**United States Government**

**Coach McCalvin**

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**Course Description:** The focus of this course will be to examine the foundations of the American government, the three main branches of government, an individual’s rights and participation in their government, public policies and services, state and local government, and political and economic systems. We will spend some time intermingling American history into our discussions to build an understanding of how history has shaped our government. We will also spend a significant portion of the course studying one’s individual rights and how an understanding of these rights can help a person influence their government.

**Text:** *United States Government: Democracy In Action*/McGraw-Hill

**Honor Code/Pledge:** John Milledge Academy expects each student to live as a responsible and honorable person. When students are admitted to John Milledge, they become identified with the school. It is expected that their conduct will reflect favorably upon them and the school at all times; therefore, the Honor Code is an integral part of the daily structure of school life which predicates the assumption that students are honorable and have the right to be trusted. Each student must take personal responsibility in accepting the Honor Code. The Honor Code encompasses academics, behavior, and character.

“*I pledge to always act in an honest, honorable, and accountable manner and expect the same of my fellow students. I agree to promote exemplary behavior at all times and understand that there will be consequences for inappropriate actions*.”

**Tardy/Attendance:** Attendance is mandated by our accreditation and is valued because of the educational content of each class. Students are expected, therefore, to be present for all classes. Any absence or tardiness must be documented in writing or by oral communication with the parents. Furthermore, tardies and absences influence a student’s ability to exempt spring exams (see Handbook for details).

For tardies:

* A student is considered tardy to school from 1 minute to 10 minutes after the late bell of the first class of the day for the student. Students with more than 10 unexcused tardies to school in a school year will not be able to exempt exams.
* After each set of five tardies to the first class, students may choose between
  + Making up one entire class period at the teacher’s discretion or
  + Receiving one unexcused absence from class.
* A student is considered unexcused tardy absent from the first class beginning at the 11th minute after the late bell.

For absences:

* After 8 unexcused absences in a year, a student may not exempt spring exams.
* After 10 unexcused absences from any class per semester, a student may lose 10 points from his/her semester grade (see Handbook for details).
* Students may be given an opportunity to receive course credit and to avoid a 10 point deduction by making up class time beginning with the 11th unexcused absence and every consecutive absence (making up class time will be scheduled at a teacher’s discretion).

**Make-Up Work:** **It is the student’s responsibility to secure all missed work and to ensure that all requirements are satisfied.**

A student is expected to complete all class work within 3 days after being absent. This applies to assignments missed during the absence, without prior knowledge. Students need to be proactive and consult on a teacher-by-teacher basis to schedule make-up work. A student should be prepared to take tests or complete any make-up work that he/she has prior knowledge of on the next day after missing. Please refer to the Parent/Student Handbook for the complete Make-Up Work Policy.

**Class Grading Profile:**

Daily Grades 40%

Tests 40%

Final Exam 20%

* The *Daily Grade* category includes the following:
* **Participation grade** will be based on general classroom behavior: willingness to participate in discussions, ability to work with and get along with others, completing and working on assignments, bringing required materials to class, meeting expectations, being prepared and on time when class begins, taking notes daily and working hard in class until class is dismissed. Another important part of the participation grade will be the student’s class binder. Each student is expected to keep a 3-ring binder with divided sections to allow the student to keep up with class notes, quizzes, tests, worksheets, handouts and any other pertinent materials. I will periodically check the student’s folder and give him or her a participation grade to be sure he or she is keeping up with this responsibility.
* **Quizzes** may be given to ensure reading and comprehension of an assignment. Students can typically expect a *surprise* quiz per chapter based on a section within the chapter, key terms in the chapter, and/or a major class discussion.
* **Daily grades** include warm-up activities, “question of the day,” “exit summaries,” (see below for these) and/or special assignments.
* The *Test* category includes the following:
* Chapter and Unit **Tests**
* Most **essays** will be completed in class and will be over a specific topic given in class. I feel that this is a great preparation for college as well as an excellent way to teach critical thinking. Spelling and grammar will not be graded as heavily as the opinions and expressed ideas.
* Grades will be recorded on the grade book program no later than one week after the due date. Please check progress via the online campus community.

**Homework:** Homework, projects, and reports may be assigned at the discretion of the teacher on week nights and/or weekends. All students are expected to do their homework thoroughly and turn it in at the beginning of the class on the due date or at the discretion of the teacher. There will not be a great deal of homework in my class except for reading the text and studying notes *daily*. Government is a lot of memorization and reading over notes daily will help tremendously! **Students and parents have access to homework, all grades, and teacher information via Parents Web at http://jm-ga.client.renweb.com/pw/. Please use this resource!**

**Exam Exemptions:** Students may exempt final exams on a class-by-class basis if the following conditions are met:

* They have a 90 yearly average in that subject or higher
* They have8 or less unexcusedabsences during the year or 4 or less unexcused absences for a one semester class in that subject
* They have 10 or less tardies in that subject during the year or 6 or less tardies for a one semester class
* They have had no major disciplinary action in any subject

No one will be exempted from midyear examinations unless it is a one-semester course.

The teacher will notify the student, in writing, of his or her exemption by the last day of regular class prior to the final examination week.

**Pertinent Information:** Our classroom schedule will be very structured everyday. A regular class day will run as follows:

1. Warm Up Activity (first 5 minutes)
2. Question from the day before (5 minutes)-this will be a general question from what was covered in class the day before.
3. Introduction to the lesson (3-5 minutes)-Here’s what we’re going to do today.
4. Lecture (25-35 minutes)-instructional time
5. Close out lesson (5 minutes)-opportunity to ask questions.
6. Exit Summary (5 minutes)-“Ticket out the door”-Brief description of what we did today in class.

* There will be days that we do in-class essays, discussions or small projects.
* What I expect of my students:

1. Do your best at all times in all things. NO WHINING and NO EXCUSES!
2. Always be prepared for class! I will not provide you with materials needed for class. This is YOUR responsibility!
3. Be on time. Tardiness will not be tolerated.
4. Always be respectful to yourself, your teacher and your fellow classmates.
5. Ask for help. I can’t help you if I don’t know you need it!
6. Behavior that is suitable to your age. Act like SENIORS!

* What they can expect of their teacher:

1. To give you the best educational experience possible by being prepared for class each day.
2. To be here for you when you need help.
3. To treat you with the same amount of respect that you show me.
4. To treat you like a young adult when you act like one.

**All students are responsible for the rules and policies set forth in the most current Parent-Student Handbook, found online at** [**www.johnmilledge.org**](http://www.johnmilledge.org) **under “quick links.”**

**Materials needed daily:**

Textbook(s), pens, 3-ring binder with dividers, loose-leaf notebook paper, hi-lighter. One of my biggest expectations is being prepared for class. You cannot learn without the proper materials.

**Turnitin.com:**

There will be times I will ask students to submit work electronically through turnitin.com.

Class ID #13139589

Password: government

If you have never used turnitin.com…

1. Click “create account”
2. Scroll down and click “student”
3. Enter class ID and enrollment password
4. Enter your user information. REMEMBER your password