Introduction
Welcome to US Government! I hope you'll get a great deal out of this class and in the process that we'll have a lot of fun learning together. I expect a lot of enthusiasm, participation, and thinking from you. It’s going to be hard, but it'll be really interesting!

Description
This class explores the events, trends, peoples, groups, cultures, ideas and institutions that lead to creation and practice of different types of government around the world. This class will also focus on the makeup and function of the government of the United States of America. We will focus on using primary sources, including the Founding Documents of the United States, to analyze the government of the country.

Practical Matters
Due to the short nature of the course and the vast amount of material involved students are expected to become learners both IN and OUT of the classroom. Homework will be assigned most nights; students will be informed in class and the information will also be posted on my website.

The atmosphere is to be one of respect. This must be the case if we are to share our knowledge and ideas with others. But this means more than not interrupting others when they are speaking—it means listening attentively to others’ thoughts and thinking carefully about their ideas. It means learning and using people’s names. It means not sending the message that you have other things on your mind. We will be talking about sensitive topics, such as political beliefs, and respect is of the utmost importance to have discussions that do not devolve into arguments.

You will be assigned a spot in the cell phone holder. Cell phones MUST be in the specified cell phone holder during the entire class (not seen or heard) except when approved by the teacher, such as finding the answer to a question using a smart phone. Violation of this policy WILL result in confiscation! We will follow the discipline plan for Jefferson Academy; it’s just common courtesy, you know.

Computers (BYOD) will be needed throughout the semester. You will be allowed to take notes on your computer, HOWEVER if you are caught not focusing in class (playing games or surfing, etc) this privilege will be taken away and you will have to write your notes.

Assignments are to be completed on time and in detail. I am very good about updating my website with assignments and homework. We will be using Google Classroom this semester for all assignments, presentations, and study guides used throughout the semester. The Google Classroom connect code for class is: sc4asfr. There will also be a calendar on my school website, which can be accessed at http://ketcham.jajags.com. It is intended to give you an update on daily classroom activities and has MAJOR due dates on it.

Late work will not be accepted. That being said, if you are in the need of more time and ask me BEFORE the due date, there are opportunities for extensions. If you come to me the day of or after the due date, the work will not be accepted.
For excused absences, you will have 2 days for every day you miss, and the clock starts when you come back to school. I keep everything on my Google classroom, so there is no reason for you to not be prepared.

**Academic honesty** is of utmost importance. Cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism will result in a 0 on the assignment and a note in the gradebook. That said, I do believe in the adage that **two heads are better than one**. We will do a lot of group work; you will brainstorm, think, discuss, and complete tasks with other people. There will be times you are able to turn in work that you completed with a partner. However, unless stated by the teacher, you MUST turn in your own **ORIGINAL** work, meaning it can’t be an assignment you submitted for another class. Tests also must be your own work. Cheating will be dealt with according to Jefferson Academy’s policies. If you have any questions about what is or is not cheating or plagiarism, please come talk to me.

**Attendance** is important. I adhere to the school’s attendance and tardy policy as detailed in the Student/Parent Handbook. Exams, quizzes, and homework often include questions on material presented only in class, so performance on these indirectly reflects attendance. If you miss class, see my web page. Don’t ask me any questions about make-up work until you have looked at the lessons online AND asked another student. You should be prepared for class every day, so you are expected to be caught up from absences before walking into 240.

**Tardiness** On-time attendance is very important. When students are late, instructional time is missed and disruptions occur in the classroom. In fact, if a student is five minutes late three times per week, it amounts to missing more than 4.5 hours of class time in a semester. It is equal to three class blocks. All tardies are excused at the discretion of the administration. Examples of Excused Tardies – temporary illness or injury, appointments, legal obligations, funeral, etc. When the number of excused tardies becomes excessive, documentation of the reason provided by parents will be required. Examples of Unexcused Tardies – oversleeping, traffic, need more time, power outage, etc.

**Extra help** is always available. If you need clarification or extra help, please ask for it! I will be in my classroom (240) during morning ACCESS HOUR for you to drop by, and after school by appointment. I check my jajags.com email address until 8pm, so emailing me there if you cannot stop by is the best way to get your questions answered.

**Materials** you need for this class include loose-leaf paper, pens/pencils (any color is fine as long as it is dark enough to read), a handful of index cards, highlighters, a small stapler, and a binder/folder.

Our **textbook** is *United States Government: Our Democracy*. We have digital licenses which you will be expected to sign up for and use throughout the semester. You will sign up at [https://my.mheducation.com/login](https://my.mheducation.com/login). You will need to create an account if you do not have one. Once you have logged in, you need the class code: **ncN1zK6H** This will allow you to access the readings and the homework I assign throughout the semester. There will be lots of reading almost every night. If you have problems staying focused while reading online, I can assign you a textbook. The textbook is the same as the online resource.

I have some **pet peeves** and feel that you deserve heads up.

