



## NOTE TO TEACHERS ONLY

# U.S. GOVERNMENT *WITH THE CIVIC MIRROR*



### **Rationale**

This course outline – which integrates *The Civic Mirror* with a U.S. Government course – puts a new and exciting spin on an old course. Utilizing the best of pragmatic, constructivist and brain-based learning theories, this scope and sequence tackles the course content in an exploratory and experiential manner. As students read through their U.S. Government text, they also work together to construct, manage, and survive in their own simulated nation ... one with its own government, economy, and environment, and with each student providing for an imaginary family. By the end of this course students will have learned about – and experienced – the basic tenets of democratic government and citizenship in the United States.

### **Pedagogical Note**

Your students will be completing readings in this scope and sequences at a fast pace. At first glance you might think, “There’s no way my students will be able to grasp that much information that quickly.” We agree. The great thing is, however, that “reading and listening” will not be the primary ways your students will be learning with this course delivery. They will be doing most of their learning through experiencing and reflecting, constructing meaningful along the way. In other words, because your students will be participating in a comprehensive set of *Civic Mirror* events and Reflection & Connection activities, the emphasis placed upon reading and memorizing will decrease. Your students will instead be given opportunities to experience the subtle nuances and interrelations amongst the otherwise disparate components of the U.S. Government course.

### **Planning Note**

By no means should you think that this scope & sequence is the only way to deliver the course content and integrate *The Civic Mirror*. On the contrary! Feel free to follow it to a tee, or tweak and modify it as you like. Also note that we’ve included several “Lecture/Activity” slots for each unit of study so you can add your own flavour to the course delivery. Use these as you see fit. These times are intended for lectures, videos, class activities and discussions, work periods, or whatever else you think would benefit your students the most. You’re the boss in this department. Also be sure to check out the *CM Library* for teaching ideas and uploaded Reflection & Connection activities that could relate to your course.

### **Rewards / Incentives**

*The Civic Mirror* provides the teacher with a variety of incentive/reward mechanisms to help encourage students to complete in-class work. Specifically, before you give your students their Citizen Profiles, they will know that you will be using their attitude, participation, and work-completion marks to decide who gets how much game-start money and what hidden agendas. Afterwards, they will know that their continued hard work may be rewarded with either CM \$\$ and/or Well-Being Pts (given by you) ... or rewarded *and* punished via the Status Points Steals (described in the *Civic Mirror Manuals*). These methods work wonders to increase interest, motivation, and work-completion rates.

### **Reading Checks**

Notice that there are a lot of “Reading Checks.” If you hype-up *The Civic Mirror’s* incentive/reward mechanisms, it’s likely you’re your students will be more motivated to read the course material than usual. And because your students will have a relevant arena to *use* what they are reading, you’ll likely also find that they enjoy reading the material more than usual.

We recommend that you allow your students to bring in hand-written cheat sheets (notes) for the reading checks – as many pages as they like – as long as they are in their own writing/printing. Note-taking is a highly effective study strategy for approximately two-thirds of the human population, and it doesn’t necessarily ‘hurt’ the other third.



## **NOTE TO TEACHERS ONLY continued ...**

Some instructors find this component so successful that they allow their students to create one-page cheat sheets for the Unit Exams too. Nevertheless, by permitting your students to bring their own study notes for the reading checks, you will:

- i. Increase the likelihood that your students read thoughtfully and attempt to make sense of it;
- ii. Communicate a message that *success* is not about how many random facts they can recall, but success is about how hard they work and prepare; which will
- iii. Increase the likelihood of your fringe students reading the material (i.e. those students who might otherwise think “There’s no point, I’ll never remember this stuff”).

### **Reading Check Discussions**

The reading checks can take from 5 to 10 minutes to complete, but we recommend spending as much time marking them as a class and discussing what was read in the process. This will require you (the teacher) to review the assigned reading beforehand and identify some of the key talking/discussion points ... always trying to think of ways to relate the course material to the happenings in your students’ Civic Mirror country. Also, with this set-up, we’re certain you’ll find your students will be ‘tougher’ markers than you would be ... especially when \$\$, WB PTs, and SP Steals are on the line.

### **Online Discussion Forums**

This scope and sequence also suggests that you use *The Civic Mirror’s* online discussion forums several times. Although we haven’t said what discussion prompts – or “big questions” – you should use, we have indicated when appropriate times to post online prompts would be. Note that the Instructor’s Manual is full of discussion questions and prompts. Assign your students to *first* compose and post an initial 250 – 500 word response (like they would for a regular essay or paragraph response), and *then* post at least two replies to their classmates’ responses. These interactive parameters can very easily instigate exciting online discussions that bring the course material to life. We highly recommend using this *Civic Mirror* feature.

