Course Overview: Government & Politics
Students in this course will examine the foundational concepts and systems of the American government under the United States Constitution. We will strive to propose policy change on a national, state, or local scale.

Units and Activities:

Unit #1: Political participation
Activities: Determine your political party; analyze 2019 Democratic debates.

Unit #2: Interaction between branches
Activities: Research a real-world issue, and attempt to address the issue through policy change.

Unit #3: Bill of Rights
Activities: Debate the responsibilities of the government versus the civil liberties of individuals.

Standards: What knowledge and skills will I gain by the end of this course?
This course will assess the knowledge and skills students build in key Anchor Standards and Content Standards.

Anchor Standards:
Sourcing: Who is giving me this information? Why does it matter?
Arguing and Explaining: How can I use what I know to inform and persuade others?
Taking Action: How can I use my ideas to impact the world around me?
Speaking and Listening: How can I share and grow my ideas through respectful dialogue?

Content Standards: This course builds student knowledge using the C3 standards. The content standard for Government & Politics is:
D2.Civ.4.9-12. Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.

Assessment of Learning

Assessment Types:
Three types of assessments will be used to determine if you have gained the necessary knowledge and skills of this course: Formative assessments, Summative assessments, and Habits of Work for Learning. Each is briefly described below:

Formative Assessments: Formative = Forming my knowledge and skills. Formative Assessments receive a weight of .1 in the overall grade. Formative assessments are information for teachers, students, and
parents on the progress students are making as they practice gaining knowledge and skills found in Anchor Standards. Teachers use the results of these assessments as data to understand individual student learning needs, adjust instructional pathways, and modify lessons to help students better meet course standards. Students use the results of these assessments to determine how they are progressing and to plan steps to ensure their success.

**Summative Assessments:** Summative = Summation of my knowledge and skills. Summative Assessments can receive three different weights: 1, 1.5, or 2 depending on the size of the assessment, and therefore have the greatest impact on the Overall Course Mastery Grade. Summative assessments are used as a measure of independent student achievement in Anchor Standards. Throughout this course, summative assessments provide benchmark student achievement data. A summative assessment will always have clear scoring criteria for students to understand how they are performing.

**Habits of Work for Learning:** Habits of Work for Learning (HOWLs) are skills and dispositions that are essential to the learning process but do not provide evidence of what a student knows or can do in relation to content. WUHSMS teachers work to foster Habits of Work for Learning in three categories: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**Assessment Scoring:**
Teachers will provide framing for summative assessment scores using proficiency level scoring criteria for grading similar to the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anchor Standard: Computational Modeling</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Course Standards:</strong> NGSS HS-L2-1 Use mathematical and/or computational representations to support explanations of factors that affect the carrying capacity of ecosystems at different scales. NGSS HS-LS2-4 Use mathematical representations to support claims for the cycling of matter and flow of energy among organisms in an ecosystem.</td>
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<th>1.3*</th>
<th>1.7*</th>
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<td>B</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>A</td>
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*Beginning | Approaching | Proficient | Distinguished |

**Representation**
I can identify the components of a system. I can represent the components of a system using numbers or variables. I can show connections between components of a system using a computational model. I can use mathematics and/or a computational representation to make predictions about how changing one variable or component will affect the system.

**Computational Modeling & Analysis**
I can use a given computational model to explore relationships between components of a system. I can use a given computational model as evidence to support a claim or explanation of a system. I can create and/or revise a computational model and use it as evidence to support a claim or explanation of a system. I can expand the computational model to illustrate how a change in a system component can impact all other relevant components.

*scores in the "Beginning range" are well below proficient and thus they are below passing.

**HOWL Scoring:**
HOWLs will be scored at least once per checkpoint, and will be based on the frequency with which students demonstrate each of the habits: preparation, participation, and perseverance.

**How is my Overall Course Grade Determined?**
Overall course grades will be reported as letter grades and will be comprised of:
- Formative & Summative Scores: 95%
- HOWLs: 5%

For more information, please see the WUHSMS student handbook.

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**Communication:**

**How Do I Know My Grades?**
- On Summative Assessments, a teacher will provide both a 4-point grade and a letter grade.
- You can monitor your progress in the following ways:
  - By reading feedback and scoring returned to students on summative assessments
  - By monitoring the scores and Overall Course Mastery Grade in the Parent/Student portal on JumpRope
  - By monitoring the grades sent home quarterly through report cards

**Where Can I Find This Syllabus during the School Year?**
- This syllabus will be available on the school website in each subject’s department tab once the school year is up and running.

**How Do I See What’s Due?**
- Summative assessment due dates and handouts are posted to the blue “Upcoming Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal on or before the day they are assigned to students.

**How Do I See What’s Past Due?**
- If a student is missing an assessment, it will be listed in the red “Missing Assessment” section of the JumpRope Parent/Student Portal along with any attachments.

**Best Way to Contact Me:**
Feel free to contact me via email and phone. I can be reached at ssmith@wcsu.net, and (802) 457-1317, ext:1206.

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**Materials:**

Students are expected to arrive every class with a laptop, a writing utensil, and a notebook devoted to Government & Politics.

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**Schoolwide Procedures:**

Please see the Student Handbook for Procedures and Policies related to: Due dates and deadlines, extra credit, retaking assessments, and turnaround time for grade entry.

**Personal Mobile Devices:** This class will follow the procedures outlined in the student handbook.
Classroom Expectations:
Students should arrive ready to engage and help lead the learning. Phones should be set in the cradle or in backpacks. Also, the topics in this class can be thought-provoking, and emotional. Students are asked to work especially hard to consider diverse points of view. All of our ideas matter. As the late President George H.W. Bush said of his friend President Bill Clinton: "Just because you run against someone does not mean you have to be enemies."

Teacher Contact Information:
Feel free to contact me via email and phone. I can be reached at ssmit@wcsu.net, and (802) 457-1317, ext:1206.

I have read this syllabus, and I have contacted the teacher with any questions I have.

Student name (printed): ____________________________________

Student Signed: ______________________________________  Date: ____________________

Parent/Guardian name (printed): ________________________________

Parent Signed: ______________________________________  Date: ____________________