



# The David A. Stein Riverdale/Kingsbridge Academy MS/HS 141

Department of  
Education  
City of New York

**Principal**

Lori O'Mara

**Assistant Principals**

Sheilagh Lustig  
Stacy Miller  
Eric Scholz, I.A.  
Thomas Sullivan

## MS/HS 141 – RIVERDALE KINGSBRIDGE ACADEMY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT Policies and Procedures – Fall 2019

**Teacher:** Mr. Sforza (Ms. Orozco until Oct. 2)

**Room:** 330

**Class Website:** [rkasforza.weebly.com](http://rkasforza.weebly.com)

**Email:** [psforza@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:psforza@schools.nyc.gov)

[rorozco@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:rorozco@schools.nyc.gov)

### **Course Overview:**

This course aims to provide students with opportunities to become engaged in the political process by acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary for active citizenship. The New York State Education Department suggests that this course should “adapt to present local, national, and global circumstances, allowing teachers to select flexibly from current events to illuminate key ideas and conceptual understandings.” Participation in government and in our communities is fundamental to the success of American democracy. The units of study are:

1) Foundations of American Democracy	3) Rights, Responsibilities, and Duties of Citizenship
2) Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	4) Political and Civic Participation

### **Classroom Procedures:**

During the first 5-7 minutes of class, students are expected to: 1) copy assignments and deadlines from the board; 2) take out any assignments that are due; 3) copy the Aim; and 4) complete the Do Now. The Do Now will almost always involve reading and writing, not speaking. Therefore, the room should be quiet. After the Do Now is completed, I will make class announcements and gladly answer any questions before beginning the lesson. I will also set aside several days a week where I will be available at lunch or after school for extra help or to discuss any problems or questions you may have. During the lesson, there will be times when I will require your full attention and other times when you will be working independently or in groups. The more easily we can transition between these modes, the more enjoyable and successful our class will be. At the end of class, you must remain in your seat until the bell rings. Under no circumstances should you be out of your seat waiting for the bell.

### **Seating:**

Assigned seating helps me learn your names and take attendance quickly. If there is a problem with your seat, please see me to discuss a seat change, but continue to sit in your seat until it has been changed.

### **Classroom Behavior:**

It is imperative that we maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect in the classroom at all times. Verbal disrespect and disruption of fellow students may result in disciplinary action. Phones and other personal electronic devices must be stowed away in your bag -- they are NOT permitted in class. Of course, all other RKA rules apply in class.

### **Materials:**

Required:	a binder or binder section devoted to our class; loose leaf paper; blue or black pens; #2 pencils
Highly Recommended:	small dictionary; highlighters; small stapler; 3-hole punch

### **Lateness & Absence:**

It is impossible to fully participate in class if you are late or absent. Therefore, excessive lateness and/or absence will negatively affect your class participation grade. If you are absent for an extended period of time due to illness, you must contact me to discuss how you will make up the work.



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### **Late Work:**

No work will be accepted more than three days after the due date. If you are absent, you are responsible for contacting me or a homework buddy in order to stay up-to-date. Work not completed in the required time will be recorded as a "zero". There will be no option to make up the work later. Computers and printers break down and sometimes don't work – it happens all the time. You need to know this and compensate by not waiting until the last minute to print your work. This **WILL NOT** be a valid excuse for late work!

### **E-mailed Work:**

You are responsible for submitting a physical copy of your work. I only accept e-mailed work in the case of extended absence and even then, you must submit a printed copy upon your return to school.

### **Class Website:**

Although you will receive hard copies of *some* materials, most assignments and readings will only be available as postings on the class website. The web address is [rkasforza.weebly.com](http://rkasforza.weebly.com). On this website you will sometimes find links to documents on Google Docs. In order to access these links you may need to be logged in to your Google account.

### **Makeup Tests and Essays:**

After a test or in-class essay is completed, I will announce a makeup deadline. If you are absent on the original date, it is your responsibility to make up the test or essay by the deadline. Makeups will be offered at lunch or after school in Room 330.

### **Presentation of Work:**

Work may be typed OR handwritten in pen on loose leaf paper. Please do not use pencil as it is often difficult to read. Please staple any assignments that are longer than one page. For some papers and projects, I will require typed work. Typed work must meet the following guidelines: black ink on white paper; double-spaced; 12-point Arial font; 1-inch margins on top, bottom, and sides. I will provide a downloadable template on the class website that meets these guidelines.

### **Plagiarism/Cheating:**

Plagiarism is using someone's words or ideas without giving them credit. We will discuss the proper format to use when crediting sources. Directly copying words from the internet will not only result in a grade of "zero," but is also a violation of RKA rules and may be dealt with as a discipline issue. The same goes for cheating or helping someone to cheat. Make sure your work is your own! This year RKA has established an account with [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com) (an online work submission tool that checks for academic integrity) and I plan to use it for some writing assignments this year.

### **Grading:**

Your grade will be based upon tests, essays, homework, projects, notebook checks, class participation, and a final exam. Your grade will be determined as follows:

Tests/Essays/Projects	Homework & Classwork	Class Participation
60%	20%	20%

### **Online Grading:**

I use [mygradebook.com](http://mygradebook.com) for online grading. You will receive a student ID and password so that you can keep track of your grades.