



Civics/American Politics



Introduction

Welcome to your Civics/American Politics class! This syllabus, or class description, contains a summary of the class this year--class expectations and procedures, what units we will cover, assignments you will have, policies, and how you will be graded for Trout Lake and CWU.

CWU Course and Number POSC 210 American Politics	Term Fall 2026
Instructor First & Last Waller, Timothy	Term Dates and Class Time 9/1/2026 – 1/26/2027 5th Period: M-F: 12:29-1:19
Instructor Email t.waller@tlschool.net	School Phone Number 509-395-2571
Office Hour/availability Monday to Friday, 6th period (1:22-2:12) plus by appointment	
Textbook and/or other required materials: United States Government by HMH (2018) provided by the school Chromebook (provided by the school)	

Civics/American Politics Course Description:

In the Civics portion of this class which is aligned with Central Washington University's American Politics class, we will be looking at the founding documents of the United States, the three main branches of government, elections, and ways in which government impacts us. Civics is technically separate from Current World Problems which we will be doing second semester. However, I will be teaching a very continuous class with Civics being focused on US government and problems that it deals with while the official CWP will be focused more globally.

In the CWP portion, which will be aligned with Central Washington's International Relations class we will be looking at issues that are impacting the United States and the rest of the world such as globalization, terrorism, human rights, environmental issues, immigration, weapons, etc. When you think about going through "issues" for a whole year, it may sound depressing, but my hope is that we take a "solutions" mindset to this class and look for hope amidst depressing stories. It may only take a few people who are willing to have hope and look for solutions to solve big problems in our world. I want this class to inspire you to be one of those people.

Prerequisite Requirements:

None



Civics/American Politics



Learner Outcomes: For both TL and CWU the course's learning outcomes appear below

- Recognize the procedures and purposes of the major US institutions (Congress, Presidency, Courts and Federalism.)
- Describe and explain the historical development of US political culture and voter preferences.
- Analyze how individual citizens collect political information and develop values and policy preferences, and express them through political participation.
- Examine evolving rights & responsibilities in the US Constitution, Bill of Rights and appraise their effects upon US political development, culture, diversity and citizenship.
- Evaluate major historical and current public policy debates and differentiate arguments and positions.
- Identify collective decision making procedures of the US government; apply disciplinary models to explain outcomes.
- Identify and explain basic concepts of American politics and government used in political science and the real world.
- Stay up to date with major news stories not only from the US but from other areas of the world

Course Expectations:

1. Be on time, prepared for class with any knowledge, homework, or assignments
2. Participate in class discussions and activities
3. Actively listen to teacher during lecture portions
4. Think deeply and do your best in course work
5. Portions of this class--politics and issues--can be controversial, and I want you to be willing to consider opinions you agree with and disagree with. I don't expect you to change your mind or worldview, but I do want you to be willing to consider others' views as you reflect on yours.

Cell Phone Policy

We will be following the new school policy for cell phones in that they shouldn't be used from the start to the end of the school day. Because your phone should not be on your person, if you are using your phone for any reason in class, it will be taken to the office every time and a referral written. This is intended to be a helpful and not punitive policy so we can learn best, avoid distraction, and be present in our classes and with each other.

Attendance Policy

I expect you to be in class unless you have a valid reason to not be. You need to follow the school attendance policy as listed in the handbook. In terms of classwork, if you miss class, you won't receive credit for what we did in class that day unless you complete it on your own. You will need to check in with me through email or check in with another student to see what you missed and need to make up.



Civics/American Politics



Work policy (make up, extra credit, late, etc.)

For written assignments, to receive credit for an assignment the student must have the assignment completed and in class when it is due. If you are gone on the day it is due, you should have it done the next day you are in class unless you have communicated with me. Assignments will be accepted up to 3 days late and will be assessed a penalty of a 10% deduction per day. If there are extraneous circumstances, please communicate well with me and we can adjust the due date if needed.

Grading Policy

Grading will be based on a points accumulation system. At any time during the semester, your grade will be determined by dividing the points you have earned by all the points possible to earn. Several different types of points will be awarded.

