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U. S. Government / Economics Course Policies  
Mr. Burchett

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Northgate's Government and Economics courses stress critical thinking and analysis. Both semesters are required for graduation. A variety of teaching methods are utilized to present the information including class discussions, group work, news awareness, mini-dramas, debates, oral and written reports, tests, Mock Congress, participatory involvement in government, and involvement in investment, both the stock market and the mutual fund sector.

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**Class Rules and Policies.** These rules are valid for the entire school year for all students.

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**Attendance.** Students who qualify for a legally excused absent may make-up their work according to the school's policy which is one day for each day of absence. Remember it is the student's, **not** the teacher's, responsibility to ask for and do all make-up work within this time frame. A **yellow slip from the Attendance Office Secretary is required to confirm the legality** of the absence before the work can be made-up. **All absences must be cleared within 72 hours or no work can be made-up and credited.** Remember, if you have been absent only one day, you must clear your absence and make-up your work within **one** day.

Students who are absent due to field trips, athletics, or independent study must check with the teacher in adequate time before departure to complete work prior to the absence. Special arrangements agreeable with the teacher must be made prior to departure, if there are special needs. Please note that being absent for **Senior Project** is classified as a Field Trip by the school and all work must be completed prior to absence. Always remember students it is your responsibility to communicate with the teacher before the visit and make acceptable arrangements.

Any student who is on campus, even for one period, will be responsible to turn in all assignments due in this class or the assignment will be deemed late.

No work can be made up if the absence is due to truancy and/or suspension.

Class begins when the bell rings. Be on time and in your seat when the bell rings.

Being a Senior does not mean you have a license to cut. You are in training for what lies ahead. To encourage positive patterns there will be a participation grade based on tardies and absences. Only with legal tardies and legal, cleared absences will a student not be docked participation points.

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**Academic work.** All assignments are expected to be submitted when due. Assignments which are turned in one day late will be docked 25% of the total points available, and those turned in two or more days late will receive only 50% credit, at most. Each semester there will be a drop dead final due date after which **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED.** These dates are: January 11 for first semester and May 27 for second semester. Note these dates in your agenda and plan accordingly.

**Presentation of work.** All assignments must be typed; **no hand written papers will be read, graded, or credited.** All assignments must be on standard sized paper (8-1/2 x 11) only.

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**Participation.** Participation is an integral part of this course. Sometimes you will participate with a partner, sometimes with a small group, and sometimes with the entire class. Plan on sharing questions, information, concerns and opinions as we proceed through the year. Some participation activities cannot be replicated. Therefore, plan to be in attendance, especially for all Mock Congress components.

**Exams.** Exams are announced well ahead of time. It is very important that students not be absent for tests.

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**Textbooks.** Textbooks should be covered, taken home, and not brought to class until collected. Any marking in a text will mandate the student's purchase of the book.

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**Communication.** My preferred method of parent communication is email. My email address is [burchettj@mdusd.org](mailto:burchettj@mdusd.org). My telephone extension is 938-0900, 2136. If you (student) need to talk to me regarding a personal concern and/or request for assistance, please do so at an appropriate time. Please bring your concerns early in the year when your success can be achieved.

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**Academic Honesty.** The school has adopted an academic honesty policy which is strictly adhered to in this class. You are not to copy a fellow student's work, plagiarize or cheat on any work. We will discuss documentation of research, which is very important. To give credit where credit is due is academic honesty and integrity. Seek to meet these academic standards. Failure to abide by these standards results in failure on the assignment, referral to the vice principal and notation on your transcript.

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**General behavior standards.**

Behave as a respectful young adult. Be courteous and respectful, never using profanity, to the teacher or to fellow classmates.

Use common courtesy.

Bring materials to class every day.

No eating or chewing gum in the classroom.

No destruction of school property.

No sitting on the desks. The accumulated weight of years of students sitting on them is devastating. It takes a long time to replace broken desks.

No electronic equipment which is against the school rules and/or state laws, i.e. cell phones. Also, please remove any earbuds or headphones before entering class and keep them off until you leave.

**Be cooperative.** Allow the teacher to teach and students, including yourself, to benefit from the day's activities. Every day the teacher has planned a lesson to explain and clarify concepts under study. Respect the time and effort to prepare these lessons and benefit from them.

**Do your best!** Just as you strive to win in an athletic contest, so strive to do your very best in all you do academically.

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**Assessment** If you disagree with an evaluation, respectfully ask to speak privately with the teacher at a mutually agreeable time.

Breakdown of grades is as follows:

For Government -

Exams – 40%

Mock Congress – 25% (details in MC Red, White and Blue book)

Class Participation – 10%

Other – 25% (Local Government and Court visits, Final Project, Chapter One essay, misc.)

For Economics –

Exams – 50%

Class Participation – 10%

Other – 40% (Stock Market Simulation, Globalization Portfolio, President's Dilemma simulation, misc.)

Grades **will not** be rounded. Instead, a series of grade bonuses are available. These will be explained in class, but examples include a bonus for fewer than 3 tardies in a quarter, and a bonus for never needing to take a make up exam. These bonuses will add up to much more than rounding traditionally does, and are designed to encourage beneficial behaviors.

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To avoid confusion and misunderstanding regarding grades the following will try to detail in depth the grading program which is used in this class.

All work is organized into categories, e.g. Exams, Participatory Government, Mock Congress, Class Discussions/News Symposiums, etc. Each category is assigned a percentage value based on the course's goals which are:

- to develop critical thinking and analysis
- to encourage awareness of our democratic and free market system
- to encourage participatory involvement in the system
- to learn to express reasoned viewpoints, both in written and oral format
- to reward faithfulness for completing the tasks required
- to develop wise time management skills

A General Rubric for Assessment. The following is a general explanation of the meanings of the letter assessments earned:

A = outstanding, excellent

This represents work which is clearly beyond the normal expectations of the assignment.  
Higher levels of analysis and critical thinking are displayed.  
Clarity of expression is evident.  
All components of the assignment are completed.  
There are extensions the student has sought on their own.

B = very good, above average

This represents work which has completed all the components of the assignment.  
There is some extension beyond the assignment.  
There are moderate elements of analysis expressed.  
Written/oral expression is generally accurate.

C = average

This represents work which has completed all the components of the assignment.  
There is no extension beyond the assignment.  
There are beginning elements of analysis.  
There may be some problems with English expression.

D = below average

This represents work which has not completed all the components of the assignment.  
There are increasing problems with English expression which inhibit understanding.

F = failure

This represents work which is well below the requirements of the assignment and sufficiently below what other students have attempted. English expression is flawed so understanding is limited.

Please take this document home. Read it, ask your parent or parents to read it. Please sign and ask your parent or parents to sign on the spaces provided. Your signatures are my documentation that you have read, understand and agree to be bound by these policies.

I have read, understand, and agree to be bound by Mr. Burchett's classroom policies.

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Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Signature of Parent

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Date

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Signature of Parent

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Date