

Course Outline

Individuals and Societies: MYP Level 3

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This Individuals and Societies class is a Civics course that is designed to help students learn how to become active and involved citizens in our nation's democracy and the world community. The course explores the legal requirements, rights, duties and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, the Constitution and Bill of Rights of the United States, the American electoral system, political parties and voting requirements, and state and local government.

This course incorporates the three *fundamental concepts of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP): holistic learning, intercultural awareness and communication*. *Holistic learning* is encouraged in many ways, including when students compare and contrast America's form and organization of government with other governments around the world—including some of the Spanish speaking nations explored in their Language B courses. It fosters *intercultural awareness* in students by encouraging them to recognize that many of the problems that governmental policies seek to address require global cooperation and also by examining how differences in national and cultural values result in different perspectives on issues and different solutions to problems. Students will be asked to express themselves using many different forms of *communication* including journal writing, debate, acting, art, film and much more.

Students will also exhibit the attributes of the *IB Learner Profile*. They are *critical thinkers* when they assess political cartoons and analyze political issues; *reflective* when they journal their responses and reactions to current events and construct their own political ideology; *communicators* when they research and present topics in a written or oral format; *open-minded* when they discuss the various political issues of the day; *caring* when they discuss social issues that affect people in the U.S. and in other countries, and *risk-takers* when they are asked to participate in debates, skits and film projects.

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Please refer to Merrill's website to view the MYP Objectives.

The content of this course is driven by the curricular objectives of the Des Moines Public School System. "The aims of the teaching and learning of MYP Individuals and Societies are to encourage and enable the student to:

- appreciate the range of human and environmental commonalities and diversities
- understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies and environments in different contexts
- understand how both environmental and human systems operate and evolve over time
- identify and develop a concern for human and environmental well-being
- act upon opportunities to be a responsible global citizen
- develop effective inquiry skills to achieve conceptual understanding in humanities" (Principles to Practice).

The course is aligned to the Iowa Core Social Studies Standards for Behavioral Science, Political Science and History and the National Common Core Literacy Standards for History and Social Science.

III. **ROLE OF THE IB GLOBAL CONTEXTS**

Global contexts direct learning toward independent and shared inquiry into our common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. Using the world as the broadest context for learning, MYP Individuals and Societies develops explanations for:

- identities and relationships
- orientation in time and space
- personal and cultural expression
- scientific and technical innovation
- globalization and sustainability
- fairness and development

IV. **TEXTS AND RESOURCES**

The primary textbook for the course is Holt, Rinehart, Winston, *Civics in Practice: Principles of Government and Economics*. During the Constitution and Bill of Rights units we rely heavily upon Addison-Wesley, *Civics: Participating in Our Democracy*.

Print reference materials used in the class include newspapers, magazines and books. We will also utilize many internet based resources as well.

Educational videos/clips and guest speakers are also integrated into the class.

V. **METHODOLOGY**

I am a firm believer in getting students actively involved in the *process* of their education. To this end students enjoy lots of choice and input into how the class operates both in terms of how it is taught and how the classroom is run. Given this philosophy, lots of hands-on learning techniques, cooperative group activities, projects, discussions, debates and simulations take place.

VI. **METHODS OF ASSESSMENT**

Formative Assessments include homework, class work, class discussions, debates, group work, teacher observation, quizzes, journaling and note sheets over assigned readings from the textbook.

Summative assessments at the end of each unit range from essays, papers, and simulations to tests and projects. They are all assessed utilizing IB rubrics.

For IB assessment, student work is evaluated on the MYP assessment criteria as identified in the Humanities Guide. The criteria are as follows:

Criterion A	Knowing and Understanding	max 8
Criterion B	Investigating	max 8
Criterion C	Communicating	max 8
Criterion D	Thinking Critically	max 8

VII. **GRADING POLICY, including the use of MYP CRITERIA**

All summative tasks will be assessed using MYP rubrics, and students will receive a copy of the rubrics to take home. Further, teachers will post each student's level of achievement on Infinite Campus.