Government
Core Competencies

This course is designed to educate students to understand the purpose, structure, and functions of government; the political process; the rule of law; and world affairs. Government builds on a foundation of history, geography, and economics to teach students to become responsible, knowledgeable citizens, committed to participation in public affairs.

The New Hampshire State Curriculum Framework in social studies identifies four standards and ten themes that the government course is developed around.

The four major standards are as follows:

1. The Nature and Purpose of Government;
2. Structure and Function of United States and New Hampshire Government;
3. The World and the United States’ Place In It;
4. Rights and Responsibilities.

The ten major themes are as follows:

A. Conflict and cooperation;
B. Civic ideals, practices and engagement;
C. People, places and environment;
D. Material wants and needs;
E. Cultural development, interaction, and change;
F. Global transformation;
G. Science, technology, and society;
H. Individualism, equality and authority;
I. Patterns of social and political interaction;
J. Human expression and communication.

Each of these ten themes are further broken into subsets not enumerated here.

The major concepts for government are drawn from the four New Hampshire state standards, and the course competencies are drawn from the ten themes and their subsets.
NH Standard 1:

The Nature and Purpose of Government

Major Concepts:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of government and the fundamental ideals of government of the United States.

Competencies, Knowledge/Content and Skills:

1.1: Identify the structures and functions of government at various levels, e.g., country - role of the sheriff’s office, or nation - role of providing the defense of the country. (Themes: A: Conflict and Cooperation, B: Civic Ideals, Practices and Engagement)

1.2: Examine how institutions and individuals make, apply, and enforce rules, laws, e.g., the Federal Communication Commission regulations on television broadcast standards or local public hearings on zoning regulations. (Themes: B: Civic Ideals, Practices, and Engagement, E: Cultural Development, Interaction and Change)

1.3: Evaluate how the purposes of government have been interpreted, e.g., promoting the general welfare or protection of private property. (Themes: B: Civic Ideals, Practices, and Engagement, D: Material Wants and Needs)

1.4: Explain how in the United States Legitimate authority derives from custom, law and consent of the governed, e.g. the Mayflower Compact or local curfews. (Themes: B: Civic Ideals, Practices, and engagement, E: Cultural Development, Interaction and Change, H: Individualism, Equality and Authority)

Assessments: Including, but are not limited to, the following:

Tests and quizzes; reaction papers - editorial writing assignments; essays; role playing; assignments as find and discuss music that interests the students that have political themes/lyrics; analyzing major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy and discuss why in a representative democracy decisions are made by the majority with minority rights protected. (Rubric included at end)

NH Standard 2:
Structure and Function United States and New Hampshire Government

Major Concepts:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of major provisions of the United States and New Hampshire Constitutions and the organization and operation of government at all levels including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

Competencies, Knowledge/Content and Skills:

2.1: Describe how the fundamental ideals and principals of American government are incorporated in the United States Constitution and the New Hampshire Constitution, e.g. the rule of law or individual rights and responsibilities. (Themes: H: Individualism, Equality and Authority, I: Patterns of Social and Political Interaction, J: Human Expression and Communication)

2.2: Analyze the evolution of the United States Constitution as a living document, e.g. the Bill of Rights or Plessy v. Ferguson. (Themes: E: Cultural Development, Interaction and Change, H: Individualism, Equality, and Authority, I: Patterns of Social and Political Interaction)

2.3: Describe the roles and responsibilities of the United States and New Hampshire judicial systems, e.g. resolution and conflict between states or New Hampshire Legislature’s use of advisory use of advisory opinions from the New Hampshire Supreme Court. (Themes: A: Conflict and Cooperation, E: Cultural Development, Interaction and Change)

2.4: Evaluate how individual rights have been extended in the United States or the Miranda decision. (Themes: H: Individualism, Equality and Authority, I: Patterns of Social and Political Interaction)

Assessments: Including, but are not limited to, the following:

Tests and quizzes; reaction papers - editorial writing assignments; essays; role playing; assignments as find and discuss music that interests the students that have political themes/lyrics; analyzing major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy and discuss why in a representative democracy decisions are made by the majority with minority rights protected. (Rubric included at end)

NH Standard 3:
The world and the United States’ Place In It

Major Concepts:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the relationship of the United States to other countries, and the role of the United States in world affairs.

Competencies, Knowledge/Content and Skills:

3.1: Discuss the impact of world affairs and the United States’ response to environmental, economic, and technological issues, e.g., intellectual property rights or global warming. (Themes C: People, Places and Environment, D: Material Wants and Needs, G: Science, Technology, and Society)
3.2: Discuss the relationship between domestic and foreign policy, e.g. farm subsidies or the impact of the 2003 Iraq war on the United Kingdom, the United States, and Spain. (Themes: A; Conflict and Cooperation, D: Material Wants and Needs)
3.3: Discuss the impact of United States contributions to the ideals of democracy and representative government on world affairs, e.g. the United States Constitution or free elections. (Themes: F: Global Transformation, J: Human Expression and Communication)

Assessments: Including, but are not limited to, the following:

Tests and quizzes; reaction papers - editorial writing assignments; essays; role playing; assignments as find and discuss music that interests the students that have political themes/lyrics; analyzing major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy and discuss why in a representative democracy decisions are made by the majority with minority rights protected.
(Rubric included at end)

NH Standard 4:

Rights and Responsibilities
Major Concepts:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and the ability to apply their knowledge of local, state, and national government through the political process and citizen involvement.

Competencies, Knowledge/Content and Skills:

4.1: Demonstrate responsible practices within the political process, e.g., registering to vote or taking civic action. (Themes: B: Civic Ideals, Practices, and Engagement)

4.2: Investigate how knowledgeable and engaged citizens have acted to preserve and extend their liberties, e.g., writing letters to the editor or participating in town meetings. (Themes: A: Conflict and Cooperation)

4.3: Explain why the preservation of liberty requires the participation of knowledgeable and engaged citizens, e.g., writing letters to the editor or participating in town meetings. (Themes: B: Civic Ideals, Practices, and Engagement)

Assessments: Including, but are not limited to, the following:

Tests and quizzes; reaction papers - editorial writing assignments; essays; role playing; assignments as find and discuss music that interests the students that have political themes/lyrics; analyzing major arguments for and against representative government as distinguished from direct democracy and discuss why in a representative democracy decisions are made by the majority with minority rights protected.

(Rubric included at end)