### **WARNING! Do Not Tell Your Students...**

DO NOT inform your students when the simulation will end! The reason is quite simple: If students know when the game ends, an apocalypse (or end of the world) scenario arises. Certain students (usually the keen ones) will plan end-game strategies that they would otherwise not plan. In order to properly simulate life, do not tell your students when the last simulated year will be. What works best is letting your students think that the time you have set aside for a final Reflection & Connection Activity will be spent going through another year or two of *The Civic Mirror*. In fact, if you look at the scope & sequence now, you can see we’ve scheduled exactly this. Also note that the “flex time” we built in should your course calendar run longer than the usual 16 weeks.



# COURSE OUTLINE

## U.S GOVERNMENT & POLITICS (WITH THE CIVIC MIRROR)

---

### COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is a study – and experience – in government, politics, and citizenship in the United States. You will not only learn about the various institutions, principles, and realities of U.S. Government, but you will be given an opportunity to experience these things for yourself by participating in *The Civic Mirror*: an online and face-to-face simulation that will turn our classroom into a country and you and your classmates into citizens.

The aim of this course is twofold:

1. To provide you with a better understanding of and perspective on U.S. government, politics, and related issues, and
2. To enhance your abilities and your willingness to participate actively and responsibly in civic life.

In other words, as you study and learn the course content in the usual ways (i.e. readings, lectures, group activities), you will also be given the opportunity - via *The Civic Mirror* - to experience these things for yourself ... opportunities to practice American-style government and effective citizenship in-class and online.

---

### ACTIVITY & MARKS SUMMARY

#### ATTITUDE & PARTICIPATION ----- %

These marks are yours for the taking. It's really quite simple: come to class (on time), be respectful when you speak and when you listen, and get involved. If you do all that, you've added % to your final grade.

#### HOMEWORK & READING CHECKS ----- %

Homework is the work you are supposed to do on a daily basis – not work that you necessarily have to do “at home”. When you do well on your homework, it's like giving yourself a gift that keeps on giving: First you get a high homework mark; Second, your high homework mark will give you game-play advantages in *The Civic Mirror* (more \$\$, more points, immunity from “steals”); Third, you will likely do better on the unit exams and tasks (because you did your homework); and Finally, you'll likely get more out of the course and *The Civic Mirror* because of the above.

#### UNIT VOCAB & UNIT EXAMS ----- %

In each unit of study you will be expected to learn new facts, concepts and terminology well enough to be able to ‘talk about’ them at length. To help ensure this happens, you will be given a vocabulary list for each unit where you will write/print the definition for each term/concept and either a) write your own, paraphrased definition for the term/concept, or b) create or draw some sort of memory trick that will help you understand what it means and remember how to use it. *Unit Vocab* lists will be DUE the day of your unit exams. *Unit Exams* will ask you to recall, remember, and respond to the major facts, concepts and terms covered in each unit.



## CIVIC MIRROR PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS ----- %

When *The Civic Mirror* officially begins, you will be evaluated at the end of every simulated year in four areas:

1. *Success in the Simulation (Status Pts)* - The level of 'success' you had in *The Civic Mirror*
2. *Involvement & Attitude* - Your involvement in the simulation and your attitude towards the experience.
3. *Initiative* - Your ability to implement initiatives of your own.
4. *Learning (i.e. Incorporating Course Material into the Game)* - Your ability to incorporate what you've learned into *The Civic Mirror* and related discussions.

Like *The Civic Mirror*, this evaluation system also attempts to reflect the real world by evaluating your performance, not your ability to remember facts and information. It was also designed to be incredibly fair in a few key ways:

- You evaluate yourself first, communicating to your instructor why you gave yourself the grade you did.
- Your instructor will review your self-evaluation and, if he/she finds that you've graded yourself honestly and accurately, will give you the grade you gave yourself. If you attempt to bump yourself up a few marks higher or grade yourself too low, your instructor will correct this before entering the marks.
- You can still earn a very respectable grade even if you don't gain Status Points in a given year, the points you need to win *The Civic Mirror*.

## REFLECTION & CONNECTION TASKS ----- %











You will be asked to complete at least one "Reflection & Connection Task" for every unit of study. These activities are crucial steps in the learning process, tying together what was learned from the readings, lectures, and videos *with* what was experienced in your *Civic Mirror* nation. In fact, we often never realize how much we've learned from our experiences until we stop and reflect on them ... making an effort to connect what happened and what we learned to our lives and the world in general. That's what these tasks will ask you to do, and they will be the last thing you'll do at the end of each unit. You'll likely find the ups-and-downs, mistakes, and successes that you experience in *The Civic Mirror* to be gold-mines of insight and understanding ... helping make the course material more fun, relevant, and meaningful.









