

The American Citizen – Course Overview and Syllabus, Spring 2008



Students are expected to come to class prepared to learn. The most important element in this is an attitude that there are things of value to learn in this course, and a healthy respect for others' opportunity to learn while they're in this class. Being prepared to learn means bringing appropriate course-related materials when they are needed and the completion of assigned readings, assignments and individual and group projects on the date they are due.

Course Web Site

Assignments, practice quizzes and tests, Powerpoint slideshows with lecture notes, online activities and links to information can be found at <http://www.twyman-whitney.com>.

Contacting Your Instructor

Ms. Twyman's email address is dtwyman@nkcsd.k12.mo.us; Mr. Whitney's is cwhitney@nkcsd.k12.mo.us.

Course Description

The American Citizen is a two-semester course for juniors and seniors. With sufficient effort, a decent work ethic and regular attendance in class students may earn one full unit of credit in social studies. Students must pass this class to graduate from any of the high schools within the North Kansas City School District, including NKCHS. There are no official prerequisites for the course. However, students will find it very helpful (and they will find the course to be a lot more fun) if they are generally knowledgeable about the following:

- United States and world history (remember those previous social studies classes?)
- the basic concepts and principles of government and democracy (remember those previous social studies classes?)
- the social, political, religious and governmental culture of the United States as a whole
- what is happening "in the news" -- in our community, state, nation and the world

Units of Instruction

Spring Semester

- the legislative process, lawmaking powers and how laws are made in a democratic society
- leadership in a democracy through the executive branch of government and the power of the bureaucracy to carry out policies
- civil rights, civil liberties, and how the national and state constitutions help to guarantee the rights of the majority and protect those who hold minority views
- the courts system and legal processes at the national, state and local levels

Additional class time will be used to explore

- the people and events and issues that are of contemporary importance
- local, state and national geography

Students' Grades

If you want to succeed in this course, be ready to . . .

- **bring paper, pens, pencils every day, and your text when asked by your instructor**
- **complete assigned readings in the text, online, or hand-outs prepared by your instructor**
- **actively participate in class activities and discussions in a mature fashion**
- **read, listen to and/or watch the national and international news in a variety of formats**

Final (semester) grades will be based on the percentage of total possible points a student has earned by the end of the semester for assignments, projects, quizzes, tests, and participation in in-class activities as follows:

A = 90% to 100% B = 80% to 89% C = 70% to 79% D = 60% to 69% F = 59% or less

Extra Credit

Your instructor does not believe in offering "extra credit" to students who "blow off" this course, and then realize in the final weeks of the semester that they are in danger of earning a poor grade because of their lack of effort. Generally, extra credit for students enrolled in The American Citizen course will be earned through their knowledge of current events. Current events quizzes may be given on an irregular basis throughout the year.



Weekly Schedule: Spring Semester, 2008



Week	Coverage of Content and Activities
January 3 – 4 January 7 – 11 January 14 – 18	No school K – 12, Wednesday, Jan. 3 (teacher workday) Second semester classes begin Thursday, Jan. 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 12, Congress: Its Powers, Structure and Members, pp. 330 – 349 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 12 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 12 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 12 Test Early Release, district staff development, Friday, January 18 No school K – 12, Monday, January 21, Martin Luther King, Jr., birthday
January 21 – 25 January 28 – February 1 February 4 – 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 13, The Lawmaking Process, pp. 350 – 375 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 13 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 13 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 13 Test
February 11 – 15 6-week grade period ends on Thursday, 2/14/2007 February 18 – 22 February 25 - 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 14, The Office of President, pp. 378 – 395 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 14 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 14 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 14 Test No school K – 12, Friday, Feb. 15, staff development No school on Presidents Day, Monday, February 18
March 3 – 7 March 10 – 14 March 17 – 21 Spring Break March 24 – 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 15, The Powers of the President, pp. 396 - 419 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 15 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 15 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 15 Test Early Release, district staff development, Friday, March 14 Spring Break March 17 – 21, no school K – 12
March 31 – April 4 12-week grade period ends on Friday, April 4 April 7 – 11 April 7 – 18 (MAP testing window) April 21 – 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 17, The Supreme Court and the Federal Courts System, pp. 462 - 487 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 17 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 17 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 17 Test
April 28 – May 2 May 5 – 9 May 12 – 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture/discussion/activities covering Chapter 18, Law and the Legal Process, pp. 488 - 509 in <i>Government in America</i> • Complete Chapter 18 Study Guide • Study for and take Chapter 18 Vocabulary Quiz • Study for and take Chapter 18 Test
May 19 – 23	FINAL EXAMS with early release on May 21 – 23 Last day of school with early release on May 23