



Reseda High School Police Academy Magnet

Foundations of Law

Instructor: L. Davis

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to equip students with an understanding of how and why government and laws are formed as they critically examine key concepts such as democracy, justice and rights. Students will analyze the tensions inherent on any system of government as it seeks to secure justice, strengthen their knowledge of the relationship between law and law enforcement, and prepare for active engagement in the civic process as they are also exposed to careers in law and law enforcement.

Topics of Instruction:

Unit 1: Human Nature and the Origins of Law

- Why do we have laws?
- What is the connection between laws, morality and ethics?
- How do we balance out the needs of individuals and the needs of the community?
- What careers in law and law enforcement help enforce laws?

- As demographics have changed throughout the United States, what is the role of law enforcement in maintaining law and order in the communities while trying to preserve and uphold people's rights?

Unit 2: A More Perfect Union: The Functions of a Constitution

- What is the social contract theory of government and how did this theory influence the founders of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights?
- What are the core values of the U.S. Constitution, such as popular sovereignty, the rule of law, separation of powers, limited government and the protection of individual liberties?
- What is the process for amending the U.S. Constitution?
- What professions in law and advocacy have contributed to changing the U.S. Constitution and laws?

-What is the "social contract" and what are the responsibilities of both the government and the governed?

-What is the role of law enforcement when riots take place as tensions grow between the government and its citizens? Research the latest riots that have taken place in England and how has law enforcement responded to civil unrest? Compare and contrast the Rodney King riots of 1992 with those occurring in England today.

Unit 3: How Does It All Work? The Legal System in Action

- How does the U.S. legal system work in practice?
- What are the interactions and tensions between the different branches of government?
- How can individuals and groups help shape legislation?
- What is the relationship between the values embodied by the U.S. Constitution and treatment of minorities in America?
- Who has power?

-What is your role as a citizen in promoting a fair and just legal system in the United States? Pick one of the following amendments and research its application to individual rights with an emphasis on minorities and the role of lawyers, judges and law enforcement in carrying out justice (1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th amendments.)

Unit 4: Crime and Punishment: Issues in Criminal Justice

- What is crime?
- What are the different theories of punishment in different times and places?
- How can law enforcement be used to protect individuals and groups?
- What is the relationship between law enforcement and your community?
- How are juvenile offenders treated differently from adults under U.S. law?
- What is the role of science and technology in criminal justice?
- What role do law and law enforcement professionals play in shaping the criminal justice system?
- Forensic Science CSI

-How did the "Peelian Principles", lay the foundations for our current Modern Day Policing?

Unit 5: Lawsuits and Liability

- What is civil law and how is it developed over time?
- How does law govern relationships between people and institutions?
- How have underrepresented groups used the legal system to address wrongs and achieve justice?
- What career opportunities are there in civil law?

-Korematsu v. United States (1944) Supreme Court case.

Unit 6: I know My Rights! Civil Liberties and Human Rights

- What are civil liberties?
- What are human rights?
- What individual liberties are protected by the U.S. Constitution?
- How do courts balance individual rights with the needs of society?
- How have different groups struggled for equal rights?
- How do international treaties and intergovernmental organizations address human rights?
- What careers in law and law enforcement address issues of civil liberties and human rights?

-Examine the Miranda v. Arizona case and determine the importance of such ruling in upholding individuals' civil liberties. How does the 5th and 6th amendment affect people's civil rights and liberties?

-What is the role of the International Criminal Court in addressing human rights violations?

Unit 7: Equal Justice Under Law: Movement for Social, Political and Legal Equality

- To what extent have the U.S. Constitution and civil rights statutes protected the rights of minority groups?
- What actions are effective in achieving equal justice under the law for groups?
- How has the concept of "We the People" changed over time?
- How have actions such as nonviolent protests, resulted in change around the world?
- What role do law and law enforcement officials have in promoting justice and civil rights?

-Research the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and the application of the Constitution in addressing the rights of minority groups.

-Examine the Women's Suffrage Movement and the current gay and lesbian fight for equality under the law.

Grading Policy:

Your grade will be determined by points received on homework, quizzes, tests, projects and writing assignments. You will have daily homework that will range from journaling and note taking to outlining and vocabulary. This is essential to ensure that you keep up with the class and that material is covered in a timely fashion. There will be a test given at the end of every unit, which translates into six exams. Unit exams will carry a higher number of points. There will be 1-2 writing assignments issued every two weeks, giving each student time to develop their thesis and master their writing skills. In addition to

these individual assignments, there will be several group projects. Grades will be given on a percentage scale as follows:

A 100 – 90%

D 69 – 60%

B 89 – 80%

F 59% - and lower

C 79 – 70%

Work Habit grades will be given based on assignments; an E will be given to a student with zero missing assignments in a grading period, an S will be given to a student with one to three missing assignments in a grading period, and a U will be given to any student with more than three missing assignments in a given grading period.

Late Work: You may only turn in late work for a current grading period. Quizzes and tests must be made up within a week of your absence. You will have to take the missed quiz at nutrition on Wednesday and missed tests on Friday at lunch. Keep in mind that if you miss a test, you will only have a fourth of the time to make it up.

Attendance Policy:

You are required to follow the attendance policy of the school. Your attendance will have a direct connection to your grade. You will receive participation points that are determined on whether you are in class or not. If you are not in class you cannot participate. 2 points will be given per class period and 1 point will be given if you are tardy to class. If you fail to show up to class, with the exception being a school-approved activity, you will not receive points for the day. In order to be successful, you must attend class on a regular basis.

Materials Needed:

1. Three ring binder
2. Divider Tabs
 - a. Class Notes
 - b. Journals
 - c. Law Lessons
 - d. Newspaper Articles/Current Events
 - e. Tests/Quizzes/Essays
3. Agenda/Organizer
4. Covered Textbook

Materials Recommended:

5. Flash Drive
6. An email address to communicate with the instructor
7. Colored Pencils and a ruler for maps and projects.

Reseda High School Schoolwide Learners:

In my class, students do much of their work in cooperative learning groups. I believe this type of activity helps students to learn while practicing how to achieve the Reseda High School SLO's:

- I. Effective Communicators-*Speak with Kindness and intelligence*
- II. Critical Thinkers-*Dare to create*
- III. Self-Directed Learners-*Take initiative*
- IV. Responsible Citizens-*Be a good neighbor*
- V. Healthy Individuals-*Sleep Smart, Eat Smart, Move Smart*