- Participation--will be earned on a weekly basis for participation in class activities
- Homework--reading, worksheets, and small assignments that will be due within a day or two
- Papers/Presentations/Projects--will be awarded points based off size, time, and length of project
- Quizzes/Tests--written assessments over information

Letter Grade	GPA Credit	Transcript Explanation	Definition of letter grade / Policy Statement
A	4.0	Excellent	Meets all objectives of the course and fulfills all requirements; performs at a level that reflects excellence
A-	3.7		
B+	3.3	Good	Meets all objectives of the course and fulfills all requirements; performs at a high level
B	3.0		
B-	2.7		
C+	2.3	Satisfactory	Meets all objectives of the course and fulfills all requirements; performs at a satisfactory level
C	2.0		
C-	1.7		
D+	1.3	Marginal Pass	Makes progress toward meeting the course objectives; fulfills course requirements at a substandard level
D	1.0		
D-	0.7		
F	0.0	Failure	Fails to meet the course objectives; does not fulfill course requirements

Student Rights and Responsibilities

As a student at Trout Lake School, you have the responsibility to act in accordance with the student handbook and be familiar with your rights and responsibilities listed there.

As a student at Central Washington University, you have the responsibility to be familiar and comply with all university policies and procedures, specifically those governing student behaviors. Failure to comply with these expectations may result in university contact and action to address the behavior, which could include removal from the institution.

Please visit this website for a detailed description of all CWU student rights and responsibilities:

<http://www.cwu.edu/student-rights/>



Civics/American Politics



Academic Integrity

For all written work in this class, you need to follow the school handbooks guidelines on plagiarism and AI. Specifically for my classes, I will follow the below steps if I have found you have plagiarized or used AI to complete an assignment. I simply want your work to be your work, I would much rather less-than-perfect work that is your own thought than polished work that is not yours.

1. The first offense will result in a zero on the assignment, a conversation with me, and an opportunity to redo the assignment with a minimum 10% grade deduction.
2. The second offense will result in a zero on the assignment, a conversation with me, and an opportunity to redo the assignment with a minimum 50% grade deduction. The office and parents will also be notified.
3. The third offense will result in a zero on the assignment, a conversation with me, and no opportunity to redo. The office and parents will also be notified and there may be potential loss of credit as decided by school policy.

For class activity work and group projects, I expect you guys to be honest about what you have done. I might have you redo class activity or group assignments individually if you didn't contribute to the group assignment. Please only share notes with each other with permission from me. If you have copied someone else's notes word for word, I will follow the plagiarism guidelines above.

Please refer to CWUs website for CWUs Academic Integrity policy:

<http://www.cwu.edu/student-rights/student-responsibilities-university-policies>

Calendar/schedule of topics

Content and Topics Schedule

*We will follow this outline with the major project or assignment for that unit listed. However, because this is a current world problems class, we may deviate if a major event happens that we want to talk about and cover in class.

Civics

- News Report Intro--practice the news reports we will be presenting throughout the year
- US Founding Documents--Project
- Federal Government--Activities for Each Branch of Government
- State/Local Government--Project Over How State and Local Government Impacts Citizens
- Political Parties and Elections--Debates over political candidates and issues on local ballot
- Bureaucracy of Federal Government--Presentation over an area of government bureaucracy to show their value
- Human Rights--Debates over situations where human rights conflict
- US Health Insurance Issues--Paper comparing US healthcare to other developed nations
- Student Loan Forgiveness--Posters over pros/cons and best possible solutions
- Native Americans Relations--Project TBD over current status and best ways of supporting and improving relations with the Native American tribes in the US.



Civics/American Politics



CWP

- Finances and International Trade--Doing a virtual stock market game to see how world events affect the stock market and vice-versa
- Globalization--Round-table discussion over how globalization affects so many areas of life
- Poverty--Watching a film on what life in poverty looks like and how to take tangible steps to help
- Foreign Leaders and Governments--Making a factsheet for the government of one of 30 large and influential countries in the world
 - Add in types of government and expand on the background for the assignment to look at different types of government and then produce a factsheet
- Russia/Ukraine Conflict--Presentations over causes, impacts, future of, and solutions for war
- Terrorism and Weapons Proliferation--Presentations on issues in the Middle East and proxy-wars
- Conspiracy Theory Unit--Presentations on Conspiracies with discussion of why people believe them
- Environmental Issues--TBD

