



# CHELMSFORD HIGH SCHOOL

## CIVICS SYLLABUS

2023-2024

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An educated citizenry is essential. This course is designed to help students enhance their civic knowledge and skills. The course takes students beyond the foundational study of government structures and history and focuses on the roles and responsibilities of citizenship at the local community, state, and national levels. Students will learn how each level works in order to “promote the general welfare” and what that means with regards to legal, social and economic policy. The Town of Chelmsford and its governance will be a significant focus of our studies. Students will explore the various, often competing perspectives regarding major policy issues facing our citizens today, and how to analyze, deliberate, and discuss the issues and the arguments from those different viewpoints. We will consider the role that a “free press”, media and social media play in our political past, present and future. Emphasis will be placed on a classroom community in which dialogue and respectful debate occur in order to enhance a student’s capacity to communicate, as both an active speaker and listener. Students will participate in a dynamic classroom environment that encourages civil discourse, collaboration, inquiry, experiential learning (visits to the Town Hall and State House) and connects them with elected officials and community representatives.

*Prerequisite(s): World History II and US History I*

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

A variety of resources will be used for this course, including but not limited to the following:

1. A User’s Guide to Democracy - How America Works By: Nick Capodice
2. Scholastic UpFront Magazine
3. Choices Program
4. iCivics
5. CloseUp Current Issues

### **COURSE GOALS and STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Building on knowledge from previous years, students should be able to:

1. describe and compare important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government, politics, and the role of the U.S. in world affairs
2. explain typical patterns of political processes and principles that provide the foundation for various government structures and procedures
3. interpret basic data relevant to U.S. government and politics (including data presented in charts, tables, and other formats)
4. critically analyze relevant theories and concepts, apply them appropriately, and understand their connections to other aspects of history and social science

### **COURSE STANDARDS**

Topic 1. Foundations of government in the United States

- Topic 2. Purposes, principles, and institutions of government
- Topic 3. Civil rights, human rights, and civil liberties
- Topic 4. Political parties, interest groups, media, and public policy
- Topic 5. The relationship of the United States to other nations in world affairs

### **PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

Chelmsford High School is committed to supporting the success and well-being of all students, regardless of varying abilities and levels of adaptive skills. The Special Education office provides services and resources to empower each student to attain their highest level of academic success and learning independence.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

At Chelmsford High School, students are expected to maintain high moral and ethical standards, as exemplified by the final sentence of our mission statement: *"A spirit of respect is fostered, as members take responsibility for their actions and acknowledge the rights and differences of others."* (CHS Mission Statement)

Students should respect themselves, other students, staff members and the school. The acts of cheating and plagiarism violate expectations that students will exhibit respectful, ethical behavior.

[The Academic Honor Code](#) exists to address the issues of cheating and plagiarism.

### **GRADING POLICIES**

Please connect with individual teachers for specific information regarding grading. Students will be able to monitor academic progress biweekly through X2/ASPEN.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the academic support programs and services (such as PRIDE Block, after-school help, etc.) available to them to help ensure and support success. Information about these services can be found by accessing Clever and speaking with your classroom teacher.

### **COURSE SKILLS**

The following skills are addressed in this course:

1. Developing questions that guide inquiry and research
2. Analysis of effective argument and critical thinking from the historic record
3. Expressing oneself clearly and effectively through writing and speaking
4. Critical analysis of documents, maps, graphs, and other graphic data

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

Topics Covered:

1. The role of each level of government
2. What it means to be a citizen in a participatory government
3. Issues regarding school safety
4. Issues regarding recycling
5. Issues regarding healthcare
6. Issues regarding immigration
7. The primary and general elections

*This syllabus and course outline are subject to change as Chelmsford High School seeks to continually improve the learning experiences for all students.*

***“We foster PRIDE\* in our pursuit of excellence.”***

**PRIDE refers to our five core values – Perseverance, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, and Empathy. These five pillars represent our points of emphasis in supporting the development of quality students and quality citizens.**