

**U.S. Government**  
**Mr. Simmons – Room 218**  
[wsimmons@swest.k12.in.us](mailto:wsimmons@swest.k12.in.us)

**Office Hours: 1:15 p.m. – 2 p.m. & by appointment**

**PHILOSOPHY:** In this Government class we will examine the principals and workings of United States Government. We will analyze its origins and philosophy. We will become familiar with the three branches of government and how they work with and against each other. We will develop an understanding of the three levels of government and how they influence our daily lives. We will recognize our roles as citizens within a productive democracy. There will be a civic participation component for this course that will allow you to demonstrate this knowledge during the semester.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS:** A text will be utilized, but I will scan them into Canvas or issue them to you for in room use. This way you will not have to lug a book to class. Apart from that, items that will be helpful for your personal use consist of the following:

- 1) A folder to keep graded work, quizzes, and tests for this class.
- 2) A notebook for this class. Note-taking is an activity that is rewarded in my class.

If you require assistance in obtaining these items, please see me.

**HOMEWORK:** Homework is the responsibility of each and every student in this class. Homework provides opportunity to review, reinforce, and extend classroom learning through application and practice. Homework may include reading assignments, outlines, review questions, vocabulary, papers, essays, handouts, worksheets, studying for quizzes and tests, or completing projects and work that was not finished in class.

**GRADING:** Follow the Southwest School Corporation Grading Scale located in the SHS Handbook.

**LATE WORK:** Late work will always be accepted up to the end of the current grading period. It is in your best interest to do all the work on time since the work we do is directly related to the material on the exams. Doing work after the exam has been seen therefore as counterproductive to your overall education experience.

**RETESTING:** Students will be given the option of retaking any test (except the final) in which they earned below a 70%. A remediation session will be required before any student may retake the test.

**TARDIES:** Students must be in the room when the bell rings or they will be considered tardy. If you are tardy to class enter the room quietly, do not disturb others, find your seat and get yourself prepared for the remainder of class. The guidelines for tardy penalties are outlined in your Student Handbook. You may surrender a Gold Pride Buck to remove the tardy at the time of it's occurrence if you arrive before the record is submitted.

**ABSENCES:** It is the student's responsibility to request work missed due to an absence. Please try to find out what happened during the class period(s) you missed before class begins. It is more respectful of others in the class if the missed material is explained before class begins, rather than after class has commenced. Make up tests may be taken before or after school and during my office hours.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is defined as an attempt to pass off the ideas and words of another as one's own without directly crediting the source. This also includes copying from others. The Turnitin webtool is at our disposal and we will utilize it for our writing needs. At a minimum, this will result in a zero for the assignment and will follow the guidelines established by the Student Handbook.

**FOOD & DRINK:** Food and drink are not permitted in the classroom without express permission. If drinks are ever allowed they must be in a clear container with a lid, without exception. This includes anything purchased out of the vending machine in the commons. I would really like to keep my room free of bugs this year and your help is essential for that to happen.

**GUM & CANDY:** Gum and candy are allowed in this classroom as long as they stay in your mouth. All wrappers will be placed in the garbage can by the door and are not to be left on the floor or desks. If this becomes an issue, then this privilege will be revoked.

***A word on Gold Pride Bucks:*** Once every nine week grading period, you may as a class surrender 2 GPB's each and Mr. Simmons will bring doughnuts for you on a day that you choose.

**CELL PHONES:** Cell phones can be a distraction to the learning process. Do not make your cell phone a distraction to you or the class. If you are seen using a cell

phone, for any reason, I will see what you are up to and maybe ask you to put it away. If it is still a distraction, you will be asked to surrender your phone. If you surrender it without argument, it will be returned to you at the end of class. Otherwise, I will have no choice but to involve the office. Cell phones cannot be visible during exams. If a cell phone is confiscated during an exam, you will receive a zero for that exam.

**OTHER TECHNOLOGY:** Headphones, air pods, and smart watches, or other technology/accessories not issued by the corporation will cost you one (1) GPB to use only during time allotted for working on your own.

*In the occurrence that class discussions and assignments are completed prior to the bell ringing, students should remain seated and not line up at the door.*

*My entire syllabus boils down to three simple rules: 1) Work hard. 2) Be responsible. 3) Be nice. If you can do those three things you will excel.*