

Freshmen Civics Syllabus

“Empowering Citizens for the Future”
2012-2013

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Instructor's Note:

Welcome to your FIRST year at Christ the King! Our goal is for you to become women and men who succeed throughout college and beyond and I want to help you do just that. Should you find the need for any assistance throughout the year, please do not hesitate to use me as a resource for your success here at CtK. I am best found after school or shoot me an e-mail to set-up an appointment. Feel free to drop in anytime for a chat. I look forward to our collaboration this year as we explore our exciting roles as citizens!

Course Description:

The History department at Christ the King seeks to provide students with the tools and skills to analyze historical information, with an emphasis on literacy skills and critical thinking. The Civics course for freshmen builds the framework for this by: fostering and expanding students' knowledge of the government, politics, and ideas that serve as the foundation of our nation; encouraging active involvement in the democratic process; and deepening their personal understanding of what it means to be an American. The course will work to improve students' reading, writing, and listening skills through analysis of current events, open discussion, writing assignments, and effective note-taking.

Course Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- ❖ See themselves as participants in the democratic process and American life
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of the foundational ideas of constitutional government in the United States
- ❖ Demonstrate an understanding of key components of the United States Constitution
- ❖ Engage in informed discussion about current events as related to civic life, politics, economics, and government
- ❖ Participate in civic life through service and other appropriate forms of engagement or activity and reflect on that participation
- ❖ Demonstrate the balance of power in American democratic government
- ❖ Describe the role of economics and law in American society
- ❖ Identify the effect that international relations and domestic affairs have on each other, on citizens of the United States, and the world

Materials:

Students will be responsible for coming to class everyday prepared mentally and physically. No exceptions! Being prepared means having:

- ❖ A 1" or 1 1/2" 3-Ring Binder (w/ 5 dividers) ***exclusively*** for Civics
- ❖ Textbook (*Civics: Government and Economics in Action* by Davis, Fernlund, and Woll)
- ❖ Civics Journal (***exclusively*** for Civics)
- ❖ Paper (loose leaf or notebook)
- ❖ Any relevant handouts/worksheets
- ❖ Pen and/or Pencil
- ❖ Student Handbook
- ❖ A thirst for knowledge!

Grading:

Your grades will be determined upon the combination of the following items:

- ❖ Tests/Quizzes
- ❖ Projects/Presentations
- ❖ Homework
- ❖ Participation & Class work
- ❖ Discussion
- ❖ Binder & use of agenda

Grades will be calculated on a TOTAL POINTS scale. This means all of the points you earn over the entire grading period will be added together and divided by the total number of points possible. For example, if you earned a total of 960 points out of 1000 at the end of your first semester you would take 960 and divide by 1000. This equals 0.96. Thus, for the semester you would have earned a 96% (A).

Grading Scale:

| | |
|------------------|------------------|
| A 100-94, | C+ 83-82, |
| A- 93-92, | C 81-78, |
| B+ 91-90, | C- 77-76, |
| B 89-86, | D+ 75-74, |
| B- 85-84, | D 73-70, |
| F 69-0 | |

Course Outline: (subject to change!)

Semester 1

- ❖ **Topic 1:** American Values and Citizenship (3 Weeks)
 - What is citizenship?
 - What defines “American”?
 - What are American values? Who defines them?
 - What makes someone a patriot?
- ❖ **Topic 2:** Foundations of American Government (3 weeks)
 - What makes a government democratic?
 - Do all people deserve basic rights?
 - Can you make a society based on finders keepers?
- ❖ **Topic 3:** Creating a Constitution (2 weeks)
 - What makes a government democratic?
 - Do all people deserve basic rights?
 - Can you make a society based on finders keepers?
- ❖ **Topic 4:** Rights of the People (5 weeks)
 - Do all people deserve basic rights?
 - Who determines what is equal under the law?
 - Can someone’s rights be taken away?
 - Is there a difference between right and responsibility?

