



7th Grade Civics
2022-2023

Mr. Thomas Ferguson

*850-245-3700; tferguson@fsu.edu**

**preferred contact*

Welcome to 7th Grade Civics! In this course, we will explore the importance of an informed citizenry and how the United States government functions at the national, state, and local levels. Throughout this course we will focus on how the people play an active role in our communities and the importance of citizen participation in government. This class will require students to keep up-to-date on current events at the local, state, national, and international level.

Major Course Topics

Unit 1: Citizenship

Unit 2: Voting, Elections, and Political Parties

Unit 3: Foundations of American Democracy

Unit 4: The U.S. Constitution

Unit 5: Rights & Responsibilities- Amendments to the US Constitution

Unit 6a: The Executive Branch

Unit 6b: The Legislative Branch

Unit 6c: The Judicial Branch

Unit 7: The American Legal System

Unit 8: State & Local Government

Unit 9: World Affairs & Comparative Governments

Unit 10: Public Issues, the Media, & Influencing Government

Unit 11: Civic and Political Engagement

Unit 12: Geography

Unit 13: Economics

Materials: You will need your binder and earbuds **every day** for class. **You must have a binder, 5 dividers, your own paper, highlighters, earbuds, and pens and/or sharpened pencils every day!**

Class Expectations (Rules)

- Students will be on time- this means in their assigned seat and working on the bellringer assignment when the bell rings.
- Students will arrive prepared with the proper materials and a positive attitude. Sharpen pencils and get supplies ready before the bell. Students will not be permitted to sharpen pencils while the class is in progress.
- Eating, grooming, and using electronic devices is prohibited during class time. Students may keep a water bottle (with a lid!) below their desk.
- Students will raise their hand when desiring to contribute to the class discussion. We want every student to have the opportunity to participate in class discussions.
- Students will be respectful to every person in the classroom at all times. No exceptions.



FSUS Middle School utilizes the Nole Note system in order to promote student ownership in behavior monitoring. Nole Notes are written for minor infractions and incremental consequences are outlined on the FSUS Middle School website. The goal of the Nole Note behavior system is to reduce undesired behavior, in turn, minimizing the amount of behavioral referrals.

****Please note that the consequences are subject to change based on the severity of the situation****

Request to Retest: Please see the “Request to Retest” guidelines on our class website. All retesting requirements/procedures (including the retest) must be done by the end of the nine weeks in which the original test was given.

Tardiness: If students are not in his/her seat when the bell rings they are LATE. When entering the classroom, please do so quietly so as to not disturb the rest of the class and join in on the activity in progress. If there is a pass, please put it on my desk and I will correct your attendance accordingly.

Absences: It is the students’ responsibility to find out what was missed upon returning from an absence. Per the student handbook, students have 2 days for each absence to make up any and all work. Please look at the weekly agenda on our class webpage to see what was missed. Any work that was missed can be collected from the Absent Folder upon return. Please see me either before or after class, or before or after school, if you have any questions about the work. Students WILL receive late credit for work that is not turned in after the 2 days have passed. Please turn all work into the “Late Work” tray and write “ABSENT” on the top.

**The only exceptions to the policy for absent work are tests, quizzes, or assignments that in some way involve teacher facilitation. In these cases, students are expected to schedule a time with me- but please do so before or after class. Please make travel arrangements ahead of time!!!!*

Late Work: FSUS middle school students are expected to complete work in a timely manner. In the event that a student misses a due date, students have the opportunity to submit late work **up to 2 days** after the assignment was due for the maximum 50% credit. Please note that late work will not be accepted after the 2 days, so please check FOCUS to avoid receiving no credit. Our ultimate goal is for students to adhere to due dates. Work that is missing due to an unexcused absence is considered late.

No Name Work: Work will be graded and marked with the period it was turned in with, then placed in the designated “No Name” area. You may find your work (before or after class!) and turn it in.

Civics End of Course (EOC) Exam: As required by State of Florida legislation, all students enrolled in Civics will take an End of Course Exam in late spring.

Grading Policy: Grades will be divided into two categories: assessments and practice. Assessments (tests/quizzes/projects) will constitute 60% of the students’ grade and practice (classwork/homework/participation activities) will be worth 40%.



Technology Policy: Electronic devices (including smart watches) must be turned off and put in the phone organizer BEFORE the tardy bell rings, unless use has been approved by the teacher. Students who do not have a phone that day will put a card in their designated slot. Cell phones are not to be charged using the outlets or computers. You must not photograph, audio, or video record adults or students at any time without their express consent.

Plagiarism: We expect students to demonstrate honesty with peers, teachers and in schoolwork. Acts of dishonesty include, but are not limited to: lying, stealing, cheating and/or illegal use of photocopies or other technology. Lying is the willful intent to mislead. Stealing is the taking of any item without permission of the owner. Cheating includes:

- Plagiarism (claiming another's work as one's own, copying another's homework, class work, or other assignment); students are required to sign a Plagiarism Policy Statement.
- Talking, using electronic devices during a test (unless explicitly permitted) or giving information to another student during a test.
- Allowing someone to copy one's work.

Email/Focus Messenger Communication: In the days of electronic communication, it is extremely important students to understand and utilize email etiquette. When sending me a message, please remember to use a subject (if sending an email), appropriate greetings, proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation, polite and respectful language, and end with your (or your child's) first and last name. When sending an email or electronic message, please give me 24 business hours to respond.

****Policies subject to change****

Please read this course syllabus carefully, and if you have any questions or comments about the content of the syllabus, contact me at 850-245-3700 or at tferguson@fsu.edu

The syllabus signature form indicates that the 7th Grade Civics Syllabus has been read and understood by both the student and parent. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to all classroom policies and to the policies listed in the Student/Parent Handbook.

Please sign and turn in the syllabus signature **no later than Friday, August 12th. This counts as a homework assignment.**

I look forward to a great year together!

Sincerely,

Mr. Ferguson



Acknowledgement of Reading Mr. Ferguson's 7th Grade Social Studies Policies Form

Please fill out the form and return to Mr. Ferguson. The signatures below indicate that the 7th Grade Social Studies Policies have been read and understood by both the student and parent.

It is the student's responsibility to adhere to all classroom policies and to the policies listed in the FSUS Code of Student Conduct. Once completed, please be sure Mr. Ferguson receives it no later than Friday, August 12th.

This counts as a homework assignment.

Student's printed name here: _____ Class Period: _____

Student's Signature here: _____

Parent's/Guardian's printed name here: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature here: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature date: _____

Please be sure your Parent Contact Information information is up to date in FOCUS

** My regular communication with parents is done via e-mail through FOCUS. Please be sure to update any changes throughout the year in FOCUS, so you can stay up-to-date on important information pertaining to your student's social studies class. Parents are always welcome to email me with questions.