

AP US Government and Politics

Teacher: Mr. McConnell

Room: D105

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(The QR code to the right will take you to my page, scan it now, navigate to your course and bookmark it; we will use this site all year.)

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Class Expectations

The expectations in this class are pretty much the same as they have been in any class you've been in.

You should always strive to be Prompt, Prepared, Polite and Productive. You're in an AP class, so it is expected that you will act accordingly.

You should always strive to be...

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Polite: | Raise your hand and wait to be recognized to speak, get up or leave the room.
Respect everyone; yourself, other students and all campus stuff. |
| Prompt: | Be in your seat when the bell rings.
I will dismiss you when the bell rings. |
| Prepared: | Bring all supplies: binder, pen/pencils, textbook
Take care of all personal issues before or after class. |
| Productive: | Follow instructions, without comment, the first time they are given.
Stay focused and on task. If you finish early, find something productive to work on/read or let me know, I will be more than happy to oblige you with something to work on. |

Course Overview

AP U.S. Government and Politics is an advanced level course designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement exam administered by the College Board in May of each year. Final test scores are reported on a 5 point basis; students who score a 3 or better may earn college credit, advanced placement, or both, depending on their college. Success in this course can be extremely advantageous to your college application.

Despite the fact that Fort Bend ISD Schools offer this class primarily to seniors, this is a **college-level course** and will be treated as such in every respect. Students should be aware that college courses require inordinately more reading, writing, and analytical skills than their high school counterparts. It is impossible to cover all the material for the AP test in the time we have this semester. Consequently, you must read all the assigned material. Class discussions and lectures are designed to complement the text readings, *not* to cover or reinforce them. Please understand that **I will test you on reading material not covered in class and you will not be successful in this class without reading the assignments.** One of my goals for this class is to create an atmosphere of relaxed alertness, intellectual freedom and analytic discussions. This cannot be accomplished if you come to class unprepared.

Readings

In order to be successful in this course, and in college, you must be well organized and manage your time wisely. If you have a test in 2 weeks, do not wait until the week of to start reading. In speaking with current college students, this is the biggest adjustment that they had to make; figuring out when they needed to study instead of being told. I will put lecture/discussion days on the calendar, and the expectation is that you'll come in with knowledge of that topic so that it is less lecture and more discussion with your input. The assigned readings will comprise a significant portion of the exams, quizzes and essays, not to mention help you avoid embarrassment during classroom discussions.

Textbook

Edward, George C., Robert L. Lineberry, and Martin P. Wattenberg. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. New York: Longman. 2002.

Supplies

For this class you will need the following:

- 1 inch binder or large notebook

- If you plan on taking notes digitally, you need to invest in a decent note-taking app; see my website for suggestions

- Gmail account with some version of your first and last name; we will create this in class the first week
- USB drive or something else to save work on
- If everyone could bring in 1 box of tissue, that should cover us for the year.

Grading Policy

Students who take this course should realize that AP courses are taught and graded at the college level; they significantly exceed the demands and expectations of typical high school courses.

Major grades: 3-4 major grades per nine weeks with at least 2 being 50 question multiple choice tests

Daily Grades: - 1-2 FRQ quizzes per unit

- 1-2 online Skyward assignments per unit
- 1 supplemental reading per unit @ 25 points each, to be totaled at the end of the grading period
- 1 current event per unit @ 25 points each, to be totaled at the end of the grading period
- other assignments may be assigned as needed

* I do not “bump” grades at the end of the nine-weeks or semester. You earn what you earn, even if it ends in a 9.

Late Work

Because you are enrolled in a college level class, it is your responsibility to complete your assignments in a timely manner. Due dates will be posted (nine weeks calendar, written in class) and I will announce them numerous times. When you are given a due date, put it in your calendar, phone, computer, etc. **Bottom line, turn things in on time.** Your college professors and bosses will expect things to be on time, so you might as well start now.

All missed work and assessments are the responsibility of the student when they are absent from school. A student who is absent on the class day before a regularly scheduled assessment will be responsible for completing the assignment on the regularly scheduled day and time. This includes major tests and projects, research papers, etc., where the deadline has been posted in advance. The teacher has the discretion to grant a longer period of time to make up work if there are extenuating circumstances. Absences on the days of Unit Exams and in-class Essays must be made up within two days, and are subject to change from the format given in class. Work that is not made up within that timeframe will be marked as a zero. Makeup work cannot be completed in class.

Standards For Work

Yes, we live in a collaborative world; you will work with others in college and in the working world and it is expected that you will collaborate with others in school. Understand that collaborating does not mean copying or turning in the same work. Any student caught cheating, which includes any form of plagiarism on submitted work or collusion with student in other sections of APGOV will receive a zero on the assignment and an automatic disciplinary referral. (Please see the RPHS Honor Code for Social Studies), and it could have an impact on other aspects of your academic career. When students submit identical papers, both will receive consequences. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, see me **before** submitting your work. When it comes to this class, I want to hear what *you* have to say, not someone else.

Tutorials

Please see the Tutorials section on my Class Policies page.

Parents

I look forward to having a great year with you and your student. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.