U.S. GOVERNMENT
(REGULAR & HONORS)

Overview
U.S. Government is a blended class, meaning that much of the course work will be posted to Canvas and students will upload their work to Canvas. We will use our class time to enhance the material being covered through lectures, discussions, activities, projects, and testing. Students will need to join my Canvas class to facilitate this course. Students should already be in the Canvas class but if for some reason the class tile does not appear on their dashboard, then please let me know and I will add the student manually.

Due to Covid-19, if any student becomes quarantined, it is essential that you make sure that you are checking the “Quarantine Plans” module on Canvas for your assignments, due dates, and instructions. Canvas will be used to house our course material and MS Teams for communicating with each other.

The intent of this course is to give students an overview of United States Government. Students will be asked to utilize prior knowledge, incorporate new information, and challenge preconceived notions as they think critically about past events and reflect thoughtfully on the future. Hopefully, the course will be engaging as well as challenging. The content will address various government concepts, as well as exploring individual perspectives. Various learning methods will be used throughout the course to ensure that the information will remain interesting and appealing to all students. Canvas will be used in our classroom to assist in the learning process. I will be uploading assignments, quizzes, etc. onto Canvas for students to access and complete at home. All work to be turned into me must be in writing. If specified that it is a CANVAS assignment, then it must be uploaded to Canvas. Login information will be given during the first week of school.

COURSE EVALUATION
Grading Scale
There is no rounding of grade percentages. The two quarters are numerically averaged for your semester grade.

A = 100 – 90
B = 89 – 80
C = 79 – 70
D = 69 – 60
F = 59 – 0

Teacher’s Authority to Override Final Grade: Teacher reserves the right to override the grade if a student’s overall performance warrants it. Proficiency is defined by the state of Florida and in the Student Progression Plan as 70% or higher. Mastery is defined as 90% or higher. This refers to the final grade of the grading period, or the final grade for the course.

Grades: The following is the grade distribution that is required by the Volusia County schools. Listed are types of assignments that will count under each weighted category.

Summative Assignments 60%
- Chapter Exams

- Unit Exams
- Research project/paper
- Culminating assignment
- Unit Mastery Project
• County End of Course Exams
• Formative Assignments 40%
  • Interactive Student Notebook ("ISN")
  • Homework
• DBQ Essays
• Quizzes
• In class assignments
• Projects
• Class discussions
• Practice presentations

Diagnostic Assignments 0%
• Pre-tests
• Reviews
• Class Participation
• Progress Reports

There will be a final administered at the end of the semester for a double-weighted summative grade.

Summative Assessment Retakes:
Students shall have the opportunity to retake a summative up to (2) weeks from the time the summative was given. In order to qualify for a retake on a summative the student must make an appointment with the teacher to discuss what the student must complete in order to qualify for the retake. For instance, in order to retake a summative, all formatives must be completed and submitted to me prior to the retake date. Retakes will only be administered during dates and times offered by teacher either during lunch or after school. Students will receive the higher of the two grades, as their final summative assignment grade.

Classroom Rules and Expectations
1. Students are expected to have their book (when requested) and a 1" binder
2. **AT NO TIME ARE PHONES TO BE OUT DURING INSTRUCTIONAL TIME.** A warning will be given once, after that, a referral will be given for violation of the “no cell phone” rule.
3. Students are to come to class on time. If late, they must report to the Tardy Room.
4. Students are to be wearing their school ID at all times in order to be admitted into class.
5. Students should demonstrate a respect for others.
6. Absolutely **no gum** chewing in class.
7. No food or drinks allowed in class except for water.

Course Description
Units to be covered
1. Foundations of American Government – chapters 1-4
2. The Legislative Branch – chapters 5 - 8
3. The Executive Branch – chapters 9 - 12
4. The Judicial Branch – chapters 13 - 16
5. Participating in Government – chapters 17 - 20

Materials: Students will maintain a dedicated 1” binder ("ISN" or “binder") for this class. Within the binder students will organize all their classroom notes and handouts. Binders will be graded for a classroom assignment at the end of the quarter. Students must have all notes and handouts organized for the current quarter to receive credit.

Homework: The purpose of homework is to prepare the student for classroom discussion and various activities completed in the classroom. The majority of the homework assignments that are
given are readings that require the student to answer questions. The purpose of the reading and answering of the questions is to prepare the student for an assessment on the material.

**Absent Work:**
All absent work can be obtained from the teacher if not already posted on Canvas and must be turned in on a timely basis. It is the job of the student to obtain all absent work upon their return to the classroom after their absence. All work assigned whether formative or summative must be completed and submitted before the unit test at the end of the current unit and before the start of the next unit. Once the next unit has begun, only the current unit work and retakes of summatives will be accepted. If absent on a day of an exam, student will need to plan to make up the exam that was missed, but not to exceed one week from the date the exam was administered.

**Tardiness:**
Students that enter class more than 5 minutes late will be marked “late” in attendance. Student will be permitted to enter class but please do so as quietly and respectfully as possible since class has already started. Student will be responsible for obtaining any information or work given prior to his/her arrival to class. No extra time will be awarded on tests or assignments if student arrives late.

**Student Podcasts** are due at the beginning of class every Friday. Every day students watch CNN Student Podcasts during the first 10 minutes of class and they take notes on the key stories covered during the podcast. Notes on the stories must be written in complete sentences. A bullet list of facts is not acceptable. If student is absent on that day, then student can watch the podcast on their own as the past podcasts are available for the week. Podcasts are NEVER accepted late (except if student was absent on Friday, then it MUST be turned in on student’s first day back in order to receive credit). It is the one assignment that must be turned in on time in order to receive credit or not at all.

