**U.S Government Class Mr. Richards**

Room 340

Class Time: 1st Period:8:25-9:50 4th Period:1:50-3:20

Class Website:<http://leonardrichardsjr.weebly.com/>

Email: lrichards@waynesboro.k12.va.us

**Textbook:** American Government (Pearson, 2009). Books will not be issued to students unless specifically asked by student or a parent. A class set will be used for class work done at school.

**Class Overview:** U.S Government is a non-SOL class that will provide you with the information of how our government works. As citizens not only of America, but of the world it is important that you all build an understanding of the importances of and contributions made by the historical people and events we will discuss and study throughout this semester. MOST IMPORTANTLY, this is a subject about YOU! Some of you will be of voting age and will be eligible to vote this November! Voting, of course, is one of the fundamental duties that citizens have in America. My objective for you all is to not only do well on assessments, but to build an appreciation and understanding of our government, as well as spark questions and discussions about various historical decisions and events that helped shaped the government that we have today. Although voting is one of the duties that citizens have, questioning by far surpasses all of the duties available to citizens. You will be responsible for questioning and discussing various issues that we see occurring daily in the political arena and how those decisions affect you.

**Units of Study:**

* Basic Principles of Government and Democracy
* Foundations of American Government
* The Constitution
* Federalism
* Three Branches of Government (Federal And Virginia)
* Political Parties, Elections, and Voting
* Citizenship, Freedoms, Civil Liberties/Rights, Due Process

**The Five Be’s**

Among the other rules that are found in the parent/student handbook, our class will have five home rules that will help us all be successful and create a safe learning environment for yourself and your peers.

1. **Be Kind-** Every person is entitled to their own thoughts and opinions and disagreements are bound to happen. However, when disagreeing, we want to do so in a respectful manner. At the same time, opinions that are being presented should also exhibit the same respect.

1. **Be Respectful-** Respect goes beyond the debates and discussions we will have in the classroom. We will make sure that we are listening to one another and respecting each others’ viewpoints no matter whether or not we agree. This classroom is a zone of equality and we are ALL in this together!!!

1. **Be Ready to Learn-** Come prepared to class everyday with not only your pens/pencils and notebooks, but with your thoughts about the topics we discuss. Participation is important in a Democracy and it is just as important in this class!!
2. **Be Engaged-** This means that you are paying attention and actively participating in our class lectures, activities, and discussions. Unless I give special permission during class to use your electronic devices, they need to remain off and out of sight. **If I see them I have the right to take them!**
3. **Be Timely-** Please arrive to class on time and try to handle any bathroom, water, or locker breaks during the bell ringer. You have 5 minutes before class even starts to handle these needs.

**Homework:** As this is a government course you all will be responsible for a reasonable amount of factual information. I will assign homework that will allow you to practice with the information discussed in class. **I DO NOT** believe in assigning busywork! Each homework and classwork assignment is aimed to be a valuable learning experience and will contribute to your success in the course.

**Required Materials:** Students must keep a notebook in the form of a 3-ring binder for this class. Students should bring their notebook, a pencil, and a pen (blue or black ink) to class each day.

**Optional Materials:** Although I have a limited supply available for class use, students are encouraged to bring their own colored pencils to class. Donations of boxes of tissues are always welcome, too!

**Grading Procedures and Grading Scale**

Grades for this class are based on “daily progress” (homework, classwork and an independent study project), quizzes, and tests, and participation and is broken down as follows:

**Homework/Classwork:** 15%

**Quizzes:** 15%

**Projects:** 20%

**Tests:** 25%

**Participation:**(Notebook Checks, Discussions, Unexcused absences and tardies to class) 25%

This is the grading scale that is provided by the Waynesboro Public Schools System. It is also found in the parent/student handbook.

A+ =97-100 B+ =87-89 C+ =77-79 D+ =67-69 F = 59 and below

A =94-96 B = 84-86 C = 74-76 D = 64-66

A- =90-93 B- = 80-83 C-= 70-73 D- = 60-63

**Make up Policy:**

When a student is absent from my class, it is his or her responsibility to see what they missed and get information about class activities and assignments. Students who have a computer at home with Internet access may check our class website,<http://leonardrichardsjr.weebly.com/> to check assignments. I also have a calendar in the class that will have the assignments listed to be made up. Students should see me personally with questions or to make arrangements for tests or quizzes. I am happy to help students catch up whether or not they have been absent! However, it is the student’s responsibility to get and complete assignments in a timely manner. If you need to contact me after school, email is the best option.

**\*Please sign below and return to me. I will keep only the portion below**

**Students:** I have read and understood this syllabus and am ready to be an active learner and cooperative participant in this class.

**Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parents:** I have read and understood this syllabus and am ready to support my child as an active learner and cooperative participant in this class.

**Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Parent contact info:**

**Daytime Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**E-mail:** **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**