

**DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**CURRICULUM GUIDE**

**U.S. Law and Government 300**

**Approved by the Board of Education on May 27, 2008**

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# **DARIEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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## **SECTION I - Course Information**

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## **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

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Social Studies concerns the study of humanity – human relationships and institutions. More specifically, this study can help students understand how people govern themselves, how societies function to meet economic and social needs, and how culture, art, literature and human behavior develop in society.

Our goal is to prepare students for active, informed citizenship by assuring that they understand precisely how the United States is governed. In this course we will study and evaluate political philosophies, the foundational documents of our system of government, the development and role of political parties, the organization and relationship of the institutions of government, and the impact of the media and interest groups on the American political culture.

The History & Social Sciences Department shares responsibility for teaching research and writing skills. Students will complete formal and informal writing assignments, perfect research skills, and employ the broad range of information resources available today.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

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The goal of the Law and Government course is to provide students with a foundation for understanding and interpreting legal and political events and trends in their historical and contemporary contexts. In this course students will understand, analyze and apply factors that affect the relationship between the state and the individual. Students will assess the role of citizenship, the scope and breadth of government, the impact of political parties in the US, and understand political philosophies and expectations regarding the role of government based on principles of good governance and on law.

Using a combination of primary and secondary sources, our goals are

- to expose students to the historical documents that define the United States.
- to help our students develop an appreciation for and an understanding of the need for citizen participation in a democratic republic.
- to further develop and refine student skills in evaluating political figures and public policies.

The enduring understandings that we expect our students to take away from the course are that

- decision-making and politics are shaped by many competing forces and politics is often accurately defined as “the art of the possible.”

- participation in a democracy is essential to its success -- whether it be through running for office, voting, jury duty, influencing public officials, obeying laws or civil disobedience.
- citizens have a responsibility to educate themselves in order to contribute to our society.

## **OVERVIEW**

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We live in a world where many institutions of government and politics are actively questioned on a daily-basis. One objective of the course is to provide students with a framework for understanding that despite the challenge of political and governmental processes, there is an underlying rationale for political behavior and action which requires an understanding of policy and a commitment to participate in the political process.

The course will begin with a focus on developing an understanding of government, its purpose and its multiple forms. The curriculum will progress to discussing approaches to balancing individual rights and responsibilities against government and society's community interests —and how that balancing act results in the formulation of a social contract or governed society. It will also lead to students' developing an understanding of the official power and authority of government and its limits, including but not limited to a broad foundation in the doctrine of federalism. It will lead to a better understanding of the historical contexts under which the Constitution has been interpreted and amended.

The semester course will achieve its goals through the study of federalism, the individual branches of government- Legislative, Executive, Judicial- case law, political parties and non-governmental institutions such as media and interest groups. In addition, the course will study and evaluate state and local politics.

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

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- How can government institutions and laws balance the rights of the individual with the needs of society?
- What role does equality under the law play in maintaining a democracy?
- How does the Constitution provide a blueprint for American government and how does it remain a living document?

- How effective are the system of checks and balances and the separation of powers?
- How has the relationship between the states and the central government evolved through our history?
- What societal and cultural factors affect the political process?

## **PROCESS SKILLS**

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In addition to instilling in students a broad understanding of U.S. law and government, this course has as its goal the development of basic learning skills. These skills have been divided into six broad categories:

**Reading Comprehension Skills:** Students will be able to locate ideas in a textbook, locate the main idea, outline, sequence ideas (timelines and cause/effect), interpret primary source documents, draw conclusions, and create an outline and take organized notes for a research-based paper or project.

**Writing Skills:** Students will be able to write a research-based paper, complete a persuasive project or essay, and document their sources according to the MLA format.

**Study Skills:** Students will be able to take clear and organized notes, prepare a study guide for quizzes and tests, use general and specific reference works, use the internet for research, and evaluate websites for reliable content.

**Oral Expression Skills:** Students will be able to participate in class discussion, listen and respond to classmates, participate in a debate, and conduct an individual and collaborative formal and informal oral presentation.

**Research Skills:** Students will be able to perform library and on-line research. They will also demonstrate the ability to identify, critically evaluate and select appropriate primary and secondary resources, going beyond “popular” search engines and encyclopedias.

**Decision-making and Analysis Skills:** Students will demonstrate the ability to compare, contrast, connect, critique and conclude. Through an examination of available evidence, they will determine (or infer) causation. They will engage in decision-making, first by assessing and evaluating impacts of historical decisions, and then by identifying alternatives, projecting outcomes, and by applying these skills to situations in the world today.

In addition to the six categories, process skills which apply to students taking U.S. Law and Government include:

- ◆ Reading (Decoding)
- ◆ Reading (Comprehending)
- ◆ Reading (Analyzing)
- ◆ Reading (Appreciating)
- ◆ Writing and Language Mechanics
- ◆ Speaking
- ◆ Listening
- ◆ Viewing
- ◆ Studying
- ◆ Reasoning and Reflecting
- ◆ Using Learning Resources and Technology
- ◆ Working Independently and Collaboratively
- ◆ Designing
- ◆ Creating
- ◆ Performing
- ◆ Quantifying
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Graphing
- ◆ Applying Scientific Method

## **GRADING GUIDELINES**

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We will evaluate students' learning using a range of assessments appropriate to their individual learning styles and abilities. Those assessments will include:

- Quizzes and tests
- Persuasive essays
- Research reports
- Oral presentations with visuals
- Class discussions and debates
- Demonstrations
- Model with written explanations
- Role-playing
- Letters to public officials
- Exhibit work
- Surveys

	<b>Expectations of Students</b>	<b>% of Report Card Grade</b>
<b><u>Quarter Grades</u></b> Homework/ Class Participation	Complete all homework and add important, relevant information to class discussion	10%-20%
Essays/ Projects/ Presentations	100% of all assignments	40-60%
Tests and Quizzes	All tasks completed in accordance with rubric	40-60%
<b><u>Semester Grades</u></b>	All tests and quizzes taken/made up	40% quarter 1, 40% quarter 2, 20% semester exam

**NOTE:** The above percentages are approximate and subject to each teacher's adjustment. These percentages can change to reflect types of assignments given in different quarters and emphasis placed on various tasks. Students will be given approximate weights for assignments at the beginning of the quarter.

## **SECTION II – Units of Study**

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<b>Unit Title</b>	<b>Duration (Weeks)</b>
<i>One Semester Course</i>	
Unit 1: Introduction to Government	~2 weeks
Unit 2: U.S. Constitution/ Federalism	~2 weeks
Unit 3: Legislative Branch	~4 weeks
Unit 4: Executive Branch	~3 weeks
Unit 5: Judicial Branch/ Constitutional Law	~4 weeks
Unit 6: Local and State Government	~1 week
Unit 7: Political Culture, Parties and Elections	~1 week
Unit 8: Media and Interest Groups	~1 week

## **UNIT 1: Introduction to Government**

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This unit will focus on how different political and economic systems developed, and will consider the benefits and deficits of each. It will also look at the purposes of government and how societies balance their interests and rights against government power. Finally, it will explore federalism and how the relationship between the central government and the states has changed over the course of time.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. What is the appropriate balance between individual rights and societal rights?
2. To what extent must equality under the law exist for there to be democracy?
3. What systems of government are most efficient while still being fair?
4. How does a government attain authority?
5. What are the respective roles of the central government and the states?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Initial Understanding**

1. **Identify** purposes for government.
2. **Define** political systems.
3. **Name** branches of government.

#### **Developing an Interpretation**

1. **Discuss** the pros and cons of a social contract.
2. **Describe** the role and limitations of government.
3. **Explain** the differences between federal and unitary governments.

#### **Making Connections**

1. **Compare and contrast** the presidential and parliamentary political systems.
2. **Discuss** benefits and deficits of the system of checks and balances in the U.S.
3. **Relate** government to daily life.
4. **Analyze** the need for constituency involvement.

