude of information available via the Internet, the Furlow Governing Board believes guidelines regarding acceptable use are warranted in order to serve the educational needs of scholars.

The school's technology resources are provided for educational purposes that promote and are consistent with the instructional goals of the Furlow. Use of computers and network resources outside the scope of this educational purpose is strictly prohibited. Scholars and employees accessing network services or any school computer shall comply with the school's acceptable use guidelines. The school reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose the contents of any user's files, activities, or communications.

Email accounts are provided to advisors and scholars as long as they are active in the school. They will be deleted when their status changes.

It must also be understood that the Internet is a global, fluid community, which remains largely unregulated. While it is an extremely valuable tool for educational research, there are sections that are not commensurate with community, school, or family standards. It is the belief of the Board that the Internet's advantages far outweigh its disadvantages. The Furlow Board will, through its administrative staff, provide an Internet screening system which blocks access to a large percentage of inappropriate sites.

Additionally, access to the Internet and computer resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, users violating the Furlow Board's acceptable use policy shall be subject to revocation of these privileges and potential disciplinary action. Contact should be made in writing stating the nature of the grievance and indicating how you may be reached in order to schedule a conference. Furlow Charter School supports the rights of scholars and staff to have reasonable access, in school, to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon scholars and staff to use this educational advantage in an appropriate and responsible manner.