Week 1 (9/1-9/3)

- Class Intro/Syllabus/Expectations; How Geography Has Influenced US History

Week 2 (9/8-9/11) (Labor Day)

- Register for CWU Class
- Finish Geography; How Native Americans Adapted to the Land

Week 3 (9/14-9/18)

- Outdoor School (3 days)
- Colonists Adaptation to Land

Week 4 (9/21-9/25)

- Spanish and French Colonization, Colonial America Documentary, West African Culture and the Slave Trade

Week 5 (9/28-10/2)

- Colonial government and the French and Indian War; The build-up to American Revolution

Week 6 (10/5-10/9)

- Differing perspectives on revolution, Common Sense, Declaration of Independence

Week 7 (10/12-10/16)

- American Revolution
- First half of *Hamilton* Movie

Week 8 (10/19-10/23)

- Study Guide and Test over Geography through Revolution

Week 9 (10/26-10/30)



Civics/American Politics



- Political Thinkers, the Enlightenment, types of government; the Articles of Confederation

Week 10 (11/2-11/6)

- The Constitutional Convention and Constitution

Week 11 (11/9-11/13) (Veteran's Day)

- The Bill of Rights and Federalists vs Democratic Republicans
- Second half of *Hamilton* Movie

Week 12 (11/16-11/20)

- History of first 5 presidents

Week 13 (11/23-11/25) (Thanksgiving)

- Study Guide and Test over Political Thinkers through first 5 presidents

Week 14 (11/30-12/4)

- Manifest Destiny, Market Revolution, and Political Developments in early 19th Century

Week 15 (12/7-12/11)

- Andrew Jackson Legacy Project (Slavery, Indian Removal, Nullification, Bank, Jacksonian Democracy)
- US-Mexican War Documentary

Week 16 (12/14-12/18)

- Comparing the antebellum North and South, Views on Slavery, Compromise to Conflict

CHRISTMAS BREAK

Week 17 (1/4-1/8)

- History of Civil War
- *Lincoln* Movie

Week 18 (1/11-1/15)

- History of Civil War/Reconstruction

Week 19 (1/19-1/22) (MLK Jr. Day)

- Reconstruction/Study Guide

Week 20 (1/25-1/26)

- Study Guide and Final Exam

CWU Resources

Resource	Phone	Email	Website
College in the High School Office	509-963-1351	HSPartnerships@cwu.edu	https://www.cwu.edu/college-hs/



Civics/American Politics



College in the High School Advising	509-963-1351	HSPartnerships@cwu.edu	https://www.cwu.edu/academics/specialized-programs/college-high-school/about-us/request-advising.php
Library	509-963-1021	libraries@cwu.edu	https://www.lib.cwu.edu/
Transcripts	509-963-3001	reg@cwu.edu	https://www.cwu.edu/about/offices/register/academic-information/request-transcripts.php
Academic Success Center	503-902-5163	tutoring@cwu.edu	https://www.cwu.edu/academics/academic-resources/index.php

Required CWU Statements

-CWU expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events."

-Central Washington University is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any obstacles to learning, contact Disability Services to discuss a range of available options. Student Disability Services is located in Hogue 126. Call (509) 963-2214 or email ds@cwu.edu for more information.

-University Policy, CWUP 5-90-040(37), provides for reasonable accommodation of student absences for religious holidays in accordance with RCW 28B.137.010. Students seeking reasonable accommodations under this policy must provide written notice to their instructors within the first two weeks of class specifying the dates for which religious accommodations are requested. Contact the Dean of Student Success at (509) 963-1515 for further information.

-Central Washington University is committed to providing all community members with a learning and work environment that is free from sexual harassment and assault. Students have options for getting help if they have experienced sexual assault, relationship violence, and sexual harassment, or stalking. Information can be found at <http://www.cwu.edu/wecare> and in CWUP 2-35-050: Sexual Harassment. Faculty are required to report information regarding sexual misconduct or related crimes.

-Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the CWU Wellness Center, 509-963-3213, or the CWU Student Counseling Clinic, 509-963-1391.