#### **Taking a Critical Stance**

1. **Evaluate** the most successful forms of government.
2. **Assess** the U.S. system of a presidential democratic republic.
3. **Justify or refute** the effectiveness of democracy versus authoritarianism.
4. **Debate** the value of all citizens having the right to participate in democracy.

## **VOCABULARY**

Nature of Man  
Social Contract  
Utopia  
Representative Democracy  
Direct Democracy  
Socialism  
Absolutism  
Divine Right Theory  
Unitary Government  
Federal Government  
Confederate Government  
Parliamentary Government  
Dictatorship  
Natural Rights  
Glorious Revolution  
Anarchy  
Declaration of Rights  
Machiavelli  
Montesquieu  
Hobbes  
Locke  
Rousseau  
Jefferson  
Madison  
Government  
Public Policy  
Sovereign  
Popular Sovereignty  
Bicameral  
Unicameral  
Limited Government  
Representative Government  
Constitutionalism  
Rule of Law  
Separation of Powers  
Checks and Balances

## **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Reading and discussing ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Responding to questions orally and in writing
- Cooperating in learning activities
- Debating the advantages and disadvantages of democracy
- Creating PowerPoint slides comparing political systems
- Reading excerpts of primary sources (*Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau*)
- Writing a persuasive essay about the most effective form of government
- Designing a poster that outlines differences between philosophers

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Tests and quizzes
- Homework
- Presentations
- Class Participation
- Analytical paper/ Essay

## **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, cartographer, writer, journalist, teacher, philosopher, filmmaker

## **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

## **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Video – *Lord of the Flies*.

Handouts and readings developed by instructor

Excerpts from theorists such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau

## **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

## **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research, online databases, writing labs to prepare/revise, graphic design

## **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.1 Formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.
- 1.11-12.2 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias; and
- 1.11-12.3 Describe the multiple intersecting causes of events.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.2 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.3 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.
- 3.11-12.5 Evaluate the economic and technological impact of the exchange of goods on societies throughout history and
- 3.11-12.6 Explain the multiple forces and developments (cultural, political, economic and scientific) that have helped to connect the peoples of the world.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.9-12.1 Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society.

*Content Standard 14: Economic Systems*

- 14.11-12.1 Evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

Academic Expectations

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

Social Expectations

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

Civic Expectations

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

Ethical Expectations

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **UNIT 2: CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES**

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In this unit, students will read and analyze the U.S. Constitution and explore how it divides power and responsibility among the branches of government. They will also analyze the origins and exercise of individuals' rights, powers and responsibilities based on the expressed and implied powers in the Constitution.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. What is the relationship among the three branches of government?
2. What powers and limitations does each branch of government have?
3. What powers and limitations do the states and central government have?
4. How are rights of citizens defined and protected?
5. How is the Constitution a living document?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### Initial Understanding

1. **Identify** the authority of and limitations on government.
2. **Define** the key terms of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence.
3. **List** the goals of the founders.

#### Developing an Interpretation

1. **Discuss** the limitations on each branch.
2. **Describe** the purpose for these limitations.
3. **Explain** the power of a "living document."

#### Making Connections

1. **Compare and contrast** the roles, responsibilities and powers of the branches of government.
2. **Discuss** the role of the states in the U.S. political system.
3. **Relate** the Constitution to current laws and issues.
4. **Analyze** the processes and events that lead to changes to the Constitution.

#### Taking a Critical Stance

1. **Evaluate** the system of federalism.
2. **Assess** the effectiveness of the system of checks and balances.
3. **Justify or refute** the need for a bicameral legislature.

## **VOCABULARY**

Federalism  
Separation of Powers  
Checks and Balances  
Expressed Powers  
Implied Powers  
Elastic Clause  
Inherent Powers  
Supremacy Clause  
Concurrent Powers  
Constitutional  
Unconstitutional  
Living Document  
Amendment  
Bill of Rights  
Judicial Review  
Executive  
Legislative  
Judicial  
Limited Government  
Rule of Law  
Full Faith and Credit Clause  
Commerce Clause

## **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Constitution Grab Game
- Read and discuss ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Respond to questions orally and in writing
- Debate the advantages and disadvantages of checks and balances
- Write a DHS Senior's Declaration of Independence
- Write a Constitution for DHS
- Write a Bill of Rights for DHS

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Homework
- Class Participation
- Analytical Essay
- Outline the Constitution

## **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, writer, teacher, philosopher

### **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

The Declaration of Independence  
The Articles of Confederation  
The Virginia Declaration of Rights  
The United States Constitution & the Bill of Rights  
Marbury v. Madison

### **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

### **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research

### **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

#### *Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.2 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

#### *Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.4 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.5 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

#### *Content Standard 4: Applying History*

- 4.11-12.1 Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events they are studying.

#### *Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.1 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.
- 5.11-12.2 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and
- 5.11-12.3 Explain why state and federal courts' powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

#### *Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.1 Compare two or more constitutions and how they promote the principles of their respective political systems and provide the basis for government.
- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and
- 7.11-12.3 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

- 8.9-12.3 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

*Content Standard 14: Economic Systems*

- 14.11-12.2 Evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **UNIT 3: LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

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In this unit, students will focus on the roles and responsibilities of the Legislative branch as a whole, as well as on the individuals who make-up the branch. Current bills will be analyzed and debated. The discussion will be framed in terms of the function of the legislative branch and its responsibilities to the American people. Students will also explore the legislative process and examine the factors, institutional and extra-institutional, affecting it.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. How do legislators make laws?
2. What are the costs and benefits of our system of checks and balances?
3. How does the veto power influence the legislative process?
4. What are the powers and responsibilities of Congress and how do the roles of the Senate and House differ?
5. How do public interest and politics affect the legislative process?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### Initial Understanding

1. **Identify** the bicameral houses.
2. **Define** the organization of Congress and the roles of legislators.
3. **State** the qualifications necessary to serve in the legislative branch.

#### Developing an Interpretation

1. **Discuss** the pros and cons of a bicameral system.
2. **Describe** veto powers.
3. **Explain** obstacles to the legislative process.

#### Making Connections

1. **Compare and contrast** the powers of each branch.
2. **Discuss** the responsibility of the legislators to their consciences.
3. **Relate** the responsibility of the legislators to their constituents.
4. **Analyze** the role of interest groups in the legislative process.

### Taking a Critical Stance

1. **Evaluate** the effectiveness of a law in resolving a need.
2. **Assess** the costs and benefits to a bill.
3. **Justify or refute** current bills before Congress.

## **VOCABULARY**

Term  
Session  
Special session  
Apportionment  
Single-member District  
Gerrymandered  
Continuous Body  
Constituents  
Oversight Function  
Bicameral  
Federalism  
Congress  
House of Representatives  
Senate  
Constituents  
Trustees  
Delegates  
Partisans  
Politicos  
Politicians  
Census  
Strict Constructionists  
Liberal Constructionists  
Direct Tax  
Indirect Tax  
Commerce Power  
Bankruptcy  
Copyright  
Patent  
Eminent Domain  
Foreign Relations  
War Powers  
Naturalization  
Necessary and Proper Clause  
Impeach  
Representative  
Minority  
Left-wing  
Democrat  
Independent  
Legislative Process  
Speaker of the House  
President of the Senate  
President Pro Tempore  
Whip  
Committee Chair  
Standing Committee  
Select Committee  
Joint Committee  
Conference Committee  
Bill  
Joint Resolution  
Concurrent Resolution  
Rider  
Discharge Petition  
Subcommittee  
Quorum  
Rider  
Debate  
Voting  
Filibuster  
Cloture  
Veto  
Pocket Veto  
Incumbent  
Seniority System  
Caucus  
Expressed Powers  
Implied Powers  
Appropriations Bills  
Line-item Veto  
Private Bills  
Public Bills  
Lobbyists  
Pork-barrel Legislation  
Logrolling  
Senator  
Majority  
Right-wing  
Republican  
Agenda  
Earmarks

