# Virginia and United States Government

## 2016-2017 Syllabus, Mrs. Shangraw

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**Please keep this document as a reference, but my website will always contain the most up-to-date information on class procedures, assignments, announcements, study links and materials.**

##### Course Description

Welcome to U.S. & Virginia Government! Throughout our year together, we’ll learn about elections, the Constitution, political behavior, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, the media, branches of government, state/local governments and much more. We will incorporate as many current events as we can to illustrate the topics we’re discussing. Our goal is for this class to be relevant and useful to you so that you are an informed citizen, especially since many of you are 18 or will be soon. You will be able to formulate your own informed opinions of our government and political system. Government is relevant to all of us, and we all need to be knowledgeable about it so we understand the power that we all have as voters**. Also, please remember that you need to pass this class in order to graduate.**

##### Classroom Expectations

Our classroom will be a safe environment that supports learning and growth at all times. To achieve this, we will uphold the following expectations:

1. Be kind. Kindness doesn’t cost anything, but it has huge rewards for everyone.
2. Be respectful of yourself and others. Listen to what your instructor and colleagues have to say and respond thoughtfully and respectfully. We will engage with controversial issues in class, and we will not always agree with one another. Those are good things in a democracy, as long as we communicate respectfully and strive to understand before we react.
3. Be prepared for every class:
	* If you are absent, it is your responsibility to obtain your work from the website and/or the makeup folder.
	* You are expected to turn all assignments in on time. Late assignments will receive a penalty, but they are ALWAYS worth doing.

**Materials – Bring to Class Every Day**

* **Three-Ring Binder** (1 ½’ is fine) with 8 dividers
* Blue or black pen, Red pen, pencil, highlighter, blank paper

**Assessments**

This course will include a variety of graded assessments. Assignments will be scored on a weighted basis as follows:

* Summative (tests, quizzes, projects, current events, some in-class assignments) – 90%
* Formative (some in-class assignments, some homework, discussions) – 10%

One Unit Assessment (test or quest) re-assessment will be allowed each quarter. Students must re-assess within two weeks of the original assessment. If a unit assessment falls in the last week of the quarter, the reassessment must be completed before the end of the quarter. In order to re-assess, the student must complete all work that was associated with the unit being tested and must complete test corrections or meet with me for remediation.

**Technology -- BYOT**

We will use technology very often in the classroom. You are welcome to bring in your own personal device (smartphone, tablet, laptop) to participate in certain class activities. If you do not have a BYOT device available, you will still be able to participate. Students are bound by school rules and are not to visit any inappropriate sites or use their devices for purposes not related to the classroom activity. If this occurs, the teachers reserve the right to confiscate the device and turn it into the office for the student to pick up at the end of the day.

**Assistance**

I am available before and after school for extra help in Room 208 by request. You may also send me an email if you have questions or concerns. Please come talk to me and advocate for yourself when you need assistance. I want every student to be successful in this course.

**Plagiarism**

A student displaying integrity understands that plagiarism includes the copying of the language, structure, or ideas of another and passing them off as your own original work. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

* Copying or paraphrasing the work of another person and submitting it as your own
* Internet cut-and-paste
* Summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting without proper citation
* Fabrication of a source citation

I value your integrity and want you to value it as well, and I consider plagiarism or cheating of any kind to be a very serious offense. Any instances of plagiarism or cheating will result in a zero for the assignment, a conference with me, a call home, a report to administration, and a replacement assignment for partial credit. If you know you will have trouble meeting a deadline, please just talk to me – don’t take a shortcut that damages your integrity. If you aren’t sure whether or how to cite or use a source, just ask! I am always happy to consult with you.