

Advanced Placement U.S. Government & Politics



- **Course Description:**

Students will develop an analytical perspective on contemporary government and politics in the United States. This course 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. Topics include: Constitutional underpinnings of U.S. government; political beliefs and behaviors; political parties, interest groups, and mass media; institutions of the national government; public (domestic and foreign) policy; and civil rights and civil liberties.

- **Course Expectations:**

Our normal schedule will be a chapter every 7-10 days. The chapter will include about 20 pages of textbook reading, as well as 3-5 supplemental readings of about 5 pages each. Tests include a multiple choice section as well an AP-level essay. An awareness of current events is one key to understanding our contemporary political system, so students will keep a current events notebook that will be discussed each Monday.

- **Special Projects:**

The class is aimed at enhancing students' knowledge of U.S. government and politics, with the goal of having them succeed on the AP Exam in May. While the bulk of the course consists of direct instruction enhanced by discussion, there are opportunities for simulations such as a mock Senate and mock Supreme Court.

- **Beyond the general education course:**

The reading level of this course is more advanced than a general education course, the workload is more rigorous, and the discussions are more analytical in nature (less "who" and more "why").

- **Other:**

AP U.S. Government & Politics requires a motivated student. Through consistent effort, achievement, in the form of a good grade **and** a high score on the AP exam, is possible.