### **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Read and discuss ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Respond to questions orally and in writing
- Debate the advantages and disadvantages of the power of Congress
- Create PowerPoint slides explaining aspects of the Legislative Branch
- Analyze a Bill and write a letter to representative and/or senator about said bill
- Design a poster to explain how a bill becomes a law
- Take part in a Bill Project: Identify yourself as a lobbyist and present and then debate a current bill before Congress
- Register to vote
- Work at Polls

### **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Tests and quizzes
- Homework
- Presentations
- Class Participation
- Analytical paper/ Essay

### **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, cartographer, writer, journalist, teacher, philosopher, filmmaker

### **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Videos – *Mr. Smith goes to Washington; The Candidate; Vote for Me*  
Handouts and readings developed by instructor

### **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

### **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research, online databases, writing labs to prepare/revise

### **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.4 Formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.
- 1.11-12.5 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias; and

- 1.11-12.6 Describe the multiple intersecting causes of events.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 311-12.2 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 311-12.3 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.1 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.
- 5.11-12.2 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and
- 5.11-12.3 Explain why state and federal courts' powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.11-12.1 Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.
- 6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws, and
- 6.11-12.3 Take a position on a current policy issue and attempt to influence its formation, development and implementation.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and
- 7.11-12.3 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

- 8.9-12.2 Identify and analyze the various domestic, political economic and social interests which play roles in the development of foreign policy; and
- 8.9-12.3 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

## **DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

### *Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

### *Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

### *Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

### *Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **UNIT 4: EXECUTIVE BRANCH –**

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In this unit, students will focus on the roles and responsibilities of the President and the Executive branch. There will be a focus on the bureaucratic organization of the branch as well as the legal and practical limitations on the President. We will also explore the electoral process through project work and discussion.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. What are the explicit and implicit powers and responsibilities of the U. S. President and the Executive branch?
2. What are the constitutional responsibilities of the President?
3. How has the role of the Presidency changed over time?
4. How has the size and scope of the Executive branch evolved?
5. What is the impact of the bureaucracy on the political process?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Initial Understanding**

1. **Identify** the responsibilities of the President.
2. **Define** presidential power in relationship to the other branches of government.
3. **Name** the roles the President plays.

#### **Developing an Interpretation**

1. **Discuss** current issues and how the President responds to them.
2. **Describe** the role and limitations of presidential power.
3. **Explain** how the President influences Congress and the Judicial branch.

#### **Making Connections**

1. **Compare and contrast** the responsibilities of the three branches of government.
2. **Discuss** the value of the veto powers.
3. **Examine** the influences that shape a presidential election.
4. **Analyze** the changing relationship between the executive and legislative branches over time.

#### **Taking a Critical Stance**

1. **Evaluate** the ability of the President to influence the political agenda.
2. **Assess** the President's ability to manage the executive branch.
3. **Justify or refute** the notion of an imperial presidency.

## **VOCABULARY**

Chief of State  
Chief Executive  
Chief Administrator  
Chief Diplomat  
Commander in Chief  
Chief Legislator  
Chief of Party  
Chief Citizen  
Presidential Succession  
Electoral College  
Electorate  
Presidential Primary  
Platform  
National Convention  
Popular Majority  
Media  
Executive Order  
Executive Agreement  
Foreign Relations  
Treaty  
Recognition  
Wartime Powers  
Bully Pulpit  
Cabinet

Embassy  
Procurement  
Deregulate  
Spoils System  
Civil Service System  
Reprieve  
Pardon  
Commutation  
Amnesty  
Federal Budget  
Cabinet  
Bureaucracy  
Administration  
Foreign Aid  
U.N. Security Counsel  
National Security Advisor  
Press Secretary  
Office of Mgmt and Budget  
National Security Council  
Homeland Security Council  
Council of Econ. Advisors  
War Powers Resolution  
First Lady (Spouse)

### **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Read and discuss ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Respond to questions orally and in writing
- Debate the advantages and disadvantages of the power of the Executive branch
- Run a mock presidential election with a National Convention and Debate
- Present a current news story involving the Executive branch and relate it to the Constitution
- Research a federal agency
- Take part in a Presidential decision-making project

### **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Tests and quizzes
- Homework
- Presentations
- Class Participation
- Analytical paper/ Essay

### **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, cartographer, writer, journalist, teacher, philosopher, filmmaker, pollster, pundit

### **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Videos – *Dave*, *The War Room*, *West Wing Live Debate*, *All the President's Men*  
Handouts and readings developed by instructor

### **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

### **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research, online databases, writing labs to prepare/revise, graphic design

### **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.7 Formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.
- 1.11-12.8 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias; and
- 1.11-12.9 Describe the multiple intersecting causes of events.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.2 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.3 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.1 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.
- 5.11-12.2 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and
- 5.11-12.3 Explain why state and federal courts' powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.11-12.1 Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.
- 6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws, and
- 6.11-12.3 Take a position on a current policy issue and attempt to influence its formation, development and implementation.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and
- 7.11-12.3 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

- 8.9-12.2 Identify and analyze the various domestic, political, economic and social interests which play roles in the development of foreign policy; and
- 8.9-12.3 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **UNIT 5: JUDICIAL BRANCH**

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In this unit, students will focus on the role and responsibilities of the Judicial branch. Students will study how the judiciary is organized and how its role has changed over time. Through project work, the students will investigate Constitutional Law and how the court's interpretation and rulings impact the legislative and executive branches, as well as the American public.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. How do different approaches to interpreting the Constitution affect judicial decision-making?
2. How does the changing political culture influence the court's decision-making?
3. What are the powers and responsibilities of the Judiciary?
4. Is an independent judiciary essential for a democracy?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### **Initial Understanding**

1. **Identify** the different courts in the Judicial branch.
2. **Define** the oversight power to the other two branches.
3. **Name** the different players in the justice system.

#### **Developing an Interpretation**

1. **Discuss** the importance of Constitutional interpretation.
2. **Describe** the role and limitations of the judiciary.
3. **Explain** how court decisions have influenced United States history.

#### **Making Connections**

1. **Compare and contrast** the responsibilities of the different courts.
2. **Discuss** the amount of time a judge should be allowed to serve.
3. **Relate** judicial decisions to current issues.
4. **Analyze** trends in litigation.

#### **Taking a Critical Stance**

1. **Evaluate** whether justice is served in our legal system.
2. **Assess** the ways the Supreme Court interprets laws and the Constitution.
3. **Justify or refute** the ways in which members of the judiciary are selected.
4. **Debate** the reasoning of court decisions based on actual cases.

## **VOCABULARY**

Judrisdiction  
Segregation  
Exclusive Jurisdiction  
Concurrent Jurisdiction  
Plaintiff  
Defendant  
Quota  
Jim Crow Law  
Affirmative Action  
Writ of Certiorari  
Majority Opinion  
Concurring Opinion  
Briefs  
Dissenting Opinion  
Self-Incrimination  
Oral Arguments  
Double Jeopardy  
Jury  
Due Process Clause  
Common Law  
Establishment Clause  
Presumed Innocence  
Free Exercise Clause  
Tort  
Sedition  
Summons  
Search Warrant  
Discovery  
Probable Cause  
“Beyond a Reasonable Doubt”  
Exclusionary Rule  
Ex Post Facto Law  
Felony  
Plea Bargaining  
Indictment  
Voir Dire  
Verdict

Original Jurisdiction  
Stare Decisis  
Appellate Jurisdiction  
District Court  
Precedence  
Court of Appeals  
Separate but Equal Doctrine  
Reverse Discrimination  
Litigant  
Swing Vote  
Gag Order  
Shield Laws  
Miranda Rule  
Conference  
Transcript  
Statutory Law  
Bill of Rights  
Constitutional Law  
Civil Liberties  
Statute  
Civil Rights  
Libel  
Trial Court  
Slander  
Preponderance of Evidence  
Treason  
Injunction  
Slander  
Affidavit  
Writ of Habeas Corpus  
Criminal Law  
Bill of Attainder  
Grand Jury  
Sentence  
Hung Jury  
Arraignment  
Equal Protection Clause

