

# Contemporary Issues in American Government

EDWARD LITTLE HIGH SCHOOL

Auburn, ME 04210

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## Course Syllabus

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION/COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Welcome to Contemporary Issues in American Government. This class is designed to help you better understand your role/voice in our government as well as the way the government functions. We will examine our founding documents, look at landmark Supreme Court Cases, and have deep discussions/thought exercises on what it means to be a citizen and what the requirement of this position entails. Below you will find the learning targets that we will reach by the end of this semester.

1. Students understand the impact of key landmark decisions of the US Supreme Court.
2. Students understand the rights, duties and responsibilities of a citizen of the United States.
3. Students understand the ways in which an individual has a voice in the decision making process in a democracy.
4. Students understand the challenges and conflicts inherent in exercising one's rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS IN CLASS**

The work this class will require necessitates a level of maturity and the ability to work with others. My personal expectations for you are as follows:

- You will come prepared for class with a pencil, pen, notebook, folder/binder, and any previous work we have done in class (even if it is not due that day). All students are asked to have a 3 ring binder so they may neatly store the photocopied documents we will use in class. It is important these are kept together as we will often revisit previous documents even after they have been assigned and reviewed.
- You will always have a charged laptop and you use this laptop appropriately for school (such as staying on the right website, using it for research if that is our task that day, and looking at appropriate news sources on our news days.)

- You will always be respectful of each others' opinions. We will have many conversations on potentially charged issues in this class. You do not have to agree 100% with what everyone is saying but you do have to be respectful of each others' opinions. This means do not attack them for their beliefs, do not argue to a point where it is too heated, and be willing to open your mind to someone else's thoughts and ideas. Always keep in mind that what people say should be addressed differently than who the person is.
- Phones must be stored in the pockets along the back wall during class time unless otherwise stated by the teacher or negotiated due to a personal emergency/need to be reached easily.

### **STUDENT GRADING AND EVALUATION**

60% Summative Assessments

25% Formative Assessments

15% Student Responsibility

### **CERTIFICATION OF PROFICIENCY: ('meets' is mandatory for credit in a course for current 9th and 10th graders)**

- A score of “meets” on the assigned targets for the course is required to earn credit.
- Proficiency will be certified for each learning target using the common scoring criteria developed by the department assessing those targets and each teacher’s professional judgement. Students will be provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency for each learning target. Each summative assessment tied to a target or targets should have target proficiency entered at the time it is scored so students can see their progress on the targets.
- Proficiency is certified as “meets” or “does not meet” or “not attempted,” using the guidelines for a 2.5 on scales/rubrics as the measurement tool to decide if it is a “meets.” A 2.5 indicates that a student has met all of the requirements for a 2 and some of the requirements for a 3 on the scales.
- If a student has not reached “meets” for required targets in the course, the student will be marked as “Incomplete” or “In Progress” for the course, which does not allow for credit to be awarded.

### **GRADING SCALE**

A 95-100; A- 93 – 94; B+ 91 – 92; B 87 – 90; B- 85 – 86; C+ 83 – 84; C 77 – 82; C- 75 – 76; D 71 - 74; D- 70; F 69 - 50 .

### **LATE PENALTIES FOR COLLECTED WORKS**

*Summative and Formative:*

Late point penalties for collected summative work: 5 percentage points lost per school day. After 6 school days, the maximum achievable score is a 70% (higher expectations and penalties are expected in AP and dual enrollment classes)

- If an excused absence occurs on the date the assignment was due, then the assignment is due the day the student returns to school.

- Formative work is not accepted for credit after the respective summative assessment is due.

### **Summative REASSESSMENT PROTOCOL:**

Teacher will establish how a student can earn the opportunity for a reassessment through teacher/student discussion (<http://bit.ly/ELHSreassessmentplan>). This contains a window of eligibility within 2 weeks of original grade/feedback.

- Late penalties still apply to a reassessment.
- Policies for college courses or AP courses may override this protocol . (Bridge, Dual, etc)
- The score on the reassessment will be averaged with the original score. The average will replace the original score.
- A student may only complete a reassessment **once** per summative assessment.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Edward Little High School requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Activities such as cheating on exams, copying other’s homework or other collected/graded works, and plagiarizing the intellectual work of others are not acceptable and will be subject to severe disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

Plagiarism means “to take ideas, writing, etc. from another.” Plagiarism is using/stealing, intentionally or unintentionally, another person’s ideas, concepts, research, pictures, graphs, statistics, etc. without in-text documentation and a “works Cited” page. The consequences for plagiarizing are significant and can tarnish your reputation with your teachers and other students here at ELHS.

“The responsibility to give credit for material that would not qualify as common knowledge applies to almost all types of assignments and situations, not just papers, and not only to finished work but also submitted drafts. Work in which students must acknowledge sources and the contributions of others includes but is not limited to draft and final versions of the following:

- Talks and other oral presentations
- Visual aids, presentation slides, or other media tools
- Websites, web pages, webcasts, and other multimedia work
- Artistic, musical, and other creative work
- Lab reports
- Problem sets
- Thesis chapters, papers, proposals, literature reviews, abstracts, annotated bibliographies, and other writing
- Exams, including in-class and take-home exams.” (Bates, 2018, para. 10 - 11)

Bates. (2018). Academic Integrity Policy. Information retrieved from:

<https://www.bates.edu/student-affairs/student-conduct/academic-integrity-policy/>

The first offense will result in the following consequences:

1. You will be required to discuss the specifics of your transgression with the teacher who discovers your plagiarism.
2. Your parents will be notified.
3. Your other teachers will be notified.
4. A notation will be placed in your Powerschool information file.

5. You will be allowed to redo the work, and the credit you receive for it will depend on your teacher and your individual circumstances. If you choose not to redo the work, you will receive a 0 on it.

Any subsequent offense will result in a grade of 0 with no chance to make up the work. A grade of 0 on a significant assignment could result in a failing grade for the class. That would entail making up the whole class. Teachers and administrators at ELHS encourage all students to achieve their highest academic potential. They want all students to develop characteristics that will give them the best chance to be successful adults: integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness. If you are concerned about plagiarism, ask your teacher for guidance.

#### **BEING AN E.L.H.S. EDDIE MEANS YOU...**

- Participate in your learning
- Have school spirit
- Follow the Code of Cooperation
  - **Good Citizenship:** Eddies are involved, positive role models who support each other and take pride in their school and community.
  - **Academic Achievement:** Eddies take pride in their work and give their best effort.
  - **Responsibility and Accountability:** Eddies are present, prepared, and engaged in their learning in order to achieve their academic and personal goals.
  - **Environment:** Our environment includes a welcoming, safe and supportive culture where everyone takes ownership for maintaining a positive attitude toward learning, teaching, and achievement.
  - **Respect:** Eddies show respect to themselves, each other, their peers, community members and opponents to allow for everyone to perform in a safe environment, in turn leading to success in all aspects of their co-curricular, extracurricular, and community lives.