	DAY 31	DAY 32	DAY 33	DAY 34	DAY 35
WEEK 7	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Intro of CM Part 3 as class;</li> <li>- Go over CM Performance Eval. Criteria (<i>Winter section in manual</i>)</li> <li>- Work / Reading Period</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CM Reading Check #3 and Discussion (<i>taken from Manual</i>)</li> <li>- Winter 2000 (<i>teacher guides students through process this 1<sup>st</sup> time</i>)</li> </ul> 	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading Check</li> <li>- President recaps new laws and policies</li> <li>- Spring 2000 (<b>computer lab</b>)</li> </ul> 	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review discussion board posts</li> <li>- Intro Town Hall + its significance (<i>see CM Manual</i>)</li> <li>- Summer 2000                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Town Hall</li> <li>▶ Accusations</li> </ul> </li> </ul> 	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Court Intro Lesson (<i>outlined in CM Manual</i>)</li> <li>- Fall 2000</li> <li>* End of Year Reminder</li> </ul> 
	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read Part 3 of CM Manual</li> <li>- Politicians prepare for Winter 2000 (<i>Govt. Event</i>); review script</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "first" section in text on Legislative branch</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online discussion prompt related to readings</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss/prepare for trials online</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "second" section in text on Legislative branch</li> <li>- finish buying, selling, trading before next class</li> </ul>
	<b>DAY 36</b>	<b>DAY 37</b>	<b>DAY 38</b>	<b>DAY 39</b>	<b>DAY 40</b>
WEEK 8	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading Check</li> <li>- Yr. 2000 Ends</li> <li>- H.A. Applications</li> </ul> 	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HA apps returned;</li> <li>- Yr. 2000 Self-Eval's</li> <li>- Discussion of posts made in online H/W assignment</li> </ul>  	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading check</li> <li>- Lecture/activity #1 on legislative branch</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lecture/ activity #2 on legislative branch <i>and/or</i></li> <li>- Work period</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lecture/ activity #3 on legislative branch</li> <li>- CM: Off-Year Elections for 2001, speeches, ballot casting (<i>counting after class</i>).</li> </ul> 
	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- R &amp; C Activity: Class evaluation of country in an online discussion format (CM Forums)</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "third" section in text on Legislative branch</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p>	<p>H/W</p>	<p>H/W</p>
	<b>DAY 41</b>	<b>DAY 42</b>	<b>DAY 43</b>	<b>DAY 44</b>	<b>DAY 45</b>
WEEK 9	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Given Unit R&amp;C Task</li> <li>- Work period (may read silently or work on the R &amp; C Unit Task)</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading Check</li> <li>- CM Winter 2001 ~ Government Event</li> </ul> 	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review online responses made in CM Forums</li> <li>- Work Period.</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lecture/Activity #1 on Executive Branch</li> </ul>	<p><b>IN-CLASS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading check</li> <li>- CM Spring 2001 ~ Open Market</li> </ul> 
	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "first" section in text on the executive branch</li> <li>- Students (esp. politicians) prepare for Winter 2001</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online discussion about this day's Govt Event in light of class evaluation done at the end of Yr. 2000</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p>	<p>H/W</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Read "second" section in text on the executive branch</li> </ul>	<p>H/W</p>
	<b>DAY 41</b>	<b>DAY 42</b>	<b>DAY 43</b>	<b>DAY 44</b>	<b>DAY 45</b>











ACTION-ED Inc.

# The Civic Mirror

AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM FOR GOVERNMENT, ECONOMICS, LAW AND CITIZENSHIP



[www.civictimirror.com](http://www.civictimirror.com)

## WHAT IS THE CIVIC MIRROR?

*The Civic Mirror* is an educational program that turns classrooms into countries and students into citizens. Players are challenged to do 3 things:

- 1 Interact in an economy to provide for their own fictitious families,
- 2 Implement a political and legal system to save their country from chaos and corruption, and
- 3 Fulfill political, economic and/or ideological hidden agendas.

The 36 hex-map below is the simulated country which provides the setting for the entire program. The hexes with green backgrounds represent the country's natural environment. The hexes with purple backgrounds represent residential areas citizens can own or rent. The other hexes represent the country's economy. These hexes produce different units that satisfy the citizens' different needs and wants.