## **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Read and discuss ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Respond to questions orally and in writing
- Research and debate interpretations of the Constitution as reflected in landmark cases
- Creating PowerPoint slides or make a poster reviewing the court system
- Take part in a Mock Trial

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Tests and quizzes
- Homework
- Presentations
- Class Participation
- Analytical paper/ Essay

## **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, cartographer, writer, journalist, teacher, philosopher, filmmaker, lawyer, judge, stenographer, bailiff

## **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

## **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Videos – *Twelve Angry Men*, *Gideon's Trumpet*, Series of Civil Rights videos on United Streaming, A Conversation on the Constitution: Judicial Independence  
Guide to Connecticut Courts, curriculum designed by state  
Handouts and readings developed by instructor

## **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

## **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research, online databases, writing labs to prepare/revise, graphic design

## **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.1 Formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.
- 1.11-12.2 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias; and
- 1.11-12.3 Describe the multiple intersecting causes of events.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.2 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.3 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.1 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.

- 5.11-12.2 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and
- 5.11-12.3 Explain why state and federal courts powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.11-12.1 Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.
- 6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws, and
- 6.11-12.3 Take a position on a current policy issue and attempt to influence its formation, development and implementation.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and
- 7.11-12.3 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## UNIT 6: STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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In this unit, students will look at the functions of state and local government and focus on the similarities and differences among the town, state, and national governments. They will gain an understanding of the responsibilities of the state representatives, first select person, and RTM members and the relationship between local government and taxing.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the decision making powers and limitations of town government?
2. What is the responsibility of citizens to their local government?
3. How can citizens influence or participate in local government?

### CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

#### Initial Understanding

1. **Identify** the local representatives.
2. **Define** representation in Darien and at the State level.
3. **Name** your representatives.

#### Developing an Interpretation

1. **Discuss** the importance of local government.
2. **Describe** the differences between local and federal government.
3. **Explain** how a constituent can participate at all levels of government.

#### Making Connections

1. **Compare and contrast** the responsibilities of the local governments and state governments.
2. **Discuss** the responsibilities of the citizens.
3. **Relate** current issues to current bills.
4. **Analyze** the power and authority of local and state governments.

#### Taking a Critical Stance

1. **Evaluate** how federal and state policies affect local government.
2. **Assess** the effectiveness of local government to address citizen's day to day concerns.
3. **Debate** zoning policy.

## **VOCABULARY**

Darien RTM  
Constituent  
First Selectman/ woman  
Board of Selectmen  
Planning and Zoning  
Health Department  
Parks and Recreation Department  
Board of Education  
Board of Finance  
State Capital  
Initiative  
Referendum  
County  
Parish  
Borough  
Township  
City  
Mayor  
Governor  
Sales Tax  
Income Tax  
Regressive Tax  
Progressive Tax  
Property Tax  
Assessment  
Inheritance Tax  
Grand List

### **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Read and discuss ideas from textbook and supplemental sources
- Respond to questions orally and in writing
- Debate the advantages and disadvantages of a federal system of government
- Interview town government officials
- Participate in a voter registration drive
- Volunteer at the polls
- Visit State Capitol and the State Supreme Court in Hartford
- Review and revise the Darien Town Charter
- Interact with state and town representatives who visit class
- Attend a town board or agency meeting

### **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Tests and quizzes
- Homework
- Presentations
- Class Participation
- Analytical paper/ Essay

### **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, writer, journalist, teacher, philosopher, filmmaker, selectman/  
woman, city planner, assessor, political cartoonist

### **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Handouts and readings developed by instructor

### **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

### **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research, online databases, writing labs to prepare/revise, graphic design

### **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.2 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.2 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.3 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.1 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

- 6.11-12.1 Evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.
- 6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws, and
- 6.11-12.3 Take a position on a current policy issue and attempt to influence its formation, development and implementation.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

- 7.11-12.2 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## UNIT 7: POLITICAL CULTURES, PARTIES, & ELECTIONS

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In this unit, students will read and analyze what is meant by the term “American political culture” and how it developed into differing political belief systems and the evolution of political parties. Students will evaluate and discuss the goals and strategies of political parties and their differing political philosophies. Students will analyze and assess demographic, socio-economic, and other factors that appear to play a role in helping determine one’s political orientation and political affiliations.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the common themes of American political culture?
2. How has American political culture developed into a range of political orientations in American Society?
3. How did American political orientations evolve into political parties?
4. What is the role of political parties in the American political system?
5. How are political parties in the United States organized?

### CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

#### Initial Understanding

1. **Identify** American political culture.
2. **Define** the range of American political orientation as a consequence of the political culture.
3. **List** the primary characteristics of American political culture.

#### Developing an Interpretation

1. **Discuss** the common features of American political culture.
2. **Describe** how American political culture generates differing belief systems on how government operates best.
3. **Explain** the organizational hierarchy of the current political parties.

#### Making Connections

1. **Compare and contrast** the role of national and state political organizations in the current electoral system.
2. **Discuss** the inability of third parties to remain viable while at the same time influencing the two party system.
3. **Relate** current political orientations to religious affiliations in the United States.
4. **Analyze** socioeconomic and other demographic information and their association with the political parties.

## Taking a Critical Stance

1. **Evaluate** the changes in American political culture over time.
2. **Debate** the role of American religious institutions on American politics.
3. **Justify or refute** the need for political parties.

## VOCABULARY

Culture  
Socialization  
Liberalism  
Libertarianism  
Populism  
Conservatism  
Correlation  
Causation  
Demographics  
Ideology  
Socioeconomics  
Suburban  
Urban  
Rural  
Progressive  
Culture Wars  
Republican  
Democrat  
Socialist  
Green Party  
Libertarian Party  
Political Party  
Political Convention  
Party Platform  
Primary System  
Caucus System  
Polling  
Sample  
Margin of Error

### **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Take a poll of class/school political beliefs
- Read and discuss current events and their role in American Culture
- Debate the role of socialization in defining a person's political orientation
- Run a caucus
- Write a political party platform

### **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Homework
- Class Participation
- Analytical Essay

### **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, writer, teacher, philosopher,

### **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

### **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Census data issued by the U.S. Government  
Gallup and other Polling information  
Political Platforms of the Parties

### **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

### **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research

### **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.3 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.6 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.7 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 4: Applying History*

4.11-12.2 Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events they are studying.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

5.11-12.4 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.

5.11-12.5 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and

5.11-12.6 Explain why state and federal courts' powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

7.11-12.4 Compare two or more constitutions and how they promote the principles of their respective political systems and provide the basis for government.

7.11-12.5 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and

7.11-12.6 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

8.9-12.4 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

*Content Standard 14: Economic Systems*

14.11-12.3 Evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **UNIT 8: MEDIA AND INTEREST GROUPS**

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In this unit students will evaluate the role of outside forces on the political process in the United States. It will explore how the role of the media and interest groups have evolved and affected the American political system. Students will assess and evaluate the effect of the media and interest groups on the political agenda.

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

1. What are the roles of non-governmental institutions on the American political process?
2. In what ways have these institutions contributed to the development of policy in the United States?
3. How did these non-governmental institutions evolve?
4. How have current developments affected the perception and role of these institutions in American politics today?
5. To what extent have these institutions contributed and to what extent have they hindered American politics?

### **CONTENT KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES**

#### Initial Understanding

1. **Identify** influential media and interest groups.
2. **Define** the various forms of the media and interest groups.
3. **List** the roles of the media and interest groups on the American political process.

