

Course number: SS3303 IC

Grade level: 7 (appropriate for grades 6-10)

Prerequisite courses: none

Credits: .5

Course Description

Taking a next-generation approach to civics education, the Civics and Citizenship course teaches about US society and government from diverse perspectives. This course uses best practices in culturally relevant and culturally responsive education to equip students to navigate community and cultural norms and to critically analyze and influence their society. This semester-long course develops students' understanding of the relationships between individuals and their community and between people and their government. Students study the principles and founding ideals of US government and apply a critical lens to analyze the application of these ideals in our modern society.

Throughout the course, students are exposed to the work of activists and advocates for change to help foster a sense of civic responsibility and inspire students to get involved in their own communities. Engaging interviews bring students up close with community advocates, law enforcement officers, and teen activists, and cover topics such as paths to US citizenship, civic engagement, and advocacy. Media-literacy lessons explore the risks and benefits of social media and the role of mass media as the fourth branch of government. Students interact with mock social media posts and news articles to evaluate the bias and reliability of sources.

Students increase their level of civic literacy through rigorous assignments and projects in which they apply source reading, focused writing, and critical thinking skills to community issues and concerns. Students research ways to become civically active and engaged to create change in their communities. Throughout the course, students have opportunities to practice and observe different types of civil discourse—one of the most fundamental tenets of a democratic society. They learn to listen, communicate, and solve problems with others in a variety of situations.

Course Objectives

Students will meet the following goals in this course.

- Explain individual and social identity and intersectionality.
- Investigate how diversity influences our nation and culture.
- Describe the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Analyze how principles in the Constitution limit the power of the government.
- Analyze principles outlined in the Constitution.
- Explain the freedoms and rights protected by the Bill of Rights.
- Analyze how constitutional amendments have expanded minority groups' political participation in the US.
- Analyze the Supreme Court's interpretations of the rights of the accused.
- Evaluate the changing definition of "all men" in US political and social history.
- Compare the powers and responsibilities of the three branches of US government.
- Describe ways individuals can participate in the democratic process and engage in civic activity.
- Compare strategies used by individuals and organizations to influence change in US institutions.

Course Overview and Syllabus (continued)

- Analyze the media's influence on public opinion and policy.
- Evaluate the reliability of information.
- Describe strategies to evaluate claims and information in social media posts.
- Explain the importance of applying media-literacy skills when consuming social and mass media.
- Describe how social media is taking on the roles of mass media.
- Explain the importance of evaluating information shared on social media.
- Analyze the effectiveness of political activism and advocacy.

Student Expectations

This course requires the same level of commitment from students as a traditional classroom course. Students are expected to spend approximately 5–7 hours per week online on:

- interactive lessons, which include a mixture of instructional videos and tasks.
- assignments, in which they apply and extend learning in each lesson.
- assessments, including quizzes, tests, and cumulative exams.

Communication

Teachers will communicate with students regularly through discussions, emails, chats, and system announcements. Students will also communicate with classmates, either via online tools or face to face, to collaborate, ask and answer questions in peer groups, and develop speaking and listening skills.

Grading Policy

Students will be graded on work completed online and work submitted electronically to the teacher. The weighting for each category of graded activity is listed below.

Grading Category	Weight
Assignments	15%
Projects	15%
Lesson quizzes	20%
Unit tests	30%
Cumulative exams	20%

Scope and Sequence

When students log on to Edgenuity, they can view the entire course map—an interactive scope and sequence of all topics under study. The units of study are listed below.

Course Units
Community, Values, and Civic Engagement
Our Democratic Roots (Debate and Compromise)
The Constitution (Intention and Impact)
People and Their Government
Influencing the Government