



Hull High School
180 Main St. Hull, MA 02045
(P) 781-925-3000
Principal: Ms. Nosek

Course: Government

Teacher: Mr. Mullin

Dear Parents and Students,

I would like to introduce myself, my name is Mr. Mullin and for the 2018/2019 school year, I will be your Government teacher. This year will be my seventh year teaching at Hull High School, but not my seventh year teaching. Previously, I have been teaching High School in New York City where I earned my Masters Degree in Social Studies Education. You will soon find that I am passionate about; politics, history, teaching, and that I expect the best effort from all students that I have the pleasure of teaching. Although, I have recently lived in New York City my original home is Massachusetts and I feel like I have found a new home here in Hull. I am now proud to call the South Shore home and I am honored to be a member of your community.

This class will begin with the study of the basic facts and terminology of Government and then work its way into the intricacies of the entire American Government system (all the way to the local government of Hull). As your teacher, I hope to actively engage you in the study of government and what makes America's government unique. This means that the course will not just be memorization of information, but students will actively be engaged in the concepts, themes and debates that encompass Government. This approach will cover many avenues of academic engagement such as; debates, research, test taking, quizzes, projects, note taking and essay writing.

My goal is to build a partnership with families and community members. Together we can create a learning environment that can help you succeed in this competitive world. Attached you will find course requirements and classroom expectations that are essential for a successful year at Hull High School. Your first homework assignment is to have you read and sign this letter and return it to class. This way you know what is to be expected to have a successful year in Governmental class.

I am very excited about this year and what it has to offer! We are a team and our goal is to have you receive the best education possible. I want to stress, the most important factor to a strong foundation in education is your (the students) involvement. With our teamwork you will get the best opportunities this world has to offer. I want to thank you in advance for your cooperation and support here at Hull High School. If you have any concerns or questions feel free to email me at bmullin@town.hull.ma.us.

It's going to be an amazingly fun and challenging year. I look forward to working with you and having a successful school year!

Sincerely, Mr. Mullin

A quote from the New York Times article titled, *The Surprising Truth About How Humans Determine Right and Wrong* explains my approach to teaching, "There are few things we enjoy more than complicating — or upending — the most common,

fundamental assumptions about how the world works. It's not that we want to upset you. Rather, those assumptions, though reasonable on their face, are often misleading, out of date, simplistic or just wrong. And, usually, we find that once you see how things really work, lots of seemingly intractable problems or unsolvable mysteries about the world become easier to figure out."

Skills utilized:

Thinking/Perspective/Identity Skills

1. Being able to think logically. Being able to form ideas based and backed on facts.
2. To challenge ideas by analyzing facts (objective v. subjective analysis). Being able to think critically.
3. To awaken the life long learner, to be able to question everything. To challenge themselves and to challenge what is expected of themselves in the world.
4. To question whom they are and why they think that way. Self-awareness creates lifelong learners.
5. The student's place as Americans in a globalized world and economy. How they view the world and how the world views them.
6. The student's role and importance in a democratic society.
7. How other governmental systems function.
8. How power, technology, and geography; affect all of our lives, beliefs and governmental systems.

Career/College Skills:

1. Formal Writing.
2. Public speaking skills.
3. Understanding and being able to see through bias.
4. Research skills.
5. Reading and Analysis of various forms of information.
6. Forming logical educated opinions.
7. Synthesize different accounts and form a solid summary and opinion.
8. Personal choice and the impact those choices have on your life.

Course Content:

1. The building blocks of government
2. Human nature and government
3. The Enlightenment to the Constitution
4. The balance of freedoms and laws
5. The Three Branches of Government
6. Federalism and States rights
7. Political parties and dissemination of information (mass media)

8. State and local Government: How it functions and your responsibility within it
9. Civic responsibility in a democracy at the local and federal level of government

Course Breakdown

I. Assessment

Tests: Tests will be given on a regular basis and they will always be announced.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given with or without announcement. If information for a quiz is to be “memorized” I will warn you. Otherwise, it will be based on classroom discussion, notes and homework.

II. Essays and Projects

At least three times a semester there will be a project or essay assigned by Mr. Mullin. The projects will vary and there will be ample time to choose and prepare for a project.

III. Homework

When homework is given it is due the next day. There will only be homework extensions if you are absent.

IV. Participation

Participation includes; *arriving on time, assigned seat, prepared for class, taking notes, and participation.*

Super Important Information:

Absences: When absent, each student is responsible for finding out the work he or she missed. This means getting homework assignments, notes, handouts, etc. Lateness and unexcused absences will result in reduction from final grade.

Housekeeping: Keeping the room clean... Please KEEP it clean.

Community Help: If anyone has friends or family members that have had a life experience that they would like to share with the class, please get in touch with me. For example: War veteran, politician, refugee or any relevant life experience that relates to the material we cover in class.

Student and Community Expectations

- ❖ Respect! Always respect each other, respect yourself, respect the teacher and I promise to respect you in return.
- ❖ Come to class on time and prepared. **Lateness will not be tolerated and will lead to a detention.**
- ❖ Raise your hand if you would like to ask or make a comment in class. Do not be afraid to ask, ask, and ASK questions!
- ❖ Plagiarism equals a zero and a referral to the office.
- ❖ Respect Mr. Mullin's right to teach and your fellow student's right to learn.
- ❖ Always stay in your assigned seat.
- ❖ **Food is not allowed in the classroom.**
- ❖ Beverages **are** allowed in the classroom.
- ❖ Never complain if you are not willing to be apart of the solution.
- ❖ Follow rules and regulations of the school. **No Cell phones, unless otherwise specified.**

What you need to do with all of these papers?

- ❖ Fill out and sign the attached portion below and submit it to Mr. Mullin at the next class.
- ❖ Read, reread, and understand everything carefully.
- ❖ Take responsibility for all things discussed in the contract.
- ❖ If you have any questions, write them down. We will discuss them as a class or one on one.
- ❖ Put the syllabus /contract in your binder and refer to it when necessary.

WE KNOW WHAT TO DO!

I, _____ (Student) and _____ (Parent) are aware of, understand, that if I (my son or daughter) do not do the work mentioned above I will not pass Government class. You are responsible for your grade in Government class. Take this contract and this year seriously, and I promise it will be an excellent year.

Student's signature:_____Date:_____

Parent's signature:_____Date:_____

Parent's Phone #:_____

Parent's Email:_____

Please feel free to contact me at bmullin@town.hull.ma.us. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Mr. Mullin