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# Program for High School Students

## **City of Weston:** Weston University Program

**Number and Frequency of Sessions:** Begins in October, meets monthly for seven months.

**Cost to Participate:** Free

**Maximum Class Size:** 18-22

In its seventh year, the Weston University Program is an eight-month program for students from two area high schools, adding a third in 2008. It provides participants with an opportunity to learn about state and local government – in particular, Weston's municipal government. The program is a combination of classroom and real-world experiences.

Juniors, seniors and select sophomores are offered entry into the program by submitting an essay titled "Communities Need Leaders." The field of students is narrowed by school administration, and when necessary the city's director of communications, and the final class of 18-22 students is selected.

The Weston University Program class commences each October and the class is introduced to the community during Florida City Government Week at a City Commission meeting. Students attend monthly program days. Through instruction, conversations, observation and actual experiences, students learn about the numerous city services and functions that are provided to residents. They also learn about state and local government, and about the intergovernmental and public/private partnerships that Weston has developed.

After the students have gained knowledge necessary to present and defend both sides of several agenda issues, they participate in a city commission simulation. Upon successful completion of the program, there is a graduation and students are presented unique diplomas and a memory book at a City Commission meeting.

The City of Weston recognizes the possible rewards of educating their students and encouraging them to become involved in their community. The Weston University Program is Weston's approach to providing a unique civic education that includes a very personal experience through open communication with elected officials and city department personnel.

## **Goals & Objectives**

### **Goals**

- Create a unique educational and personal experience for high school students, through open communication with government officials and departments.
- Expose students to the multiple layers of government and various career possibilities.
- Provide a civic education on government in Florida.
- To enable students to understand procedures for making their opinions and concerns known to local government.

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## Objectives

- Students will develop an appreciation for and an understanding of local government through instruction, conversations, observation of daily activities and operation and actual experiences.
- Students will gain an understanding of Weston's governmental structure and the role of residents in the decision-making process.
- Students will learn problem-solving procedures used by city government, recognizing the positions taken by city officials and the reasons behind them.
- Students will effectively participate in a City Commission simulation, after having gained knowledge throughout the program, necessary to present and defend both sides of the agenda issues.

## Program Days

8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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|----------------|---|
|                | Introduction of Class at City Commission Meeting<br>Weston Community Center                 |
| <b>Class 1</b> | Local and State Government<br>Weston City Hall  |
| <b>Class 2</b> | Law Enforcement Services<br>Weston Police Services Building                                 |
| <b>Class 3</b> | Community Services Department<br>Weston Community Center                                    |
| <b>Class 4</b> | Fire and EMS Services and Fire Marshal<br>Weston Fire Station No. 81                        |
| <b>Class 5</b> | Development Services: Planning & Zoning/Engineering<br>Calvin Giordano and Associates, Inc. |
| <b>TBA</b>     | Trip to Broward Days in Tallahassee<br>(date changes annually)                              |
| <b>Class 6</b> | More Local Government and Finance<br>Commission Simulation Preparation                      |
| <b>Class 7</b> | City Commission Simulation – Mandatory Attendance<br>Weston Community Center                |
|                | Graduation Honors at City Commission Meeting<br>Weston Community Center                     |

For more information, visit [www.westonfl.org/Content.aspx?f=/Content/CommInfo/westonUniv.aspx](http://www.westonfl.org/Content.aspx?f=/Content/CommInfo/westonUniv.aspx).