#### Developing an Interpretation

1. **Discuss** the role of non-governmental groups on the political process.
2. **Describe** how the media and interest groups play a role in defining the political agenda in the United States.
3. **Explain** to what extent non-governmental groups act as another check and balance on the American political system.

#### Making Connections

1. **Compare and contrast** the relationship between non-governmental groups and political positions of elected officials.
2. **Discuss** the relationship between the branches of government and the media.
3. **Relate** the first amendment freedom of the press and association to non-governmental actors on the political landscape.

- 10 **Analyze** the growing impact of the internet and other technologies on the media, interest groups and the political process in its entirety.

Taking a Critical Stance

11. **Evaluate** the effectiveness of non-governmental groups on determining the political agenda in American society.
12. **Debate** the need for campaign finance reform as a means of ensuring a fair and balanced political system.
13. **Justify or refute** the government's attempts to limit the freedom of expression.

## **VOCABULARY**

Media  
Print Media  
Broadcast Media  
FCC  
Gatekeeper  
Watchdog  
Political Cues  
Political Ratings  
Fourth Estate  
Campaign Finance Reform  
Political Action Committees  
Watergate  
Muckraker  
Talking points  
Bully Pulpit  
Spin  
Mainstream media  
New media  
Blogs  
Editorials  
Endorsements  
Bundling  
Press Conference  
Whistle Blower  
Pundit  
Lobbyist  
Grassroots  
Public Interest Research Groups  
Non-governmental organization  
Interest Group

## **ACTIVITIES/ PROJECTS**

- Compare news articles from various newspapers to identify bias
- Read and discuss the impact of interest organizations on elected officials' political positions
- Debate pros and cons of the role of the media on the political process in the US
- Write an Op. Ed. piece on a current political issue
- Analyze the effectiveness of the different methods interest groups use to try to effect the political process

## **PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

- Homework
- Class Participation
- Analytical Essay

## **CAREER AWARENESS**

Politician, historian, writer, teacher, philosopher, reporter, lobbyist, activist

## **CORE TEXT FOR STUDENTS**

McClenaghan, William A. *Magruder's American Government*. Needham, MA: Prentice Hall, 1997.

## **ADDITIONAL TEXTS/ RESOURCES FOR USE BY STUDENTS**

Census data issued by the U.S. Government

Gallup and other polling information

Political platforms of the parties

Internet news and political websites

## **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Textbook, handouts, videos, library resources

## **INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

Internet research

## **STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.4 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.8 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.9 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 4: Applying History*

- 4.11-12.3 Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events they are studying.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.7 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.
- 5.11-12.8 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and

5.11-12.9 Explain why state and federal courts powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

7.11-12.7 Compare two or more constitutions and how they promote the principles of their respective political systems and provide the basis for government.

7.11-12.8 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and

7.11-12.9 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

8.9-12.5 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

*Content Standard 14: Economic Systems*

14.11-12.4 Evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

**DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:**

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process.

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **SECTION III - Goals and Standards**

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## **RELATED GOALS and STANDARDS**

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### NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT

#### **Topic I: What are civic life, politics, and government?**

##### **A: What is civic life? What is politics? What is government? Why are government and politics necessary? What purposes should government serve?**

- **A2:** Necessity of politics and government. Explain the major arguments advanced for the necessity of politics and government.
- **A3:** The purposes of politics and government. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on competing ideas regarding the purposes of politics and government and their implications for the individual and society.

##### **B: What are the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government?**

- **B2:** The rule of law. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the importance of the rule of law and the sources, purposes, and functions of law.
- **B3:** Civil Society and Government. Explain and evaluate the argument that civil society is a prerequisite of limited government.

##### **C: What are the nature and purposes of government?**

- **C1:** Concepts of "constitution". Explain different uses of the term "constitution" and to distinguish between governments with a constitution and a constitutional government.
- **C2:** Purposes and uses of constitutions. Students should be able to explain the various purposes served by the constitution.
- **C3:** Conditions under which constitutional government flourishes. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on what conditions contribute to the establishment and maintenance of constitution.

##### **D: What are alternative ways of organizing constitutional governments?**

- **D1:** Shared powers and parliamentary systems. Describe the major characteristics of systems of shared powers and of parliamentary systems.
- **D2:** Confederal, federal, and unitary systems. Explain the advantages and disadvantages of federal, confederal, and unitary systems of government.
- **D3:** Nature of representation. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on how well alternative forms of representation serve the purposes of constitutional government.

#### **Topic II: What are the foundations of the American political system?**

##### **A: What is the American idea of constitutional government?**

- **A1:** The American idea of constitutional government. Explain the central ideas of American constitutional government and their history.

**B: What are the distinctive characteristics of American society?**

- **B3:** The role of organized groups in political life. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the contemporary role of organized groups in American social and political life.
- **B4:** Diversity in American Society. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding diversity in American life.

**C: What is American political culture?**

- **C1:** American national identity and political culture. Explain the importance of shared political and civic beliefs and values to the maintenance of constitutional democracy in an increasingly diverse American society.

**D: What values and principles are basic to American constitutional democracy?**

- **D1:** Liberalism and American constitutional democracy. Explain the meaning of the terms "liberal" and "democracy" in the phrase "liberal democracy."
- **D2:** Republicanism and American constitutional democracy. Explain how and why ideas of classical republicanism are reflected in the values and principles of American constitutional democracy.
- **D3:** Fundamental values and principles. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of American political life are and their importance to the maintenance of constitutional democracy.
- **D4:** Conflicts among values and principles in American political and social life. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues in which fundamental values and principles may be in conflict.

**Topic III: How does the government established by the constitution embody the purposes, values, and principles of American Democracy?**

**A: How are power and responsibility distributed, shared, and limited in the government established by the Constitution?**

- **A1:** Distributing governmental power and preventing its abuse. Explain how the U.S. Constitution grants and distributes power to national and state government and how it seeks to prevent the abuse of power.
- **A2:** The American federal system. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the distribution of powers and responsibilities within the federal system.

**B: How is the national government organized and what does it do?**

- **B1:** The institutions of the national government. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the purposes, organization, and functions of the institutions of the national government.

- **B2:** Major responsibilities of the national government in domestic and foreign policy. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the major responsibilities of the national government for domestic and foreign policy.
- **B3:** Financing government through taxation. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding how government should raise money to pay for its operations and services.

**C: How are state and local governments organized and what do they do?**

- **C1:** The constitutional status of state and local governments. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the proper relationship between the national government and the state and local governments.
- **C2:** Organization of state and local governments. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the relationships between state and local governments and citizen access to those governments.
- **C3:** Major responsibilities of state and local governments. Identify the major responsibilities of their state and local governments and evaluate how well they are being fulfilled.

**D: What is the place of law in the American constitutional system?**

- **D1:** The place of law in American society. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the role and importance of law in the American political system.
- **D2:** Judicial protection of the rights of individuals. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on current issues regarding the judicial protection of individuals.

**E: How does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?**

- **E1:** The public agenda. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about how the public agenda is set.
- **E2:** Public opinion and behavior of the electorate. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about how the public opinion in American society.
- **E3:** Political communication: television, radio, the press, and political evaluation. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.
- **E4:** Political parties, campaigns, and elections. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about the roles of political parties, campaigns, and elections in American politics.
- **E5:** Association and groups. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about the contemporary roles of associations and groups in American politics.
- **E6:** Forming and carrying out public policy. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about the formation and implementation of public policy.

**Topic IV: What is the relationship of the United States to other nations and to world affairs?**

**A: How is the world organized politically?**

- **A1:** Nation-states. Explain how the world is organized politically
- **A2:** Interaction among nation-states. Explain how nation-states interact with each other.

**B: How do the domestic politics and constitutional principles of the United States affect its relations with the world?**

- **B2:** Making and implementing U.S. foreign policy. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about how the U.S. foreign policy is made and the means by which it is carried out.
- **B3:** The ends and means of U.S. foreign policy. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on foreign policy issues in light of American national interests, values, and principles.

