

**Boulder Valley School District
Course Outline**

Course Name: T37 United States Government

Designated Grade Levels: 9

Course Duration: Semester

Prerequisite / Recommendation: None

Fees, Supplies: None

Credits: 5 credits

Teacher: Darren Bessett

School: Fairview H. S.

Course Overview:

The purpose of this course is to present the basic concepts of American government from pre-Revolutionary days to present time. This course presents an overview of why government is important to societies and then pursues a study of the foundations of American democracy, the rights of citizens, politics of democracy, and the structure of American government. Students will investigate a comparison of other political systems and philosophies. This course focuses on writing and critical thinking skills. This course is advanced, and goes beyond curriculum expectations of a standard course by increasing depth and complexity. Students will be engaged in dynamic, high-level learning. The pace of this course may be faster than that of a traditional course.

Course Content / Student Objectives:

- The student will demonstrate a sound understanding of the historical origins of our United State's government.
- The student will acquire the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their responsibilities and protect their rights as citizens of a free society.
- The student will develop the skills necessary to make decisions, influence decisions of others, and judge their own decisions.
- The student will demonstrate structured reasoning and the ability to formulate a critical conclusion as it relates to government.

Teacher Comments:

The instructor will be a facilitator of learning. Students are expected to be active participants in class. Methods of instruction will include: class discussion, lecture / note-taking, group problem solving, and critical writing development. Students are encouraged to use Mr. Bessett's web site as a resource for information and research.

The course grading system is based on the accumulation of earned points on assignments. Students may calculate their grade simply by dividing accumulated points (from the various assignments and earned extra credit) by the total amount of points available.

US Government

Unit & BVSD SS Standard	Essential Questions	Unit Content	Outcome/vocabulary
Intro to Government Standard 2	<p>What is a “state”?</p> <p>What are different types of government?</p> <p>What is the role of a government?</p> <p>What are government and Federalism?</p> <p>Why is federalism important?</p>	<p>Federalism – federal, state and local control</p> <p>Characteristics of a nation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> land People Sovereignty government <p>Citizen’s role in a democracy</p>	<p>Federalism*</p> <p>Nation*</p> <p>Sovereignty*</p> <p>Rule of law*</p> <p>Power*</p> <p>Majority rule*</p> <p>Mediation*</p>
Political Spectrum and Parties Standard 4	<p>How are individual values represented in the political spectrum?</p> <p>What role do political parties play in the American political system?</p> <p>What are the pros and cons of a two party system?</p> <p>What role do citizens play in the American political process?</p>	<p>Political Spectrum</p> <p>Functions of Political parties</p> <p>Types of political parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Democrats Republicans 3rd parties <p>One, two and multiparty party systems</p> <p>Voting and Elections</p> <p>Analyzing Political Cartoons</p>	<p>Radical</p> <p>Liberal</p> <p>Moderate</p> <p>Conservative</p> <p>Reactionary</p> <p>Plank</p> <p>Platform</p> <p>Coalition</p>
Origins of American Government Standard 1	<p>Where was democracy born and what are the differences between a direct democracy and a republic?</p> <p>What landmark documents led to the establishment of our government?</p>	<p>4 theories of government: force, evolution, divine right, social contract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greek origins Roman origins British Origins Magna Carta Parliament English Bill of Rights John Locke, Natural 	<p>Civic virtue, common good, civic values*</p> <p>Republic/republicanism*</p> <p>Democratic republic*</p> <p>Patriotism*</p> <p>Natural Rights*</p> <p>Bicameral legislature*</p> <p>Negotiation*</p>

US Government

	<p>Who were the influential thinkers who shaped the thought behind some of our governmental principles?</p> <p>What is the Declaration of Independence? Why was it important?</p>	<p>Rights Philosophy Dec of Independence Articles of Confederation</p>	
<p>The US Constitution</p> <p>Standard 2</p>	<p>How/why was the Constitution drafted?</p> <p>What are the key concepts embodied in the Constitution?</p>	<p>Articles of Confederation What are the six basic principles of the Constitution? 6 Con. Principles: Federalism Limited Government Checks and balances Separation of powers Popular sovereignty Judicial review Articles I-VII –general content of each 27 total Amendments Amending the constitution</p>	<p>Constitution* Principles* Checks and balances* Separation of powers*</p>
<p>Bill of Rights</p> <p>Standard 3</p>	<p>What is the significance of the Bill of Rights?</p> <p>What are the first ten Amendments to the Constitution?</p>	<p>The Bill of Rights – purpose, history, content 14th Amendment Free Speech Types of speech Limits on Free Speech 4th Amendment – privacy US Supreme Court role in enforcing the Bill of Rights</p>	<p>Individual rights*</p>
<p>Legislative Branch</p> <p>Standard 2</p>	<p>What are the powers of Congress?</p> <p>What is the difference between the House and the Senate?</p> <p>How is the legislative branch organized?</p>	<p>Organization of the Legislative branch – Speaker, majority party, minority party, whips, Committees Powers of leg. Branch Qualifications for House and Senate membership How a bill becomes law Lobbying</p>	<p>Legislative branch* Bicameral legislature*</p>

US Government

	How, specifically, does a Bill become a law?	Special interest influence	
Executive Branch Standard 2	What are the Executive, Military and Judicial powers of the President? How is the executive branch organized?	Powers of the President Executive Order** Qualifications to be Pres The Cabinet Federal Federal Agencies	Executive branch*
Judicial Branch Standard 2	How is the Judicial System organized to ensure justice? What is the role of the judicial branch in determining due process?*** What is the difference between interpreting and writing the law?	Focus on Amendments 4-8 and due process Roles and responsibilities of Jury, prosecution, defense, judge	Judicial branch* Justice*

*BVSD Curriculum Essentials Vocabulary, pp. 20-21 *Government Curriculum Essentials Document, 2012.*