

Course Information: AP United States Government and Politics 2011-2012
Room S202 Archbishop Ryan High School
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OBJECTIVES AND THEMES FOR AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

AP Government and Politics is a year-long course designed to prepare students to for the Advanced Placement examination administered by the College Board and Educational Testing Service. The test will be administered on Tuesday, May 8, 2012. For students who achieve a score of 3, 4, or 5, colleges (depending on the college) can grant credit for taking this course.

The course itself is designed to teach students about how people behave politically and about the design of the American political system. It includes both the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. politics and the analysis of specific examples. It also requires familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute U.S. politics.

This course will cover the following themes:

- I. Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government
- II. Political Beliefs and Behaviors
- III. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media
- IV. Institutions of National Government
- V. Public Policy
- VI. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- VII. Civil Society

TEACHING STRATEGIES/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

The course is designed for the highly motivated student. There will be a great deal of independent reading and writing, research, analytical evaluation and critical thinking. Advanced writing skills will be emphasized. Class discussions, seminars, simulations, debates, student led presentations will be used to supplement assigned reading, critical writing, and lecture.

This course is a reading course. Reading will be assigned every night and the student is responsible to keep up with the reading. It would be beneficial to take reading notes on your own for this course.

GUIDELINES

Students are responsible for reading, note taking, research assignments, discussions, unit tests, free response exercises, and reading of pertinent political science journals. All of these are required for successful completion of the course. Students should be able to express themselves with clarity and precision, know how to cite sources, and credit the phrases and ideas of others. Reading assignments will be given in advance according to the school calendar.

TEXTBOOK

Wilson, James Q. and John J. Dilulio, Jr. *American Government: Institutions and Politics*. 11th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2010.

SECONDARY RESOURCE

Serow, Ann and Everett C. Ladd. *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*. Baltimore: Lanahan Publishers, 2007.

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

- Banfield, Edward. *The Unheavenly City Revisited*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 1990.
- Beck, Glenn. *Glenn Beck's Common Sense*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009.
- Boehlert, Eric. *Bloggers on the Bus*. New York: Free Press, 2009.
- Ciglar, Allan and Loomis, Burdett. *American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.
- Ellis, Joseph. *Founding Brothers*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.
- Janda, Kenneth; Berry, Jeffrey and Goldman, Jerry. *The Challenge of Democracy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008.
- Jencks, Christopher. *Rethinking Social Policy*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.
- Judd, Dennis and Swanstrom, Todd. *City Politics Private Power and Public Policy*. New York: HarperCollins, 1994.
- Kennedy, Caroline. *A Patriot's Handbook*. New York: Hyperion, 2003.
- Kozol, Jonathan. *Savage Inequalities*. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.
- Lasser, William. *Perspectives on American Politics*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- Matthews, Christopher. *Hardball: How Politics is Played — Told by One Who Knows the Game*. New York: HarperCollins, 1989.
- O'Brien, David. *The Lanahan Readings in Civil Rights and Civil Liberties*. Baltimore: Lanahan Publishers, 1999.
- Polenberg, Richard. *One Nation Divisible*. New York: Penguin Books, 1980.
- Toobin, Jeffrey. *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.

***THE ONLY SUPPLEMENTARY READING THAT YOU NEEDED TO ATTAIN ON YOU OWN WAS *HARDBALL*. THE REST WILL BE PROVIDED AS LIMITED SELECTIONS, HANDOUTS OR IS USED BY THE INSTRUCTOR AS BACKGROUND MATERIAL.

QUARTERLY GRADING PROCEDURE

Tests.....	50%
Free Responses	15%
Assignments/Quizzes.....	15%
Analysis Paper.....	10%
Seminars/Debates.....	10%

TESTS: As per Archdiocesan guidelines, there will be at least three major grades per quarter. Tests will be unit tests, not chapter tests. There will be in class tests and take home tests.

FREE RESPONSES: A "Free Response" is a 25-minute written exercise to an in class prompt. This exercise may announced or unannounced, and the prompt will always remain a surprise. The Free Response is designed in conjunction with in class material and is administered to determine the student's written synthesis of the material. It is always written on a 5x8 index card.

ASSIGNMENTS/QUIZZES: You are responsible for your written work. Expect it to be graded. Any written assignment that you are asked to prepare will be submitted electronically, method to be specified, unless otherwise noted. Most nights, you will be asked to react to an assigned reading. For this assignment, a brief summary followed by your own analysis is always needed. Reading quizzes or quizzes on the notes will be administered as needed. We will also complete assignments using Web 2.0 tools such as wikis, readers, and social networking sites. These assignments will be graded under this category.

