

## College Prep American Government

Text: American Government, MacGruders

### **American Government Course Objectives:**

1. To demonstrate an understanding of the principles within the Constitution
2. Understand the respective roles of the three branches of government, how they balance each other, and how the federal government works in accordance with the states
3. To develop an appreciation of the intricate development, nature and functions of the American political system
4. To provide basic information on the institutions and procedures of government and lawmaking in the United States, as well as the less formal political influences such as those of media and political parties.
5. To introduce students to the theory, purposes, and practice of government in the United States, and their relevance to current political issues.
6. To develop citizenship skills in political thought and decision-making

#### **Unit 1: The Constitution - Objectives**

- explain the development of government and the state

- synthesize the different forms of government
- understand the basic concepts of democracy that influenced the foundations of our democracy
- understand the influences that shaped our political system
- explain the circumstances which led to the colonies declaring independence
- evaluate the system of government prior to the Constitution
- describe the varied philosophies in creating the Constitution
- analyze the different pro's and con's for ratifying the Constitution
- describe the basic principles used in creating the constitution
- understand the amendment process and how it provides flexibility to our Constitution
- explain the development of Constitution change and development through informal amendment process
- illustrate the division of powers between the National Government and the states, with emphasis on the National Governments obligation to the states

#### **Unit 2: The Political Process and Mass Media – Objectives**

- describe the nature and function of political parties in America
  - explain the evolution of American political parties and the nature and role of minor parties
  - interpret the structure and composition of the two political parties
  - retell the history of voting rights in United States
  - illustrate the diversity of voter qualifications
  - contrast voter turnout and nonvoting in American elections
  - summarize factors that affect the way people vote
  - understand the methods by which candidates are nominated to run for public office
  - compare the administration of elections and of the different types of ballots
  - examine the reasons why money is an indispensable campaign resource
  - investigate the factors that shape public opinion
  - interpret the impact of mass media on politics
- #### **Unit 3: Local and State - Objectives**
- show an understanding of the structure, organization and powers of the Illinois state legislature

- describe the power and shape of the office of the Illinois governor
- explain the structure of local governments
- demonstrate an understanding of the history and geography of Illinois

#### **Unit 4: Patriotism and Civil Liberties Objectives**

- interpret the meaning of Patriotism
- compare the relationship between liberty and government
- relate the importance of religious freedom in the United States
- describe the scope and limits on free speech and free press
- examine the relationship between individual liberties and national security
- explain the limits on the freedoms of assembly and petition
- investigate the concept of due process of law
- contrast the rights to freedom and security of the person
- describe the rights of the accused to a fair trial
- outline the constitutional limits on punishments for crime