**Topic V: What are the roles of the citizen in American Democracy?**

**A: What is citizenship?**

- **A1:** The meaning of citizenship in the U.S. Explain the meaning of citizenship in the U.S.

**B: What are the rights of citizens?**

- **B1:** Personal Rights. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding personal rights.
- **B2:** Political Rights. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding political rights.
- **B5:** Scope and limits of rights. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the proper scope and limits of rights.

**C: What are the responsibilities of citizens?**

- **C1:** Personal Responsibilities. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the personal responsibilities of citizens in American constitutional democracy.
- **C2:** Civic Responsibilities. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues regarding the civic responsibilities of citizens in American constitutional democracy.

**D: What is the place of law in the American constitutional system?**

- **D1:** Dispositions that lead the citizen to be an independent member of society. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the importance to American constitutional democracy of dispositions that lead individuals to become independent members of society.
- **D2:** Dispositions that foster respect for individual worth and human dignity. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the importance to American constitutional democracy of dispositions that foster respect for individual worth and human dignity.
- **D3:** Dispositions that incline the citizen to public affairs. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the importance to American constitutional democracy of dispositions that incline citizens to public affairs.

**E: How can citizens take part in civic life?**

- **E1:** The relationship between politics and the attainment of individual and public goals. Evaluate, take, and defend positions on the relationship between politics and the attainment of individual and public goals.
- **E3:** Forms of political participation. Evaluate, take, and defend positions about the means that citizens should use to monitor and influence the formation and implementation of public policy.
- **E5:** Knowledge and participation. Explain the importance of knowledge to competent and responsible participation in American democracy.

CONNECTICUT STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

*Content Standard 1: Historical Thinking*

- 1.11-12.5 Evaluate data within the history, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

*Content Standard 3: Historical Themes*

- 3.11-12.10 Identify various parties and analyze their interest in conflicts from selected historical periods.
- 3.11-12.11 Describe, explain and analyze political, economic and social consequences that came about as the resolution of a conflict.

*Content Standard 4: Applying History*

- 4.11-12.4 Initiate questions and hypotheses about historic events they are studying.

*Content Standard 5: U.S. Constitution & Government*

- 5.11-12.10 Apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.
- 5.11-12.11 Analyze, using historical and contemporary examples, the meaning and significance of the ideal of equal protection under the law for all persons; and
- 5.11-12.12 Explain why state and federal courts' powers of judicial review reflect the United States idea of constitutional government.

*Content Standard 6: Rights & Responsibilities of Citizens*

6.11-12.2 Establish, explain and apply criteria to evaluate rules and laws.

*Content Standard 7: Political Systems*

7.11-12.10 Compare two or more constitutions and how they promote the principles of their respective political systems and provide the basis for government.

7.11-12.11 Explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society; and

7.11-12.12 Provide examples of legitimate authority and exercise of power without authority.

*Content Standard 8: International Relations*

8.9-12.6 Describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

*Content Standard 14: Economic Systems*

14.11-12.5 Evaluate economic systems by their ability to achieve broad societal goals, such as efficiency, equity, security, employment, stability and economic growth.

DHS EXPECTATIONS ADDRESSED:

*Academic Expectations*

1. Read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write effectively.
3. Speak effectively.
4. Listen actively and critically.
5. Access and evaluate multi-media and print information efficiently and critically.
6. Demonstrate the skills and real-world contextual knowledge to meet the demands of a changing world.
7. Analyze problems from multiple perspectives by understanding past and present cultures.
8. Engage in intellectual and cultural activities with people from other communities and cultures.

*Social Expectations*

1. Demonstrate self-advocacy.
6. Participate effectively and efficiently in groups to pursue and generate information.

*Civic Expectations*

5. Have the opportunity to volunteer for community service.
6. Participate in the democratic process

*Ethical Expectations*

3. Explore, discuss and question the moral issues that arise within the context of his/her day.
4. Demonstrate sensitivity to, and respect for, the perspectives, opinions, needs and customs of others.

## **SECTION IV – Learning Resources**

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Supplemental resources are listed in each unit of study.

## **Appendix**

### **Sample Law and Government Assessments**

#### **Unit 1:**

1) Political Theory Essay

#### **1: Political Theory Essay**

Write a thesis based essay (approx. 7-8 paragraphs) designing a government as you see would be the most successful. You must use one quote per supporting paragraph to strengthen your argument. A minimum of 5 quotes by 3 of the philosophers we've read in class is required.

## **Unit 2**

- 1) Write DHS Declaration of Independence and Constitution
- 2) Apply the Bill of Rights to a given scenario

### **1: DHS Constitution**

#### **DHS Declaration & Constitution Assignment**

##### **Declaration of Independence**

Directions: Your group is to write a declaration describing why you feel it is necessary to secede from the Darien Public School ruling body.

Considerations:

- Who are you? Why do you have a right to secede?
- What are the grievances which the DPS ruling body has committed?
- How have you presented your concerns prior to declaring independence?
- What are you going to do? What do you mean by independence?

##### **Constitution**

Directions: Your group is to write a constitution explaining the way Darien High School should be governed and the laws and rights which are to be followed.

Considerations:

- Format— How will you set up the constitution for ease of comprehension?
- Who has the right to make the laws?
- Will there be multiple branches for a system of checks and balances, or a unitary system in order to expedite decisions making?
- What specific powers do they have?
- Will there be a court system to give the opportunity to appeal a decision?
- Should the document be “living” or set in stone?
- If it is “living”, what are the qualifications/ requirements to make changes?
- Have a Bill of Rights which will lay out student rights and prevention of abuses by the governing body.

## 2: Application Scenario

Read the scenarios below and determine which amendment(s) are related to the scenario and explain how you would handle the situation if you were a judge.

1. Mary and Ted, each 67 years old, are sitting in their car listening to music in an empty parking lot. About 10 PM, a police officer notices the car and believes it looks “foggy” inside. Concerned about a possible fire, he approaches the vehicle and knocks on the window. When Ted rolls down the window, the police officer smells what he believes is Marijuana. He has Ted and Mary step out of the car and he searches the vehicle, finding drug paraphernalia with Marijuana in the glove compartment. The couple is charged with possession of an illegal substance. Ted and Mary claim the search was illegal and that the drugs are used for medicinal purposes; they have glaucoma.

What # amendment(s) does this situation deal with?

As a CT state judge, how would you rule on Ted and Mary’s case?

Currently, CT does not allow marijuana for medicinal purposes. Would you set precedent and if so using, which amendment?

2. Larry, A DHS student, walks with his Law and Government class, during school hours, to Middlesex Rd. The school has gone to cheer for Coach Trifone who has been selected to run the Olympic torch through lower Fairfield County. Larry decides to take a banner that reads, “Bong Hits for Jesus”. Larry is suspended from school. Larry sues the school.

What # amendment(s) does this situation deal with?

As a CT state judge, how would you rule on Larry’s case?

3. CT state senator, Joe Lieberman, is running for U.S. President. Senator Lieberman is ONLY campaigning at local temples, mosques, and churches. Elizabeth Smith claims that this unconstitutional. She wants to learn about and meet the presidential candidates but she does not follow any of these religions and feels that these campaign sites infringe on her rights.

What # amendment(s) does this situation deal with?

As a CT state judge, how would you rule on Elizabeth Smith’s case?

4. Randy is arrested for stealing a pack of gum from CVS. The only person who saw him do it was an elderly woman named Tammy. During Randy's trial, the prosecution calls Tammy and she states that she saw Randy steal the gum. However, before Randy's attorney can question Tammy, she passes away. Randy's attorney claims that you, the judge, should call a mistrial.

What # amendment(s) does this situation deal with?

As a CT state judge, how would you rule on Randy's case?

