

CIVICS – Course Expectations
Wheeler High School, Social Studies Department

Mrs. Shannon Curioso
curiosos@northstonington.k12.ct.us
www.mrscurioso.com
Twitter/IG: @mrscurioso

Course Description

Half Year - .5 Credit

This **State of Connecticut required course for graduation** provides contemporary knowledge of the United States Constitution and how the rules of law and values of liberty and equality impact individual, local, state and national decisions. Emphasis will be placed on the rights and responsibilities of citizens and their relationship with the national, state, and local governments. The course will also explore how world affairs affect citizens' lives and the well-being of their community, state, and nation.

Units of Study*

- Foundation of American Citizenship
- The United States Constitution
- The National Government
- Political Parties and the Election Process
- State and Local Government

*Current issues and events will be integrated continuously throughout the units of study

Essential Questions/Themes for the course:

- Explain what it means to be a citizen of the United States.
- Evaluate the obligations and responsibilities of citizens.
- Explain how a government works to balance the rights of the individual with the overall wellbeing of the society.
- Evaluate how laws both shape and reflect characteristics of American society.
- Evaluate how political parties both shape and reflect political, economic, and social interests.
- Explain the factors that influence voter participation, and how new technologies influence elections, voting, and voter behaviors.
- Explore the relationship of the U.S. to other nations and to world affairs.

Wheeler High School Academic Expectations met by this course:

- **Analysis** • Collaboration • Communication • Literacy

Course Materials

It is your responsibility to bring a **2-3 inch binder, folder and writing utensil** (pen or pencil) to class daily.

Textbook – *Civics Today (2008)*. The specific textbook that is signed out to you may be stored at home for your convenience; there are plenty of copies in the classroom.

Relevant supplemental readings and handouts will be assigned throughout the semester. I expect you to keep any materials that you are given in your class binder or folder for the tenure of the class.

Recommended Websites:

Town of North Stonington - <https://www.northstoningtonct.gov/>

State of Connecticut - <https://portal.ct.gov/>

Connecticut General Assembly - <https://www.cga.ct.gov/>

United States Government - <https://www.usa.gov/>

Course Organization

Class will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and group work. In addition to homework, written responses, and announced tests and quizzes, there will also be unannounced reading quizzes, essays, research projects, graded discussions, and presentations.

Digital work can be submitted to my school email or shared via google docs to MrsCurioso@gmail.com

Assignments and articles of interest will frequently be posted on Twitter/IG @MrsCurioso and on PowerSchool.

Grading

Assignments will be graded through a points system, as follows* (*point values are per assignment*):

- Homework/Classwork – 10
- Quizzes – 50
- Tests/Projects/Essays – 100 points each.
- Town Meeting summary and analysis** – 40

*Any additions or modifications to the grading/points system will be identified on the specific assignment.

**Students are required to attend a minimum of two town meetings (Board of Education, Board of Finance, Board of Selectman, Town-wide meeting, to name a few) during the semester. An assignment sheet with directions for attending these meeting will be distributed early in the semester.

Grades will be updated weekly on PowerSchool. Keep in mind that I rarely offer “extra credit” assignments.

[Please see WHS’s policy regarding Academic Integrity on pages 21 - 22 in the Student Handbook.]

Late Work Policy

All assignments are due in class on the assigned due date. Late work can be handed in for half credit no more than 2 days after the due date. After two days, late work will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions to this rule except in genuine emergencies.

Essays and Projects are penalized 10% every day that they are late.

Absences

If you miss class for any reason (illness, fieldtrip, etc.), it is your responsibility to find out what you missed in class. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, you should talk to me before your absence to help ensure a smoother return to class.

Missed work due to an absence must be completed within a responsible amount of time upon your return to school. It is your responsibility to schedule make-up work. If missed work is not completed within a responsible amount of time, you will receive a zero for the assignment. Make up assessments such as tests and quizzes may be in a different format from the original assessment to protect the integrity of the assessment. When you schedule to make up the assignment, I will alert you to any changes in format. Additionally, because some class assignments are impossible to replicate, they will be altered so that you can receive a grade for the assignment.

Attendance/Tardy Policy

Please arrive to class prepared and on time. I will follow the tardy/attendance policy explained in the Student Handbook on pages 12 - 15.

Extra Help

Extra help is available before and after school, and during break. These appointments should be scheduled ahead of time. Students may also seek extra help through email.

Class Participation

I strongly encourage you to participate positively in class, discussions and activities, as participation will enhance your interest and understanding of the course material. You must come to class with a curious, open, thoughtful and conscious mind. Inappropriate or derogatory behavior or comments will not be tolerated. You may not agree with everything you read or hear, but part of learning is to gather a diverse array of information, analyze your findings, draw your own conclusions, and then to express those conclusions in an appropriate manner. Everyone should feel comfortable sharing ideas and stories appropriate to class.

“Civility is not something that automatically happens.
Civil societies come about because people want them to.”

- Jimmy Bise Jr

“Civility means a great deal more than just being nice to one another. It is complex and encompasses learning how to connect successfully and live well with others, developing thoughtfulness, and fostering effective self-expression and communication. Civility includes courtesy, politeness, mutual respect, fairness, good manners, as well as a matter of good health.” – Pier Massimo Forni

Classroom Guidelines

The following are some general expectations I have for the class:

-- Be respectful of each other, of me, and of classroom property. Comments, ideas, opinions and questions are welcomed and encouraged; just make sure that they are appropriate. *[See the Bullying policy on pages 39 - 45 in the Student Handbook]*

-- Please keep your cell phones off and away at all times. If I see or hear a cell phone in my classroom, I will confiscate it for the day. *[See the Bring Your Own Device policy on pages 24 - 26 in the Student Handbook]*

Both students and parents should complete appropriate sections and sign below.
Students should return the signed portion to Mrs. Curioso by _____.

STUDENTS:

I acknowledge my reading of the course syllabus and the demands, responsibilities and consequences for the Civics course. I am aware that extra help is available by appointment.

Student Name (print)	
Student Signature	
Student Email	

PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

I acknowledge my reading of the course syllabus and the demands, responsibilities and consequences for the Civics course. I am aware that extra help is available by appointment.

An additional note:

This year in Civics your child will be examining the foundations of the United States government, as well as relevant current issues and events. In order to better express and illustrate the development and current status of the United States government, the class will be exposed to a variety of materials, including news articles, book excerpts, documentaries and film. Some of these materials may contain adult content such as language and/or violence. Please check the appropriate below to indicate whether or not you approve of your child studying these materials in class. If you do not give your child permission, alternate assignments will be provided for them during the study of such material. If you have any questions about this please do not hesitate to contact me, 860-535-0377.

I do ____ do not ____ give my child permission to view materials deemed appropriate for the classroom by Mrs. Curioso.

Parent/Guardian Name (print)	
Parent/Guardian Signature	
Parent/Guardian Email	