Semester 2

- ❖ **Topic 5:** Three Branches of Government (6 weeks)
 - Is there a limit on political power?
 - Why is the “process” necessary?
 - Is everyone eligible to hold office?
 - Does my vote matter?
 - Is the law set in stone?
- ❖ **Constitution Exam** (graduation requirement)

- ❖ **Topic 6:** State and Local Government (3 weeks)
 - Which level of government is most important?
 - Can power be shared equally?
 - Who's in charge anyway?
 - How does abuse of power affect government?
- ❖ **Topic 7:** Political Parties, Voting, & Elections (4 Weeks)
 - How do citizens participate in the democratic process?
 - How do competing voices get heard in a democracy?
 - Does the majority rule?
- ❖ **Topic 8:** Basics of Economics (6 weeks)
 - Can everyone's wants and needs be met?
 - Who decides what is equal or fair?
 - What role does the government play in economics?
 - Can citizens influence change in the free market?
 - Do my financial decisions affect others?
 - How is money best managed?
- ❖ **Topic 9:** Final Project: Issues in Civics (2 weeks)

Classroom Expectations: (I hold US ALL to higher expectations)

Students can expect the following from me:

1. I will create an atmosphere within my classroom that promotes learning in a safe manner for all students.
2. I will make myself as available as possible for consultation about projects, tests, assignments, or life in general.
3. I will turn assignments, tests, and projects back in a timely manner with feedback.
4. I will come to class prepared to do my best.
5. I will help my students receive a quality education and challenge them to broaden their minds.

I expect the following from my students:

1. Students will be in their seat working on the Do-now when the bell rings
2. Students will come prepared to class with ALL of their materials
3. Students will practice audience behavior at all times
4. Students will treat all members of the class with respect at ALL times.
5. Students will adhere to ALL school rules as outlined in the CtK handbook.

Attendance, Late Work, ETC...

Attendance:

- ❖ Students are expected to come to class every day, as your success in this class will be a direct result of your participation in classroom exercises.
- ❖ If you miss a class you will be expected to make up any relevant missed work within two days of returning. Failure to do so will result in a loss of credit for the assignment.
- ❖ If you miss a test or quiz, you **MUST** come see me by the end of the next class day to schedule a makeup time. *Failure to setup a makeup time for a test or quiz could have a severe impact on your grade.*
- ❖ If a student knows that he/she will be absent, that student should inform me before such absence occurs **AND** will seek makeup work **BEFORE** departure. In the event of extenuating circumstances, students should seek makeup work immediately upon return, as described above.

Behavior:

- ❖ Students are expected to act in accordance with the Grad at Grad principles.
- ❖ Students who fail to act respectfully and professionally will receive the appropriate amount of demerits. If the inappropriate behavior continues, students will continue to receive demerits accordingly and/or be sent to the Dean.
- ❖ See the student handbook for additional information and specifics regarding the demerit policy.

Cheating:

- ❖ Any student who chooses to cheat or plagiarize assignments for my class will receive a **ZERO** on the assignment. I have a ZERO tolerance policy for cheating.
- ❖ The student will be reported to the Assistant Principal for Academics, as stated in the CtK Student Handbook.
- ❖ Parents will be notified.
- ❖ Cheating of any kind may result in the loss of academic honors.

Late Policy:

- ❖ **Late work DOES NOT reflect the behavior of a good professional.**
- ❖ Assignments can only receive full credit (up to 100%) if they are received in class on their due date according to teacher specifications.
- ❖ I will not allow students to finish homework during class, nor will I accept work for full credit after it has been collected in class.
- ❖ Students who turn in their work after the day it is due, will only receive a maximum of 70% (D).
- ❖ If the quality of the work is poor, students may receive less than 70%.
- ❖ **No late work will be accepted after the end of the quarter for which it is due.**
- ❖ Teacher may adjust late policy depending on certain circumstances.
- ❖ Use your student planner to avoid missing due dates! If you complete things on time, you should expect to receive prompt and helpful feedback, and you will also be able to participate and keep up with the rest of the class.

Lastly:

- ❖ If you are having difficulty with any material covered in class, please see me for help. REMEMBER, your education is your responsibility...so please ask for help when you need it and make good use of the partnership created in the CtK classroom!

Student and Parent/Guardian Consent

As a student in Mr. Zundel's class I have read the syllabus and understand what will be expected of me this year. I agree to being an active participant in this classroom and working constructively with my classmates to build a positive classroom environment. I understand that if I have any questions or am struggling with anything I should make those issues known so that they can be resolved as quickly as possible. FURTHERMORE, I agree to follow all policies as outlined in my CtK handbook, at all times. Finally, I understand that the policies outlined in the syllabus may change at any time to better reflect the changing needs of the class and its students.

Name (printed): _____ **Period:** _____

Signature: _____

As a parent/guardian of a student in Mr. Zundel's class I have read the syllabus and understand what will be expected of my student this year, particularly in regard to the policies listed on the syllabus and school handbook. I commit to helping my student develop as a young and active citizen in any way that I can. I understand that if I have any questions I can contact Mr. Zundel at any time.

Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian E-mail: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: _____

Preferred Contact Method/Time: _____