5. Lisa is convicted of killing Sasha, a woman she believed to be flirting with her boyfriend. The judge sentences Lisa to the death penalty. Lisa's attorney claims this is unconstitutional.

What # amendment(s) does this situation deal with?

As a CT state judge, how would you rule on Lisa's case?

Currently, the death penalty is permitted in CT. Would you set precedence and if so using, which amendment?

## Unit 3:

1) Debate a Bill as a lobbyist

### **1: Lobbyist Project**

Choose a partner. You and your partner are now officially lobbyists. As such, you must **identify yourselves, which interest group you represent**, and your position on your assigned bill. Your team will be asked to complete TWO parts to this project. First you will **present** on the assigned bill that is currently before congress. This presentation is to persuade “congress” (your classmates) to vote as you choose. Secondly, you will **debate** the other pair of lobbyists from an opposing interest group, in regards to the same bill. Therefore, you and your partner will be assigned to “take a side” of the bill, as if you were a hired lobbyist for a major interest group and **persuasively convince your classmates to vote for your desired outcome—passing or rejecting the bill.**

#### How to Begin:

Determine whether your bill is currently before the Senate or the House of Representatives. You can tell based on the bill # (each bill begins with “s” or “hr”).

- If your bill is in the senate: [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)
- If your bill is in the house: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)
- Or, go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and find your bill by bill # or keyword

#### Project Requirements:

**Presentation:** Your group should prepare a 10-15 minute presentation to the congress on your position about the bill. Do NOT go over 15 minutes! This does not mean I want it less than 10, however. You may choose a multitude of avenues to convince the class to vote for or against the bill. Some options: Power Point presentation, posters, brochures, pins, etc.

Every presentation requires a Power Point and an MLA bibliography with a minimum of five (5) sources—your bill counts as a source.

**Debate Presentation:** Your group should prepare to debate your opponents. Each group must turn in **8 questions** for me to pose to their opponents during the debate. The debate format will be as follows:

- Each group will be asked 3 questions.
- The original group will receive 90 seconds to respond.
- The opposing group will receive 60 seconds to respond.
- The original group will receive 30 seconds to rebut.
- The opposing group will receive 30 seconds to rebut.
- Then a new question will be posed to the opposing team (now the original group).

We will take a class vote to determine which lobbyists were most persuasive and whether the bill should be passed or rejected. This vote will be taken by paper ballots which will require an explanation of the bill and a justification for the individual vote. This counts for 15% of your project grade. Everyone is required to turn in a ballot on every bill presented with an explanation for their vote.

### **Proposed Bills for Final Project of Fall 2007**

**Energy:** *Whereas the United States has a quantity of renewable energy resources that is sufficient to supply a significant portion of the energy needs of the United States (Introduced in House)* [\[H.CON.RES.25.EH\]](#)

**Iraq:** *Bring Our Troops Home Responsibility Act of 2007 (Introduced in House)* [\[H.R.3938.IH\]](#)

**Housing Foreclosures:** *Whereas Home Ownership is an Essential Part of Realizing the American Dream (Introduced in House)* [\[H.CON.RES.127.IH\]](#)

**Immigration:** *Clear Act (Introduced in House)* [\[H.R.842\]](#)

**Healthcare/ Malpractice lawsuits:** *Help Efficient, Accessible, Low-Cost, Timely Healthcare (Health) Act of 2007 (Introduced in House)* [\[H.R.2580\]](#)

**Stem Cell:** *Patients First Act of 2007 (Introduced in House)* [\[H.R.2807.IH\]](#)

**Guantanamo Bay: Guantanamo Bay Detention Facility Closure Act of 2007** *(Introduced in Senate)* [\[S.1469.IS\]](#)

## Unit 4:

- 1) Presidential Agenda based on current issues
- 2) Election Project

### **1: Presidential Agenda**

The President has to prioritize. The following events take place in a given week. How should the President set his schedule?

**Scenario-** In a recent examination the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has reported that they continue to find enriched uranium at Nuclear facilities in Iran, violating the prior agreement. Reports from the CIA estimate that Iran will have a nuclear bomb w/in approximately one year.

**Scenario-** Two months before elections in Iraq, insurgents continue to gain an upper hand, last night an assassination attempt was made on Prime Minister Malaki, and 20 US marines were killed in 3 separate incidents.

**Scenario-** Oil Prices spike to \$120.00 a barrel, the US Economy is just getting out of a recession. Growth in the last term was only 1% and job losses have increased.

**Scenario-** Drought conditions are causing major problems in the Midwest, there is growing concern that another "dustbowl" is just around the corner. Farmers are becoming distraught and the Governors of several states are requesting that the Federal Government declare the area a disaster zone to provide additional Federal monies.

**Scenario-** As a result of possible contamination 1/2 of the Flu Vaccine intended for the US population has to be thrown away. While flu issues have not been a major concern in recent years, the 1918 influenza epidemic led to more than 20 million deaths worldwide (there was no such thing as a flu vaccine at that time).

**Scenario-** Recent reports show a step up in ethnic cleansing in the Sudan, governmental forces are threatening refugee camps, hundreds of thousands of people are expected to die.

**Scenario-** An earthquake of 7.9 was just registered in LA County and there are reports of massive deaths and several raised highway areas collapsing.

**Scenario-** The recent trade deficit has ballooned to over 400 Billion dollars a year, China refuses to reduce the value of its currency (Yuan), and as a result the international monetary system is coming under more and more pressure. Some experts are predicting enormous problems w/in the next 2 years if something is not done on an international scale to avoid a catastrophic disaster.

### **Your job:**

1. Prioritize the President's agenda: Where should he (someday she) be spending his time?

Provide your reasoning for each of the selections

2. Who should be at the meetings?: Which cabinet officials, administrative agencies (FEMA, NSA, CIA, Council of Economic Advisors (CEA), EPA, FBI, Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Health Institute, CDC (Center for Disease Control)(INCLUDE ACTUAL REAL NAMES AND TITLES). Go to [whitehouse.gov](http://whitehouse.gov), on the homepage go to "your government."

3. Which members of Congress should be included in the discussions (leaders of which committees of the Senate and House). Go to [Senate.gov](http://Senate.gov) and [House.gov](http://House.gov) to find out the various committees. (INCLUDE ACTUAL REAL NAMES AND TITLES)

4. Under what circumstances should the President seek help from the opposition party members?

5. Too little information can lead to inaccurate decisions, too much information to the paralysis of analysis, how many people should be included for each meeting? Remember those not included may also resent it and this could mean problems later on for the President. Explain your decisions.

## **2: Presidential Election Project**

Each of you will be assigned to one of the candidates vying for either the Republican or Democratic nomination for the United States Presidency in 2008. On your own, you need to research the following criteria.

### **Republicans:**

Rudy Giuliani  
Mike Huckabee  
John McCain  
Mitt Romney  
Ron Paul

### **Democrats:**

Hillary Clinton  
John Edwards  
Barack Obama

**What does your candidate's party believe?** This is about the party, not the candidate. This group of people organized and felt it was necessary to form a political party to represent their distinct views. What are these views?

**Background of the candidate.** You should make a resume for the candidate from your party that's running for president. Where did they go to school? What jobs have they had? Why are they prepared to take this job?

**Record of the candidate:** How have they voted on issues in the past? As governor or senator, etc., have their votes followed what they are claiming now? If there are discrepancies, can they be justified?

**Agenda:** What is your candidate's agenda? What issues are they claiming they will deal with in the next four years and how are they going to deal with them?

**Major issues of THIS campaign:** Despite the candidate's desires to keep the campaign focused on the issues of their agenda, the citizens often force them to discuss other issues. What are these other issues and what stance does your candidate take on them? What stance do your opponents take?

*Your group will prepare a two-front campaign. Your group will put on a National convention/ presentation and there will be debate with all candidates.*

**National Convention Presentation:** Your group should prepare a 20-25 minute presentation to your class. You may choose a multitude of avenues to convince the class to vote for your candidate. Some options: Power Point presentation, posters, brochures, pins, decorate the room with balloons and streamers, bring in food, etc.

**Debate Presentation:** Your group should prepare one member to debate your opponents. The debate will be a town meeting style debate. Therefore, everyone in the class should prepare at least one question for all candidates. Through this preparation, you should help your party's debate team prepare.

## Unit 5:

- 1) Interpretative Analysis of a case
- 2) Comparing former cases with current events

### **1: Interpretative Analysis**

Judges use their reasoning skills to decide what particular laws mean when they rule on cases. Different judges sometimes use different reasoning skills to interpret the Constitution, meaning that judges do not always agree on the meaning of the Constitution. There are six widely accepted methods of interpretation that shed some light on the meaning of the Constitution.

<b>Historical Interpretation</b>	A judge looks to the intentions of the framers and ratifiers of the Constitution to shed light on its meaning.
<b>Textual Interpretation</b>	A judge looks to the meaning of the words in the Constitution, relying on common understandings of what the words mean today.
<b>Structural Interpretation</b>	A judge infers structural rules (power relationships between institutions, for instance) from the relationships specifically outlined in the Constitution.
<b>Doctrinal Interpretation</b>	A judge applies rules established by precedents.
<b>Ethical Interpretation</b>	A judge looks to the moral commitments reflected in the Constitution.
<b>Prudential Interpretation</b>	A judge seeks to balance the costs and benefits of a particular ruling.

Source: [http://www.landmarkcases.org/plessy/const\\_interp.html](http://www.landmarkcases.org/plessy/const_interp.html)

Your assignment is to write a decision about one of the cases introduced in class and describe how you interpreted the US Constitution to come to your decision. You are free to select one, several, or even all of the above approaches. Be sure to explain why you would use the approach you choose.

## 2: Compare Supreme Court Cases

**Directions:** Choose one of the four cases listed below. Research the case and the constitutionality of the decision. Consider your case now, in light of current issues such as the Virginia Tech Massacre, prison stories from Guantanamo Bay, etc.

Make a Power Point of at least 5 slides.

- Introduce the Case. Give background, how each party argued their side, and the final decision by the Supreme Court.
- Quote the Constitutional Amendment that the Court used to decide the case.
- Explain both the majority and dissenting opinions of the Court.
- Give your opinion of the courts decision; which side do you agree with (majority or decent)?
- Now, research and use a current news story that illustrates the importance of this case today. Did this news story change your opinion? Do you think the court might rule differently today based on these new circumstances?

### Court Cases:

- Korematsu v. Unites States, 1944
- Roe v. Wade, 1973
- Printz v. United States, 1997
- Gratz v. Bollinger, 2003
- Hamdi v. Rusmfeld and Rasul v. Bush, 2004

## Unit 6:

- 1) Write a bill to be passed by the Connecticut State Legislature
- 2) Interview a local government official

### 1: Write a Bill

**Writing your own bill..."the why, when, where, how, and everything else"**

*Directions: Now that you have seen how Mr. Smith prepared and presented his bill, you are going to try one of your own. You and your group mates will need to decide on an issue of concern that a new bill could address. Then, you will complete the information below to create your own bill to present to the class.*

Name or brief description of your bill: \_\_\_\_\_

Which part of Congress will you present this bill to? (circle one)	<i>Be it enacted by the Senate (or the House of Representatives) in Congress assembled...</i>
Why do we need your bill? What is the purpose of your bill?	<i>In order to...</i>
What will your bill do? Who will it affect and where will it work?	<i>This bill provides that...</i>
What if people do not follow your proposed law? What will the penalty be?	<i>Anyone violating the terms of this bill shall be subject to...</i>
How much money do you think it will cost to enforce your bill?	<i>For carrying out the terms of this bill, a sum of _____ shall be authorized.</i>
When will this bill go into effect?	<i>This bill shall take effect no later than...</i>

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## 2: Interview of Local Government Official

Go to: *ci.darien.ct.us.gov* to get the information about what your town government does and who participates in it.

For participants, you can also go to: *sots.state.ct.us/RegisterManual/SectionVII/townd.htm#Darien Public Schools*

You are to find and interview a member of local government who serves voluntarily.

### Questions to ask include:

1. Why did you get involved in local government?
2. How long have you been involved?
3. What issues consumed the most time or created the most controversy in your position/commission during the past year? Why?
4. What outside forces do you think are most influential in town government? (e.g. state laws and programs, local businesses, political parties, interest groups)
5. How important is party affiliation in the day-to-day operation of town government?
6. What, in your opinion, could be done to improve town government?
7. Develop a minimum of one additional question based on the answers you receive during the interview.

## **Unit 7:**

- 1) Survey Project
- 2) Make Your Own Political Party

### **1: Survey Project**

#### Survey Project

The purpose of this assignment is to survey potential voters and to find out how they feel about controversial government related issues. Students will design survey questions, administer a survey, collect data, graph data, analyze data, summarize the data, and present the results professionally.

#### Part I – Creating the Survey

Your team must create ten survey statements based on your political party platform belief statements. The possible responses are: disagree strongly, disagree, agree, or agree strongly.

#### Part II – Administering the Survey

Your group must survey at least 50 people. Each person surveyed must sign, date, and provide contact info (phone, email, address, classroom).

#### Part III – Collecting Information

When the surveys are completed, the data must be collected and totaled. Create a neat table illustrating the totals for each question.

#### Part IV – Graphing the Information

Every survey question needs to be graphed.

#### Part V – Analyzing the Data

Each survey question must be analyzed with a short paragraph that describes the data.

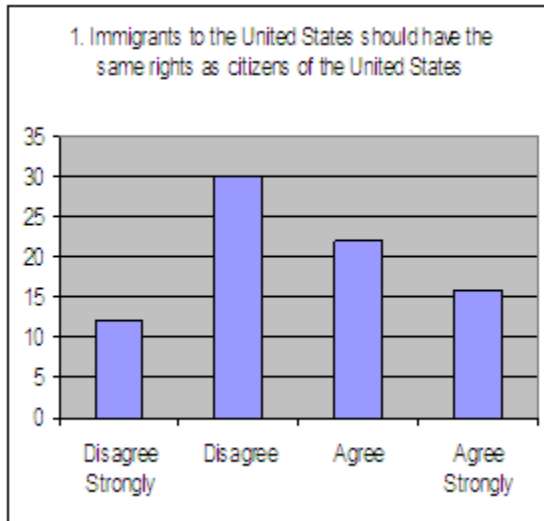
#### Part VI – Presenting the Survey

Your group will present the results of the survey in a folder that contains the collected data tables, the graphs, and the analysis. In a separate envelope, you should turn in your survey results. Your report should have a title page with the names of the authors.

## Sample Survey

	Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Agree	Agree Strongly
1. Immigrants to the United States should have the same rights as citizens of the United States	12	30	22	16
2. Health care ...	12	65	45	65
3. Gay rights...	32	12	45	65
4. Etc...				
5. Etc...				

Graphs should look like this.



Signing your name below means you have answered the political survey to the best of your ability. Your contact information is only to be used except to certify the work performed by the group.

Name	Signature	Contact Info (phone/address/email)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
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16.		
17.		
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21.		
22.		
23.		
24.		
25.		

## **2: Political Party & Platform**

Invent a political party and write a **political party platform**

- Includes a Preamble that outlines your parties main beliefs
- Expresses your beliefs on ten major political issues
- Makes at least two specific proposals to make the belief a reality
- Party has a relevant name
- Platform is typed and presented professionally
- 50 points

## **Unit 8:**

1) News Article Analysis

### **1: Media Bias**

**Article Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Source:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Article** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject Matter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Individuals and organizations cited or referred to in Article together with their respective roles and political positions:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary of Article:**

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**Any Bias noted in Article:**

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