

AP US Government and Politics

Welcome to Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics! We are excited that you have decided to take on the challenge of college level work as high school students. We look forward to an exciting semester of hard work, learning, and fun.

This course is designed to prepare you to take the AP Government and Politics exam on **May 3, 2021**. The exam provides a way for you to compare your knowledge with high school students throughout the country. Success on the exam could lead to college credit and/or course waivers.

Course Expectations

As AP students you are held to the same academic expectations as college students. Those expectations are as follows:

- You are responsible for attending class regularly and on-time and participating with your video on unless you have parental permission to do otherwise.
- You are responsible for completing all reading assignments as scheduled.
- You are expected to complete all assignments thoroughly, thoughtfully, and on time.
- You are expected to participate in class regularly by asking questions and contributing to large and small group discussions.
- You are expected to take the AP US Government exam on **May 3, 2021**.
- You are expected to have an imagination, a sense of humor, and a positive attitude, at least most of the time.

Course Content

The course will cover the following five units:

- I. Foundations of American Democracy
- II. American Political Ideologies and Beliefs
- III. Political Participation
- IV. Interactions Amongst Branches of Government(Legislative, Executive, Judicial, Bureaucracy)
- V. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

The AP Exam

The AP US Government and Politics exam will be administered on Monday, **May 3, 2021** in the morning. The test consists of two sections, each worth 50% of your score. The first section requires you to complete 55 multiple choice questions in 80 minutes. The second section asks four mandatory essays to be completed in 100 minutes. Assignments and activities in the course are designed to prepare you for this exam.

Course Materials:

Every student will need to have:

- a three ring binder with tabs
- highlighters in at least two different colors
- pens in at least two different colors
- A separate google drive folder for the class

The primary textbook for the course will be American Government, by James Q. Wilson. We will also assign supplementary readings throughout the course. We recommend the use of technology/internet as a valuable tool to help further understand class readings and discussions; remember don't just copy/print information as a substitute for work/reading, find resources to help further your understanding of what we are studying.

Course Structure

We will begin each unit with a syllabus that outlines the topics of study, reading assignments, assignments, and due dates. Please note that readings must be completed prior to the class period listed.

We will spend class time enhancing concepts covered in your reading. We will not recap every detail of the reading. Therefore, you are responsible for asking for clarification on any points not discussed in class.

Throughout the course, you are expected to read the newspaper and watch the news on a daily basis. Weekly news shows and discussion groups are also valuable resources, as are websites and radio shows. We will be discussing media bias this year as part of critical thinking. You will also be asked to complete current events assignments regularly.

I recommend the following news sources:

National Public Radio
The Washington Post
The New York Times

Time Magazine
Wall Street Journal

Nightly News on any major
network

Our goal is to build your knowledge of government and to use that knowledge to develop your critical thinking skills. Therefore, we will use reading, writing, graded discussions, seminars, quizzes, tests and projects to build and assess your learning.

Course Grades:

Your grades will be determined by scores on assignments in the following categories:

- All assignments - 90%
 - Tests and Long-Term Projects –
 - Your tests will mimic the AP exam. They will have multiple choice questions and free-response questions.
 - Long term projects are assignments for which you are given a week or more to complete. These projects will allow you to show deep knowledge of a subject.
 - Tests and Long-term projects **may not** be reassessed.
 - Reading Quizzes: Students should take reading notes which may be used on quizzes
 - You will have weekly quizzes that assess mastery of the week's learning objectives.
 - Writing Assignments, Document Analysis, Reading Presentations, Group assignments
 - These assignments may be reassessed unless otherwise noted by your teacher.
 - Short term-projects are homework assignments and tasks that are due within 2-3 days. These assignments will require you to collect, analyze and summarize information.
- Practice & Homework– 10%
 - At times, you will be asked to do homework in order to prepare for in-class activities, this will include meeting with your study groups outside of scheduled class time and completing assigned readings ahead of time. This work will be checked for completion and overall quality

Late Work:

If you are absent, you are expected to take any missed reading quizzes and tests during end of school support time or on Wednesdays. Late assignments will be accepted until the end of each unit. For example, work done during a unit may be turned in late until the unit test, after the test, the assignment becomes a zero. Remember, late work will lose 10% which is ALWAYS better than a zero.

Attendance:

This is a college level class. It is imperative that you attend class consistently, though you can make up missed work, discourse that takes place on a daily basis is essential to learning. Due to our being online this semester, please remember to enter each Zoom meeting with your camera turned on.

Zoom Etiquette

All zoom meetings will be recorded. Any misbehavior will be subject to disciplinary action. Don't forget to leave mute ON when you first enter the chatroom. We WILL be holding breakout sessions during Zoom classes.

Breakout Etiquette

No breakout sessions will be recorded unless there is a legitimate educational reason for doing so, and if so, students and parents will be notified

All provisions of the Student Code of Conduct apply in break out rooms and will be enforced

Students acting out during break out sessions will, at a minimum, not be able to engage in breakout sessions and will be given alternate assignments.

Academic Support:

Advanced Placement courses are designed to be harder than any course you've ever taken before. We expect that you will struggle, even if you've been a straight A student up to this point. When you struggle, don't despair and don't give up, ask for help. That's what we're here for.

The email I use is William.B.Feasley@mcpsmd.net