- First, if you must arrive late, come in as quietly as possible. Explanations and questions are appropriate later. Calling additional attention to yourself and wasting others’ time is unacceptable.
- Do not interrupt and/or make a spectacle of yourself. Second, any interruption to my class, such as sharpening your pencil, stapling papers, making inappropriate comments, or not coming to class prepared, is inappropriate and will be dealt with by a conniption fit from your teacher. If you think I wouldn’t approve, don’t do it.
• Use furniture for appropriate purposes; **please do not sit on the desk tops.**
• Never use the phrase, “did I miss anything?” when you come back from an absence. It is offensive—of course you missed something. Instead, ask a specific question that demonstrates that you have already looked at the website and spoken with another student in the class.
• Finally, tapping, drumming, and any unnecessary noise drives me crazy.

**Grading Information**
The grade scale is a basic ten-point scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
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</tbody>
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**A:** You put forth maximum effort on each and every task assigned, activity in class, project given, and overall had a positive attitude in class. Very high level of self advocacy.

**B:** You put forth good effort on each and every task assigned, activity in class, project given, and had a good attitude the majority of the time in class. Self advocacy is a priority for the student.

**C:** You put forth average effort on each task assigned, activity, project, and had a mostly positive attitude in class. Some attempt made to get extra help. Average level of self advocacy.

**D:** You put forth very little effort on each task assigned, activity, project, and had a somewhat negative attitude in class. Little effort put into getting extra help.

**F:** You put forth no effort on each task assigned, activity, project, and had a negative attitude in class. No effort to receive extra help either.

**Topics and Themes**

- **Unit 1 Philosophical Foundations of Government**
  - The nature of power, politics, and government
  - Comparing forms of government
  - The US constitution
  - The Bill of Rights and civil liberties
  - Federalism

- **Unit 2 Civic Engagement**
  - Citizen participation in a democracy
  - Parties, interest groups, and public policy
  - Public opinion and the media
  - Political campaigns and elections

- **Unit 3 Government in a Global World**
  - Lawmakers and legislatures
  - Congressional lawmaking
  - Chief Executives and bureaucracies
  - Courts, judges, and the law

  **We will spend an average of 2 weeks per Unit**

**Classroom Activities and Homework:** Students will be involved in numerous large and small learning activities and discussions throughout the semester.

(25% of grade)

**Writing:** We will work on writing with specificity and analysis throughout the semester. Expect to write 2-3 papers throughout the semester, along with different types of smaller writing assignments. Each paper will be at least 3 pages in length. We will be using **TURNITIN.COM** to
turn in papers this semester. The Class ID is 24180323 and the Password is EvansHughes
No paper will be graded if it is not turned into Turnitin.com by the due date.

Writing Schedule: April 3\textsuperscript{rd}, April 27\textsuperscript{th}, May 15\textsuperscript{th}.
(30\% of grade)

**Quests:** 5 quests (small test) will be given throughout the semester, covering a range of topics. Each test will consist of multiple choice questions and short-answer questions for you to answer. Because you have the testing schedule, if you miss a test, I will expect you to be ready to make it up the day you come back, otherwise it will go into the gradebook as a ZERO. I will drop your lowest quest grade at the end of the quarter.

Quest Schedule: April 3\textsuperscript{rd}, April 15\textsuperscript{th}, April 28\textsuperscript{th}, May 4\textsuperscript{th}, May 15\textsuperscript{th}.
(30\% of grade)

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be given according to the Jefferson Academy Final exam schedule at the end of the quarter. The final exam will consist of multiple choice questions, short answer and essay questions for you to answer over topics covered on the previous tests.
(10\% of grade)

**Bell Ringers/Discussion/Participation:** Short questions for you to answer right at the beginning of class most days. These will be turned into the teacher at the end of each class. These CANNOT be made up. There will also be multiple discussions throughout the class. (5\% of grade)

**Helpful Hints**

**Writing:** If you find that you are having trouble, spend about an hour and read the very short and helpful book, *Elements of Style*, at [http://www.bartleby.com/141/](http://www.bartleby.com/141/) This is a timeless classic that will help improve your writing immensely, and will help you with your writing throughout high school and college.

Have fun!!
Permission and contact form

(Please Sign Below and return to Mr. Ketcham)

-I have read and understand Mr. Ketcham’s class policies and procedures and will do my best to help my student succeed.

-I understand that in the study of social studies students will occasionally watch movie clips and movies and that some of these movie clips and movies may be rated R. At no point will Mr. Ketcham show scenes involving unnecessary gore or anything of a sexual nature. These clips will only be used to highlight historical material. I also understand that if I do not allow my student to see these movie clips that the student will be given an alternative activity that they will complete independently.

_________yes my student may view the clips/movies

_________no my student may not view the clips/movies

Parent Signature:___________________________________________________________

Student Name:_____________________________________________________________

Student Signature:__________________________________________________________

Fill out the info below to ensure I have your correct contact information

Parent Name:_________________________  Parent Name:_________________________

Parent Phone #:______________________  Parent Phone #:______________________

Parent Email_________________________  Parent Email:_______________________

Thank you in advance for contributing to a great school year that I know we will all have! Feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions.