

American Civics 101 Course Outline: (six sessions)

Instructor: Alan Perper

Session 1: The U.S. Constitution – from its creation in 1787 through its 27 amendments in over 234 years. A thorough understanding of why this amazing document continues to be the supreme law of the land.

Session 2: A detailed analysis of the three co-equal branches of government (Legislative, Executive and Judicial) and their unique power sharing roles. Understanding the concept of “checks and balances” and its critical role in ensuring a balance of power in our democracy.

Session 3: A bottom-line discussion to “de-mystify” political terms and tools such as budget reconciliation, the electoral college, gerrymandering, filibuster, impeachment, the Federal Reserve Bank and many others.

Session 4: A frank discussion about the concept of our “National Debt” and how the realities and “myths” regarding this issue will actually affect all of us.

Session 5: Our elected representatives and forthcoming election issues, both local and national. More specifically, a focus on your House of Representative and U.S. Senate members and their actual powers and responsibilities... an important analysis to explain why being informed as citizens and voters matters!

Session 6: A frank discussion about the importance and history of teaching civics in this country and why it is so important to be informed and engaged, particularly in today's polarized political environment! This session will also include a simulated USCIS Citizenship quiz to assess what students have learned. Students will also have an opportunity to ask questions or clarifications on any of the previous class topics or issues.