**Unit Mastery Projects:**
At the end of most units’ students will be required to submit a Unit Mastery Project (“UMP”) demonstrating their proficiency of their content knowledge. The method of demonstration will be determined by the student or students. A handout will be provided to students which details this project.

**Social Studies Fair Projects** are mandatory, and each student is expected to participate for a grade. Packets of information on the fair projects will be distributed later in the year.

**Extra credit** is offered for special projects from time to time. Extra credit is optional but strongly recommended. No other extra credit opportunities will be given outside of class.

**Viewing of PG-13 Movie Release**
Often appropriate documentaries or PG-13 movies or sections of PG-13 movies can be utilized effectively to enrich classroom instruction and accomplish identified objectives. If you give permission for your child to view such materials, you do not have to do anything. (NOTE: NO “R” rated movies will ever be shown per Volusia County School Board Policy). If you do NOT wish to grant permission for your child to view any PG-13 movies identified by the teacher as effective in
teaching the curriculum, please contact me via email at ggdorcy@volusia.k12.fl.us or send in a note with your student.

**Academic Honesty:** The school policy regarding academic integrity and honesty will be enforced. Please refer to the *Academic Integrity policy and your Code of Conduct* booklet for details. If evidence of plagiarism was discovered by the teacher, the cheater and cheatee both will receive a zero for that assignment until student has met and discussed the situation with me and the grade will be updated once the student has demonstrated that the learning or skill was achieved.
DeLand High School Student Academic Integrity Policy

In a world of ever-changing priorities one constant is the need for ethical academic standards. The guidelines presented in the policy below show student expectations regarding cheating, plagiarism and academic honesty. These guidelines and expectations cover all school related projects, reports, tests, quizzes and assignments whether in or outside of class. By signing this statement students acknowledge their understanding of the stated expectations and possible consequences.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (http://www.m-w.com/) to plagiarize is:
“To steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own: use (another’s production) without crediting the source. To commit literary theft: present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.”

At DeLand High School plagiarism includes but is not limited to:
• Using another person’s words or ideas (written or spoken) without giving credit to the source.
• Copying and pasting material from any source including the Internet without giving attribution to the writer. You must put quotation marks around direct quotes and give credit in your works cited list.
• Changing the words or order of words from another source and submitting them as your own. Even with proper paraphrasing you must give credit to the source of the materials.

“When you use someone else’s words, you must put quotation marks around them and give the writer or speaker credit by revealing the source in a citation. Even if you revise or paraphrase the words of someone else or just use their ideas, you still must give the author credit in a note. Not giving due credit to the creator of an idea or writing is very much like lying.”

Dr. Robert Harris - Virtual Salt Anti-Plagiarism Strategies - http://www.virtualsalt.com/antiplag.htm

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary (http://www.m-w.com/) to cheat means: “to get something by dishonesty or deception.”

At DeLand High School cheating includes but is not limited to:
• Copying an assignment from another person without explicit permission from the teacher. This includes sharing work that should be individually produced and includes obtaining answers from another student with or without their permission.
• Using, supplying or communicating with unauthorized devices with the intent of deception. This will include but is not limited I-Pad, calculator, camera, textbook, recorder, computer, phone, etc.
• Failing to follow teacher guidelines regarding collaboration, parent help, etc. Students will be expected to complete work independently unless specifically directed otherwise by the teacher.

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES:
First Offense: Second Offense: Third Offense:
Zero on assignment First offense consequences plus: 1st and 2nd off. Cons. Plus:
Parent notification Parent/student/teacher/ Referral to administration,
Referral to counselor, counselor conference, Suspension from extracurricular activities, elected offices and/or Senior privileges.

Student Name (Print) ___________________________ Alpha Code: ______

Student Signature ________________________________

Parent Signature: ________________________________

Portions adapted from John F. Kennedy H.S., Norcross H.S. and Langley H.S. policies with their permission. Updated December 2007
Dear Parents and Students:

The syllabus, grading policies and procedures, and class rules for this class are posted on Canvas as well as on the school website for your convenience and can be accessed at any time.

Please sign below indicating your receipt of this information. I am looking forward to a successful school year. Feel free to contact me by email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Graye Dorcy

SIGNATURE PAGE MUST BE RETURNED TO MRS. DORCY BY NEXT CLASS!

Student’s Printed Name: ___________________ ALPHA Code: _____ Period: _____

I have read and understood the information on this page and on the website and understand the rules, policies and expectations of this course.

Parent or guardian signature: ______________________________________ Dated: __________

Student’s Signature: ____________________________________________ Dated: __________

Viewing of PG-13 Movie Release
Helping your student become a lifelong learner is a primary goal in my classroom. I want my students to discover that learning can be a source of enjoyment. As a result, I will use a wide range of non-traditional instructional materials of high academic merit including popular literature, appropriate and instructionally related movies such as documentaries and/or movie clips rated G, PG and PG-13. If you feel that certain material may not be appropriate for your student, please notify me in writing with your concerns. Your signature below will serve as your consent for your student to use all of the alternative instructional materials as described above.

Parent or guardian signature: ____________________________ Dated: __________

Contact Information

Parent Information (please print)
Full name of parent or guardian ____________________________________________________________

Address ________________________________________________________________

Home phone number ______________ Best time to reach you __________

Cell phone number __________________________ Best time to reach you __________

E-mail address (very important) ________________________________