

AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

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Cedar Grove High School
Room E223

Welcome to AP United States Government and Politics! You have elected to accept the challenge and enjoyment of an intensive study of American Government and Politics. This course explores the political theory and everyday practice that direct the daily operation of our government and shape our public policies. The purpose of this course is to prepare students to take the AP Exam for U.S. Government and Politics. The course is for all intents and purposes taught on a college level and it requires a substantial amount of reading and preparation for every class. The objectives of this course go beyond a basic analysis of how our government “works.” Students will develop a critical understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system, as well as their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

As indicated in the course title, there are two distinct but inter-related aspects of American Government that we will study; **government** (institutions, structure, and responsibilities) and **politics** (process, players, perceptions, decisions, and “the people”). Your summer preparation assignments are intended to provide an introductory understanding and class launch point for the study and integration of both of these areas.

I. Assignment:

1. Select and read 5 of the articles provided on Google Classroom.
2. Write a 1 page reaction paper for each of the articles.
 - What did you think of the article?
 - Do you agree with the author?
 - Did you learn anything new from the article?
 - Identify any unfamiliar terminology, and research the meaning. “I didn’t know” is never an excuse in my class. It is expected that if you come across something you do not know, that you will use the resources available to you to look it up.
 - Did anything in the article surprise you?
 - Did the article make you see a political issue from a perspective that you had not previously considered?

Format Rules:

1. Times New Roman (12 pt. font)
2. Heading = Name + Article title on each page
3. Single spaced
4. 1 inch margin

*Everything must be submitted to me via google classroom by midnight on **AUGUST 31st**, no exceptions. It will be graded and applied towards your first marking period grades.*

II. Start following U.S. Government and Politics news stories.

- You should be reading online news daily, and it would be beneficial to watch a variety of evening (national, not local) news broadcasts as often as possible.
 - Focus on stories that discuss Congress, the Presidency, Federal agencies, and the Supreme Court. You can also follow stories that involve national elections, politics, and politicians.
 - C-Span and C-Span 2 also cover the House and Senate live from D.C.
- Being able to discuss “real world” current events will greatly enhance your understanding of the theoretical concepts in this course. In addition, current events knowledge is assumed on the AP Exam free response section.