

622.0
10 units

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

I. Course Description:

The principles and the mechanics of our constitutional republic are examined underscoring the responsibilities of Christian citizenship within our society. Areas of emphasis include biblical and governmental principles, the Constitution, political parties, elections, pressure groups, citizenship, the branches of government, and economics of government.

II. Course Goals and Objectives:

The student will be conversant with the key events, movements, people and ideas that contributed to establishing the United States government as it is today. Specifically, they will be able to identify these events, movements, people and ideas, recognize their historical antecedents and consequences, and be able to articulate their inter-relationships and evaluate them on the basis of an evangelical Christian ethic.

III. Course Outline:

Section I: Introduction and Examination of American Government

A. American Government in the 20th Century – An Introduction

B. The Political Crisis

C. American Government

1. A Constitutional Government
2. A Republic
3. A Federal System of Government
4. A Limited Government
5. The Bill of Rights

Section II: Background of Political Thought and Practice

A. The Heritage of Political Thought

1. Judeo – Christian Background
2. Greek Rationalism
 - a. Socrates
 - b. Plato
 - c. Aristotle
3. Roman

- a. Cicero
- b. The Philosopher Kings

4. The Middle Ages

B. The Development of Modern Political Thought

1. The Renaissance
2. The Reformation
3. The Age of Reason

C. The English Heritage

1. Political Changes of the 17th Century
2. British Political Thought
3. Two Revolutions in England Set the Stage for America's Birth
4. The Flight of the Reformation to America

- 5. The English Common Law
- D. American Colonial Experience
 - 1. Practical Political Experience
 - 2. Development of Ideas on Liberty
- E. A Season of Constitution Making
 - 1. Declaration of Independence
 - 2. The State Constitutions
 - 3. The Articles of Confederation
 - 4. The Constitution of 1787
- F. The Case For the Christian Constitution
 - 1. The American Revolution
 - 2. Two Founding Documents
 - 3. Separation of Church and State
- G. The Case Against the Christian Constitution
 - 1. Is America a Christian Nation
 - 2. Roger Williams and the Religious Argument for Church – State Separation
 - 3. The Godless Constitution
- Section III. American Government in the 19th Century
 - A. Establishing a General Government
 - 1. Putting the Government in Operation
 - 2. Setting an Economic Course
 - 3. Foreign Affairs
 - 4. Washington's Farewell Address
 - B. The Rise of Political Parties
 - C. Limited Constitutional Government: The Jeffersonian and Jacksonian Way
 - 1. The Jeffersonians
 - a. Economy in Government
 - b. Checks and Balances in Practice
 - 2. The Jacksonians
 - D. The Constitution as Higher Law: The Establishment of the Supreme Court
 - 1. Major Decisions of the Marshall Court
 - 2. The Taney Court
 - E. Civil War and Reconstruction
 - 1. Republicans in Power
 - 2. Conduct of the War and Presidential Reconstruction
 - 3. Congressional Reconstruction
 - 4. Constitutional Reconstruction
 - 5. Constitutional Restoration
 - 6. Evolution of the Federalist Faction
 - 7. Early Tensions Between North and South
 - 8. State Sovereignty and the Right of Secession
 - 9. The Unlawful Suspension of Habeas Corpus
 - 10. The Purpose of the 14th Amendment
 - 11. The New Nation in the 20th Century

Section IV. Leviathan: American Government in the 20th Century

- A. Preparation for Leviathan
 - 1. Cutting Away the Foundations
 - 2. The Rise of Socialism
 - 3. Major Reforms of Progressives
 - a. Presidential Leadership
 - b. The 16th Amendment
 - c. The 17th Amendment
 - d. The Federal Reserve System
- B. Breaking the Constitutional Dam
 - 1. Emergency Used to Justify Action
 - 2. Overwhelming Congress
 - 3. Bringing the Courts to Heel
 - 4. Buying the People
- C. Overwhelming the State Governments
 - 1. Buying and Controlling the States
 - 2. States Reduced to Minions by Warren Courts
- D. Government out of Control
 - 1. Fiscal Policy and Spending
 - a. The Welfare State
 - b. Foreign Aid
 - c. The Credit Expansion System
 - 2. Bureaucracy
 - a. The Ubiquitous Bureaucracy
 - b. Bureaucratic Barriers
 - c. Oppressions Large and Small
 - 3. Crime, Punishment and Litigation

IV. Instructional Materials

Basic American Government, Clarence B. Carson, American Textbook Committee, 1999.

Never Before in History, America's Inspired Birth, Amos, Gary and Richard Gardiner, Foundation for Thought and Ethics, 1998.

The Godless Constitution, Kramnick, Isaac and R. Lawrence Moore, W. W. Norton and Company, 1997.

America's Caesar, Durand, Greg Loren, Crown Rights Book Company, 2000.

V. Teaching Method

- 1. Reading Assignments
- 2. Discussions
- 3. Written Assignments (Notebook)

VI. Evaluation

- A. Components
 - 1. Teacher -- Student Interaction and Discussion

2. Daily Work (Notebook)

3. Final Exam

B. Grading Scale

100 – 90% = A

89 – 80% = B

79 – 70% = C

69 – 60% = D

lower = F