Each has an owner and any hex can be developed into something else. Countries must build strong economies by developing hexes, but they must also be concerned about sustaining their natural environment. Both paths present unique costs and benefits.

As in the real world, there is not enough "stuff" to satisfy every player's needs. Scarcities are common. When demand is greater than supply, people fight and argue over who gets what. To manage this conflict, players must implement a set of rules and a system of government. Because *The Civic Mirror* attempts to represent the civic system of the United States, the players use a modified version of the U.S. Constitution to institute law & order. In essence, players become citizens of a miniature U.S.A.

*The Civic Mirror* is played in two settings: online and in class. The simulated scenario described above is managed online and it sets up political, economic, and civic events that take place in the classroom. These in-class events include:

- i) a *Government Event* for making & changing laws,
- ii) an *Open Market Event* for buying, trading, & selling,
- iii) a *Judicial Event* for prosecuting illegal actions, and
- iv) a *Town Hall Event* where players voice questions & concerns

To add focus, each player is given a Hidden Agenda at the start of the game. These agendas are economic, political, and/or ideological in nature. They motivate players to participate in the civic events and they create flavor and diversity to their civic discourse.

In a nutshell, *The Civic Mirror* gives students opportunities to become family providers, entrepreneurs, politicians, political lobbyists, activists, and so much more. To quote a former student-participant now studying at Babsen College, "A straight-A student may have lots of knowledge, but I have the head start in the real world."

[www.civictimirror.com](http://www.civictimirror.com)

# THE CIVIC MIRROR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (U.S. Module)

## Pre-Game, Nation Building Events



**Introduction:** You and your classmates will learn how *The Civic Mirror* works by touring through the online program and reading the game rules in the Student Manual.



**Practice Run:** You will get a chance to play *The Civic Mirror* program in a Practice Run, trying to earn the most “Well-Being Points” (WB Pts) by buying, selling, and trading with your classmates.



**Create National Identity:** You and your classmates will then create an identity for your simulated nation, giving it a name and agreeing on other fictitious identity items that will be broadcasted to the *Civic Mirror Community*.



**Citizen Profiles:** Your instructor will assign each of you a Citizen Profile. This will include your game-start money, a Hidden Agenda, two human services you’ll need to obtain for your family, and a culture. Work hard if you want a good Citizen Profile!



**National Constitution:** You and your classmates will work together to study and learn your simulated nation’s book of law. This will be a modified version of the United States Constitution.



**Elections:** Keeping your Hidden Agendas in mind, you and your classmates will form political parties, campaign to win votes, and elect your own President, three Senators, and five House Reps.



**Auction:** In the last nation-building event, you, your fellow citizens, and your Government will use your game-start money to win hexes in a property auction, hoping to own and control the hexes you want.

## Game Events

*At this point, your simulated nation will be ready for action. Each of you will have a Citizen Profile, your nation will have its own Government, and different pieces of property will be owned by each of you. The game will begin and you will repeat the following four events as many times as you can. Each event is called a ‘season,’ and together they will make up a simulated ‘year.’*



**Winter: Government Event:** Your President will address the nation, propose a budget, and nominate cabinet members and a National Judge. Your House Reps will try to pass a budget bill and set tax rates, and your Senators will approve/reject the Presidential nominations and try to pass their own laws.



**Spring: Open Market:** The market will open and everyone will log into *civicmirror.com* to start buying, selling, and trading with one another in hopes of providing well for their families. Everyone will also have to consider the Government’s new laws and policies, and check to see if there are ‘law breakers.’



**Summer: Town Hall:** You and your classmates will run your own round-table meeting. Everyone will have an opportunity to voice their concerns, air their grievances, advance their Hidden Agendas, and discuss how to make your nation better. At the end, law suits and accusations will be announced.



**Fall: National Court:** You and your classmates will have the opportunity to prosecute one another for illegal activity in a series of fast-paced court cases. Verdicts will be determined by a 3-person jury and the National Judge will determine consequences. Once done, your instructor will announce when the simulated year will end.



**End-of-Year:** When your instructor ends the year, the following will occur:

- Each of you will be given good or bad Wild Cards and Die Rolls that will determine your chance events for that year. Family *deaths* will also be determined.
- Hexes will be developed if orders were submitted to do so and the program will collect taxes for your Government.
- The *five* students with the highest Well-Being Pts will earn 10 Status Points (SPs) – the points you need to win the game.
- Everyone will submit Hidden Agenda Applications to your instructor in hopes of earning SPs.
- You will look back on the simulated year and evaluate your performance, and your instructor will cross-evaluating it before finalizing your mark.



*The Civic Mirror might end at this point, or your instructor may let you play another simulated year!*