

### **Course Information:**

Topic: Current Issues  
Grade Level: 11, 12  
Length: Semester  
Period/s Per Day: 1 period, 50 minutes

### **Essential Understanding:**

The goal of this class is to become aware and engaged in the most current issues featured in our national headlines. The course content includes bi-partisan debates which discuss the most current policy issues that face America today. Each year's topics will evolve as the current events in our news evolve. Students will gain the knowledge they need to become active citizens in today's world.

### **Theme Samples:**

- Media Literacy
- Forms of Persuasion and Logic
- The Role of the Federal Government
- The Federal Budget
- 1st Amendment Rights
- The War on Drugs
- Healthcare
- Immigration Policy
- Social Liberties
- Environmental Policy
- Foreign Policy
- Cyber Security

### **Course Objectives and Expectations:**

- To effectively exercise their responsibilities as citizens—the most important political office in U.S. society—students need to be able to analyze current issues.
- Students will learn methods that will allow them to form opinions on how they think their government should respond when faced with critical national decisions.
- Students will learn how to analyze important issues. Current events instruction also serves to help students develop critical-thinking skills.
- By defining problems, collecting and analyzing data, developing alternative solutions, selecting appropriate responses, working with their peers, defending a position, and persuading others, students can learn the skills and attitudes that will make them informed and effective citizens.

### **Student Objectives:**

- Students will be able define rights and responsibilities of American citizens

- Students will be able to use vocabulary and lexicon of current events and politics
- Students will be able to form a logical argument
- Students will inquire about local topics of interest through various research methods.
- Students will be able to identify credible sources
- Students will compare and contrast various perspectives
- Students will be able to identify motifs, themes, and symbolism in editorial cartoons.

**Pacing and pertinent Montana Content Standard:**

<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Technology</b>
Media Literacy	MCS 1,4	12.01-12.03
Government and Politics 101	MCS 1-4	12.01-12.03
Rights and Responsibilities	MCS 1	12.01-12.03
Foreign Policy Issues	MCS 2,3,4	12.01-12.03
<b>Quarter 2</b>		
Generational Differences	MCS 4	12.01-12.03
Social Liberties	MCS 1-4	12.01-12.03
Social Safety Net	MCS 1, 2	12.01-12.03
Environmental Policy	MCS 2,3,4	12.01-12.03
Final Research Project	MCS1-4	12.01-12.03

**Course Outline and Assessments:**

Unit 1 Media Literacy

- Source analysis
- Detecting biases
- Fact checking resources
- Discussion reflection questions

Unit 2 Government and Politics 101

- Crash Course Political Ideology youtube video
- Political Platform identification and matching activity
- Isidewith Quiz political spectrum quiz
- Discussion reflection questions

Unit 3 Rights and Responsibilities

- Youth Rights in America
  - History and development of youth rights
- Survey of youth rights and responsibilities

- C. Case studies of youth rights in America
- D. Discussion reflection questions

#### Unit 4 Foreign Policy Issues

- A. Tools of National Foreign Policy
- B. Evaluating US relations with foreign countries
  - a. Compare and contrast various tools used
- C. Selection of Documentaries based on student choice
- D. Evaluate role of the US in the world

#### Unit 5 Generational Differences

- A. Identify living generations
  - a. Greatest Generation
  - b. Silent Generation
  - c. Baby Boomers
  - d. Generation X (Lost Generation)
  - e. Millennials
  - f. Gen Z (iGen)
- B. Compare and contrast characteristics of each generation
- C. Adult interview of generational experiences
- D. Creative Group performance
  - a. Act out a scenario that highlights different characteristics of generations

#### Unit 6 Social Liberties

- A. 1st Amendment Rights
- B. Other rights guaranteed in constitution
- C. Role of Supreme court in individual rights
- D. Perspective of each political party and social liberties
- E. Group Debate on Issues selected by students

#### Unit 7 Social Safety Net

- A. Identify role of government in social safety net
  - a. New Deal
  - b. Great Society
- B. Identify top 8 programs in US
  - a. Medicare
  - b. Medicaid
  - c. Headstart
  - d. Free and Reduced Lunches
  - e. Unemployment
  - f. Social Security
  - g. TANF
  - h. Section 8 Housing

- C. Creative project
  - a. Explore role of each program, impact, controversy, and functioning
- D. Debate efficacy of program and role of government in keeping people out of poverty

Unit 8 Environmental Policy

- A. Explore vocabulary related to Climate Change
- B. Discuss Pros and Cons of Environmental Policy
- C. Analyze various types of energy and impact on Montana and US

Final Research Project “Teaching Your Classmates”

- A. Student Groups selection of topic relevant to class
- B. Create a lesson plan to teach classmates about topic
- C. Students teach full class period about research and topic
- D. Final evaluation and reflection essay

**Timeline:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Approximate Timeline</b>
Media Literacy	2 weeks
Government and Politics 101	3 weeks
Rights and Responsibilities	2 weeks
Foreign Policy Issues	2 weeks
Generational Differences	1 week
Social Liberties	2 weeks
Social Safety Net	2 weeks
Environmental Policy	2 weeks
Final Research Project	2 weeks

**Resources:**

**[www.closeup.org](http://www.closeup.org) “Current Issues in the Classroom Resources”**

**<https://upfront.scholastic.com/> “NYT Upfront Scholastic Magazine subscription”**

**<https://montana.pbslearningmedia.org/>**

**<https://www.cnn.com/cnn10>**

**<https://www.factcheck.org/>**

**<https://www.isidewith.com/political-quiz>**

**Crash Course Political Ideology [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j\\_k\\_k-bHigM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j_k_k-bHigM)**

## **A Place at the Table 2012 documentary about food insecurity**

HPS Technology Curriculum :

<https://www.blueponyk12.com/cms/lib/MT01001096/Centricity/Domain/12/HAVRE%20PUBLIC%20SCHOOLS%20TECHNOLOGY%20CURRICULUM.pdf>