**Ms. Miller**

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**11th Grade - Honors Civics**

**2019-2020**

“Civics” is defined as the study of “the rights and duties of citizens and of how government works.” We are going to take this idea and run with it. The goal of this course will be to become informed and active community members who feel empowered to make change.

We will look closely at terms like *democracy, citizen, American,* and *justice* and study who in the United States has been included in and excluded from these ideas. We will study the U.S. Constitution and the structure of our government, elections and voting, economics, and the controversial issues and questions that arise in all of these different contexts. We will challenge assumptions, consider how history has influenced our current society, reflect upon the current state of affairs, and strive to make a more just future.

Honors Civics will end with your writing a college-level research paper on an American social movement of your choice from the 1960s/1970s. This is also a graduation requirement! The third trimester will be dedicated to learning and participating in the research and writing process. You will leave this class with a strong writing sample, as well as skills you will use not only in senior year, but in college, career, and beyond.

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| **Unit 1: Interrogating American Ideals** (Sept) |
| **Essential Question:** What are American ideals and to what extent have these ideals been upheld?  **Topics:** Founding documents, democracy, slavery/the 13th amendment, the border, citizenship, immigration  **Major Assessment:** Aim Portfolio |
| **Moderation Study** (Sept) |
| **Essential Question:** Should the national minimum wage be increased to $15/hour?  **Major Assessment:** Mini-argumentative essay |
| **Unit 2: Voting and Elections** (Oct-Nov) |
| **Essential Question:** Does our electoral system of democracy work?  **Topics:** Political parties, elections, the electoral college, history of voting rights, voter suppression  **Major Assessment:** Op-ed |
| **Unit 3: The U.S. Constitution Part I- Structure of Government** (Nov-Dec) |
| **Essential Question:** To what extent is power balanced in the U.S. Constitution?  **Topics:** Constitutional convention, separation of powers/checks and balances, lobbying, federalism, state government, local government  **Major Assessment:** Political Cartoon |
| **Unit 4: The U.S. Constitution Part II- Constitutional Rights** (Dec-Jan) |
| **Essential Question:** Does the Constitution effectively protect people’s rights?  **Topics:** Bill of Rights, amendments, landmark Supreme Court cases  **Major Assessment:** Supreme Court case study presentations + midyear thesis assessment |
| **Unit 5: Economics and the Government** (Jan-Mar) |
| **Essential Question:** How big a role should the government play in regulating the economy and addressing inequality in America?  **Topics:** Economic systems, capitalism, taxes, laissez-faire vs regulation from the Gilded Age to today  **Major Assessment:** Speech |
| **Unit 6: Social Movements & Research Paper** (Mar-Jun) |
| **Essential Question:** Why do social movements develop and to what extent have they created lasting change in American society?  **Topics:** The Civil Rights Movement, social movements of the 1960s/1970s  **Major Assessment:** Research Paper (course exit task) |

**Grade Breakdown**

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| **Tri 1 & 2** | * Daily aims (20%) * Major Assessment 1 (30%) * Major Assessment 2 (30%) * Other Performance Task (20%) | **Tri 3** | * Daily aims (15%) * Research notes (20%) * Initiative, Self-Direction & accountability (20%) * Research Paper (45%) |

**Honors Civics Course Portfolio Criteria:**

* Moderation Study
* Essential Question - Major Assessments
* Midyear Thesis/Support Assessment
* Exit Task: 6-8 pg Social Movement Research Paper

**Mastery Grading**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Mastery Language Abbreviations** | **Mastery Language** | **Progression to Meeting Standard** | **Grade Point Average** | **Standard Grading Equivalent** |
| XE | Exemplary | Exceeds Standard with Distinction | 4 | 100 |
| CO/XE | Competent/Exemplary | Exceed Standard  (revise for exemplary) | 3.5 | 93 |
| CO | Competent | Meets Standard  (revise for exemplary) | 3 | 85 |
| EM | Emerging | Approaches Standard  (needs revision) | 2 | 70 |
| NY | Novice | Not Yet  (needs revision) | 1 | 60 |
| NE | No Evidence | No Evidence of Work Yet | --- | 50 |

**Materials-** Recommended: ***A three-ring binder*** to keep all notes, handouts, classwork, and aims in chronological order **(Note:** You will not be using a textbook in this class. You will receive many paper resources that you will need to keep track of.)

**Attendance-** Please arrive to class **on time**. Lateness will not only affect your success in this class, but also impacts our learning environment as a whole. Additionally, daily attendance is very important. Absence from class is not an excuse for missed work. If you are absent, **you are responsible** for getting and making up all missed aims, notes and handouts. Check the “Missed Work” folder for dated handouts.

**Plagiarism-** If you copy others’ words/work without giving credit **you will receive an “NE” and must redo.**

**Respect-** We will respect all people, property, and ideas in the classroom!

**Extra Help and Revision-** I am always available for extra help. Just ask! Revision is encouraged and expected.

**Ms. Miller**

**Honors Civics**

Honors Civics Students and Families,

I look forward to working with you this year! Please feel free to contact me at any time with questions, comments or concerns.

Please sign and return this agreement/contact info by September 5 (A-day) or September 6 (B-day).

Thanks!

Sincerely,

Julia Miller

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***I have read and understand the course syllabus and expectations.***

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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