ANALYSIS PAPER: There will be one analysis paper assigned per quarter. The paper will be three typed pages in length, Times New Roman, 12-point font, with standard one-inch margins and will be submitted electronically. This paper, with a topic designated by the instructor, will be due at the end of every quarter.

SEMINARS/DEBATES: Three to five seminars or debates will be held per quarter. These will be graded sessions.

******ANY CHANGES TO THE GRADING PROCEDURE, ESPECIALLY DURING THE FOURTH QUARTER, WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN ADVANCE AND WILL BE MADE IN WRITING.**

FINAL GRADING PROCEDURE

First Semester Grade.....	45%
Second Semester Grade.....	45%
Final Exam (June).....	10%

CLASSROOM DECORUM NEEDS

- A notebook for this class alone for lecture notes, note-taking, discussion, summaries, and supplementary materials.
- One pack of white, lined 5x8 index cards. These are most commonly found at an office supply store or a stationery store.
- A three ring, one inch binder and a folder for handouts and other supplementary material.
- Always use a blue or black pen in this class. Pencil is unacceptable.
- A free account on www.pbworks.com
Create a free account for the class wiki. When it asks for your name only use your first name and first initial of your last name, such as Jane D. The site is public and only your classmates and I should know who you are. Once you create your account, logon to www.arapgov12.pbworks.com to request access to our class wiki. I will receive an email and will grant you access. This is very important and must be completed by Friday, September 9.
- A free account on Twitter
Create a free account on www.twitter.com. When it asks for your name only use your first name and first initial of your last name, such as Jane D. Your username should contain your initials and the last four digits of your school ID number, such as JD2020. If you already have a Twitter account, you will need to create one for this class. *Please note, that a second Twitter account needs a separate email address.* This site will be used for our class. Your account must be completed by Friday, September 9.

WEB 2.0

- As mentioned in this packet, students will be using the tools of Web 2.0 during this course. Students will be working with wikis, bookmarking sites, internet readers, and social networking sites. Any use of these sites is for educational purposes only. If you have any questions concerning the use of these tools, please contact me using the information on the front of this packet.

ABSENCES

- The student is responsible for missed assignments caused by any absence; such missed work must be made up as soon as possible. If a test is missed, the student is responsible for scheduling a make-up examination. If a student fails to do this, the grade will be recorded as ZERO. Suggestion: have the phone number and/or email addresses of two classmates handy in case of emergency. Also, my email address is listed at the front of the syllabus. Ultimately, responsibility rests with you.
- Any major assignment, such as an analysis paper, is due on the day that it is assigned, by the end of first period. If you are absent, for any reason, send your assignment into school with a responsible classmate or email it to me as an attachment, a Word document. If it is not submitted on the day that it is due, it is late, and will be graded as such.

AP PRACTICE TEST and AP TEST

- A practice AP U.S. Government and Politics test will be administered at Archbishop Ryan High School, scheduled for Saturday, March 24, 2012. The test is designed to simulate the conditions of your actual test in May. The actual AP U.S. Government and Politics is scheduled for Tuesday, May 8, 2012. As a student in this course, you are required to take both the practice test and the actual AP test for successful completion of this course.

DISCIPLINE, A MATTER OF RESPECT

- “Triple A” – ALERT, AWAKE, ATTENTIVE
- Respect yourself, your teacher, and your classmates.
- Active and informed participation is key.
- Be positive.
- Be prepared.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Honesty, academic and otherwise, is the best policy.
 - You cheat, you fail. So does your friend.
- Dress to impress.
- Be prompt and professional.
- Be on time with your work.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

- Any assignment that is submitted late will receive 55% credit for that assignment.

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC HONESTY

- Plagiarism is:
 - Copying without quotation marks; or paraphrasing without acknowledgement from another's writing.
 - Using someone else's facts or ideas without acknowledgement.
 - Handing in work for one course that you handed in for credit for another course without the written permission of both instructors.

Therefore, if one commits plagiarism, even unintentional plagiarism, the student will fail the course and appropriate individuals, institutions, and organizations will be notified.

- The students of this course will uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior. CHEATING of any kind will not be tolerated. Any cheating or use of AP Government material in a fraudulent manner will result in a failing grade and punishment through the appropriate academic channels.

PLEASE DETACH, SIGN AND RETURN BY FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2011.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me immediately. Thank you.

I have reviewed the contents of this syllabus with my son/daughter. All use of internet tools and email for the class is designed to enhance the material of the class and is utilized for educational purposes only. We understand and accept the policies of this course and agree to meet ALL requirements of this class.

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT) _____

STUDENT ID NUMBER: _____

TODAY'S DATE: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE(S) _____
