

Caroline County Public Schools

Contemporary Issues Curriculum

Course Description: This course examines the social, economic and political issues in the World today. The class will focus in-depth on the American Constitution, Government Institutions, Democratic Processes and the economy. Students will also be exposed to the media, its influence and will learn how to evaluate various sources of information. Other topics included in the course are social issues, foreign affairs and crime and punishment. At the end of the course students will have a better understanding of the issues facing America which will prepare them for the future.

Unit 1: Constitutional Government

1. Examine the selection process of governmental officials at various levels.
 - Evaluate the candidates and identify issues of the current election cycle.
 - Identify the political spectrum and determine how you align on the spectrum.
 - Evaluate the current referendums.
 - Identify and evaluate the multiple ways citizens participate in the government.
2. Evaluate the Constitutional Issues facing American society.
 - Examine current Supreme Court Cases and their impact.
 - Identify Civil Liberties and determine their limitations and impact on society.
 - Analyze the balance between personal freedoms and national security.
3. Analyze how federal, state and local government institutions impact society through policy- making process.
 - Examine the role of the President and Congress and how their powers/roles impact American society.
 - Examine the role of the Governor and General Assembly and how their powers/roles impact Maryland.
 - Examine the role of Local Government and how their powers/roles impact Caroline County.

Unit 2: Economy

1. Examine the business cycle and its impact on government policy and the individual.
 - Evaluate the various economic factors that impact the nation's economy.
 - Analyze government policies that lessen the impact of the business cycle.
 - Evaluate how individuals deal with the phases of the business cycle.
2. Evaluate the use of the stock market and other investment tools on the individual.
 - Analyze potential stocks to be used in an investment.

3. Analyze ethical responsibilities of businesses.
 - Identify important ethical issues that arise in business (drug testing, consumer protection and discrimination)
 - Analyze corporate decision making on the community and workers.
 - Determine the costs and benefits of environmental policy.

Unit 3: Foreign Affairs

1. Examine the role of the United States in international affairs.
 - Analyze the President's powers in international decision -making.
 - Examine Congress and its impact on international policy.
 - Assess the impact of emerging economies on the United States.
 - Identify and analyze international organizations roles in solving problems.
 - Develop an understanding of Globalization and its impact on trade.
2. Examine the most volatile regions in the World (Persian Gulf, South Asia, East Asia, Latin America and Middle East)
 - Evaluate American response to terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.
 - Analyze United States involvement in solving international conflicts.

Unit 4: Social Issues

1. Examine the impact of social issues on American society.
 - Analyze issues of equality and their impact.
 - Evaluate the current Immigration system.
 - Examine other societal issues which may include; drug use, education and sports.

Unit 5: Crime and Punishment

1. Examine the issues and problems confronting the civil and criminal justice systems.
 - Identify the steps of the legal process.
 - Assess the effectiveness of federal and state judicial systems in resolving problems
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of civil and criminal punishments.

Unit 6: Media, Sources of Information and Influence

1. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of various sources of information.
 - Evaluate accuracy of a variety of sources.
 - Assess how point of view shapes the content and credibility.
 - Compare different points of view on the same event or issue evaluating similarities and differences.
2. Assess and analyze different types of informational text to include maps, charts, political cartoons, diagrams and graphs.