

A.P. Politics and Government



Syllabus for Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics

Course Description:

In this rigorous college-level course students will use an analytical perspective to study American government and politics. The course will focus on the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute U.S. politics. Students will become acquainted with a variety of theoretical perspectives and explanations for various political behaviors and outcomes. Current political, legal, and governmental issues will be used to illustrate major points and refine the student's understanding. An emphasis is placed on critical and evaluative thinking skills and thus students must be highly motivated and have strong reading skills.

Course Objectives:

Students successfully completing this course will:

- **Know important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics**
- **Be able to analyze and interpret basic data relevant to U.S. politics**
- **Understand typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences (including components of political behavior, the principles used to explain or justify various government structures and procedures, and the political effects of these structures).**

Primary Text

Wilson, James Q., and John J. Dilulio Jr. 2006 American Government: Institutions and policies 10th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006

Additional Reading

Articles from current newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Los Angeles Times*; news magazines such as *Time*, *the Economist*, and *the Nation*; news footage and documentaries; and various political websites.

Woll, Peter *American Government: Readings and Cases*. Boston: Longman, 2006.

Course Outline:

- Principles of Government (2 days)**
- Constitutional Foundations and underpinnings (2 week)**
- Federalism (1 week)**
- Public Opinion & Political Socialization (1 week)**
- Participation & Voting (2 week)**
- Mass Media (2 week)**
- Nominations, Elections, & Campaigns (2 week)**
- Campaign Finance Regulations & Reforms (1 week)**
- Political Parties (2 week)**
- Interest Groups (2 week)**
- Congress (2 week)**
- How a Bill Becomes a Law (2 week)**
- The Presidency (2 week)**
- The Bureaucracy (2 week)**
- The Judiciary (2 week)**
- Equality and Civil Rights (2 week)**
- Civil Liberties (1 week)**
- Public Policy (1 week)**

Review and Test Preparation (2 weeks)

Required Material

- 1.) **A three-ring binder.**
- 2.) *The American Government* textbook

Testing Schedule

Major exams will be provided after every 3 or 4 chapters. Exams will consist of multiple choice questions and timed free-response essays. Free-response essays will be carefully graded according to rubrics similar to those designed by AP Central. Quizzes will be given weekly and will be based on assigned reading as well as lecture.

Homework Policy:

If you are present when a test, essay, or quiz is assigned, you will be expected to take it at the assigned time (unless new material was covered during an excused absence). Project due dates are non-negotiable. If you are absent on a project due date you will be expected to turn in the completed project and/or present your project on the day you return to school.

Grading:

Assignments/Classwork: 25%

Essays: 35%

Tests: 40%

Rules:

1. **Respect:** Each other, the classroom, the teacher, guests, yourself.
2. **Respond:** Have an appropriate answer when called on.
3. **Responsibility:** Read assigned readings, do assignments, try, be prepared each day.
4. No eating or drinking in class except for bottled water.
5. **All school rules apply at all times.**

Check the following:

- I understand that I must pass this course with a D- or higher or I will not be able to graduate and receive a diploma. It is my responsibility to learn. If I do not understand something, I will contact the teacher and ask for help. If I fail to do so, I understand that all responsibility lies with me.
- I promise to abide by all school rules and classroom rules.
- I understand that late work may only be turned in one week after the deadline. Missed work and missed tests can be made up on an excused absence at the discretion of the teacher. I have up to one week to make up tests with an excused absence. I understand that I take a zero if I have an unexcused absence or do not make up work by the deadline set by the teacher. I promise not to cheat. I understand that doing so violates school policy. I will be given a referral and receive a zero with no make up opportunity on any work that is not original.
- I understand that Mr. Donde can contact my parents at any time. My parents and I both understand that we can contact him at any time to ask about assignments, grades, or classroom procedures.
- I understand that I and my parents have the ability to sign-up and access my grades on Zangle Parent Connect to review the most current information about my progress.

I have read through the entire syllabus and agree to be bound by its stipulations.

Student Print Name	Student Signature	Date
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I understand what is required of my child. I have recorded the teacher contact information and know that I am free to contact him at any time in order to check the progress of my child. It is my child's responsibility to work hard in this class in order to pass. I understand that he/she must pass this course in order to graduate.

Parent/Guardian Print Name	Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Best Contact Phone Number	Parent/Guardian Contact Name
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