



## NYC iSchool

# iAdvocate: Making the City Livable for Aging New Yorkers

COURSE SYLLABUS

Mrs. Barber Q1

### The Challenge

Is New York City a good place to grow old? What issues do seniors face that are neglected by the city? And, what can community members, politicians, activists and YOU do to make the city more livable? According to the National Council of the Social Studies, active and responsible citizens “identify and analyze problems”, “deliberate with other people about how to define and address issues”, “take constructive and collaborative action”, and “influence institutions large and small.” Your challenge is to identify problems that senior citizens face at both the national and local level, work with others to define and address these problems, and finally, take action to solve them.

### Course Description

In this government course, students will learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and use their understanding to address problems that our elderly neighbors in New York City face every day. The final project will be a campaign to alleviate the problems of this marginalized group through active communication with the office of our city council, and brainstorming other creative, custom-designed solutions to be proposed at a final presentation. The course is designed to introduce you to the foundations and perspectives of civics and government and will ultimately enable you to synthesize, apply, and reinforce the knowledge, skills, concepts, themes, and dispositions of active citizenship. Earns 1 credit in Government.

### Course Objectives

Through this course, you will:

- Analyze the role of citizens in U.S. political systems
- Evaluate citizen and institution effectiveness in addressing social and political problems
- Assess options for addressing problems through strategy identification and complex causal reasoning
- Apply a range of deliberative and democratic strategies and procedures when working in a group to make decisions and take action in classroom and out of school contexts

### Course Timeline

Week	Topics Covered	Major Assignments
<b>1</b> <b>9/8—9/12</b>	Intro to course What is citizenship? Problems in the local, national and global community	Obtain a journal Citizenship Pyramid <u>Journal</u> - “Mini Problem” Identification
<b>2</b> <b>9/15—9/19</b>	What makes NYC run? Who represents me? Research Problem research and speed-dating	City gov’t organization chart Who represents me? research <u>Journal</u> - Reflection on problem and who can solve it



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<p><b>3</b>  <b>9/22—9/24</b>  <b>(9/25-9/26 NO SCHOOL)</b></p>	<p>What is public policy?          Letter to Representative</p>	<p>Solution graphic organizer          Letter to representative draft</p>
<p><b>4</b>  <b>9/29—10/3</b></p>	<p>Is NYC a good place to grow old?          Polling classmates          DOROT Orientation</p>	<p>Letter to representative due          Aging statistics worksheet          Poll data          Group Survey  <u>Journal-</u> Identity and age          Permission slip</p>
<p><b>5</b>  <b>10/6—10/10</b></p>	<p>First visit to DOROT          KWL Research and Presentation          News articles          Researching problem and related policies</p>	<p><u>Journal-</u> DOROT reflection, “Master problem” identification</p>
<p><b>6</b>  <b>10/14—10/17</b>  <b>(10/13 NO SCHOOL)</b></p>	<p>Polling and statistical analysis          Group letter writing          Solution development</p>	<p>Letter rewrite due          Statistical analysis            4 Mini Problem Presentations</p>
<p><b>7</b>  <b>10/20—10/24</b></p>	<p>Mini-Problem Presentation Prep          Master Problem Solution Portfolio development          Making connections with representatives</p>	<p><u>Solution portfolio Part I:</u> research, statistics, initiatives    <u>Journal-</u> Citizenship reflection (democratic strategies and procedures)            3 Mini Problem Presentations</p>
<p><b>8</b>  <b>10/27—10/31</b></p>	<p>Conference Calls with seniors          Solution Portfolio development          Merging senior and student testimony</p>	<p><u>Solution Portfolio Part II:</u> Testimony, letters, emails            3 Mini Problem Presentations</p>
<p><b>9</b>  <b>11/3—11/10</b>  <b>(11/4 NO SCHOOL)</b></p>	<p>Solution Portfolio development          Representatives connections          Presentation at DOROT</p>	<p>Permission slip  <u>Finished Solution Portfolio:</u> psa and/or other campaign material          Power Point Presentation</p>



### Course Materials

You must purchase and maintain a **journal** that will be kept in the classroom. You should also maintain an organized **notebook, folder, or section in a binder** dedicated to this module. Both will be checked regularly and will be part of your grade. Finally, you should know your Google Docs and D2L information, as they will be used for many assignments.

### Grading

<b>Mastery</b>	<b>70%</b>
Letters to Representatives, Mini Problem Presentation, Solution Portfolio	
<b>Productivity</b>	<b>20%</b>
Worksheets, Journal Entries, and Out of Class Work	
<b>Contributing Factors</b>	<b>10%</b>
Attendance, Punctuality, Participation, Effort, Civic Behavior	

### Course Expectations (Also See Rules/Procedures)

1. Students are expected to arrive on time to class each day.
2. Students are expected to be prepared for class each day, with any out-of-class assignments, a binder and /or a notebook with pockets, and a pen/pencil.
3. Students who must miss a class period for any reason are responsible for seeing the teacher and/or checking in with their group members to determine what they missed. Students are required to make up any work missed.
4. Students are expected to take their role as a group member seriously. Groups will be created based on both teacher and student input. Final Module grades will be determined, in part, by the group's cumulative efforts, so it is critical that each student play an active role in completing assignments successfully and contributing positively to the group dynamic. Structures will be put in place to record each group member's daily contributions, group members will be asked to give each other feedback regularly. Students are encouraged to contact their teachers immediately if a problem arises in the group.
5. When students are working with seniors outside of the classroom, they are expected to be on their best behavior. This is a fascinating group of people with special needs and interests, and students must be sensitive and respectful to them at all times. Any problems that arise during visits to DOROT due to student behavior will result in serious consequences.

**Incomplete Grades**

Students who receive below a 65% or fail to complete the final product will receive a 55 for the course. The student's productivity and contributing factors percentage grades will be locked in place. The students will then have the next quarter to work towards raising their mastery percentage grade.

**Late Assignments**

I will accept late assignments up to 5 school days after the original due date but they will not be accepted after that, unless completed at office hours.

**Course Resources**

- Students should be checking their iSchool email regularly, as I will communicate instructions, group feedback, etc. through email.
- Students can check D2L regularly, as assignments, templates, and resources will be posted there.
- Additional help is available during office hours (Tues., Wed., and Thurs. 3:20—4:00 in room 513). My email address is [kbarber@nycischool.org](mailto:kbarber@nycischool.org).