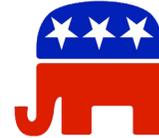




AP U.S. GOV & POLITICS



~Course Guidelines and Overview~

Instructor: Mr. Schaefer

Room #: 508

School/year: Olympia H. S. – Fall 2014

About the course: This semester-long class will give students the analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States necessary in the preparation for the College Board's AP Exam. It includes both the study of terminology and general concepts used to define and interpret U. S. government and politics and the analysis of specific examples. It also requires familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute U. S. government and politics. Students will learn to understand typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences, and be able to analyze and interpret basic data relevant to U. S. government and politics.

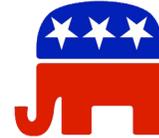
***Important note:** In May, students enrolled in this course will be given the opportunity to take the *Advanced Placement Examination*, a two hour and 25 minute multiple-choice and free-response test created and graded by the College Board. The fee for this test is about \$90 (financial aid is available; if this is an issue see your AP coordinator.) If you pass this examination with a creditable mark, and we expect most of you to do so, the College Board will recommend to the college of your choice that you be given credit (3-10 credits) for a college survey course in American Government and Politics and placement into higher-level courses. Many, but not all, colleges give both placement and credit; some give only placement; others do not acknowledge the Advanced Placement program at all. If you fail to pass this examination you will still have earned your high school credits and will have had the interesting and challenging opportunity to develop your abilities far beyond the level you might have attained in a less demanding course.

Expectations:

1. Come to class *prepared* each and every day! This includes the completion of all written assignments as well as readings for class discussion/participation/quizzes and exams.
2. Unexcused late work will be accepted for half credit until the Friday before the last day of the semester.
3. You are responsible for work missed during absences. If ill, you will have the number of days missed to make up the work for full credit. If you know you are going to be gone (for sports, music, etc.) you **MUST** get your assignments before you go. **Exams** may only be made up for excused absences and must be taken *the day you return*.
4. **Plagiarism** of any sort will not be tolerated and will result in a loss of grade and referral to the OHS discipline policy. This includes copying another student's homework. Be careful!
5. You are expected to refrain from the following in class:
-Profanity -character attacks -use of cell phones, headphones, video games, etc.
6. OHS attendance and discipline policies will be enforced! See your student handbook.

Grading scale: (SCORES ARE NOT ROUNDED!)

A	= 93.33-100%	C+	= 76.67-79.99%
A-	= 90.0-93.32%	C	= 73.33-76.66%
B+	= 86.67-89.99%	C-	= 70.0-73.32%
B	= 83.33-86.66%	D+	= 66.67-69.99%
B-	= 80.0-83.32%	D	= 60.0-66.66%



Government and Politics Course Outline

Unit #1: Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government (ch. 1-3)

- A. Considerations that influenced the formation and adoption of the Constitution
- B. Separation of powers
- C. Federalism
- D. Theories of democratic and comparative governments

Unit #2: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (ch. 4 & 5)

- A. The development of civil liberties and civil rights by judicial interpretation
- B. Knowledge of substantive rights and liberties
- C. The impact of the Fourteenth Amendment on constitutional rights and liberties

Unit #3: Public Opinion, Elections, & the Media (ch. 6, 10, & 7)

- A. Beliefs that citizens hold about their government and its leaders
- B. Processes by which citizens learn about politics
- C. The nature sources and consequences of public opinion
- D. The ways in which citizens vote and otherwise participate in political life
- E. Factors that influence citizens to differ from one another in terms of political beliefs and behaviors
- F. The mass media
 - 1. The functions and structures of the media
 - 2. The impacts of media on politics

Unit #4: Political Parties, Nominations & Campaigns, & Interest Groups (ch. 8, 9, 11)

- A. Political parties and elections
 - 1. Functions
 - 2. Organization
 - 3. Development
 - 4. Effects on the political process
 - 5. Electoral laws and systems
- B. Interest groups including political action committees (PACs)

Unit #5: Congress & The Presidency (Ch. 12 & 13)

- A. Congress
 - 1. Organization
 - 2. Powers unique to each house
 - 3. Types of committees
 - 4. Relationship with constituents and other groups
- B. The Presidency
 - 1. Powers and limitations
 - 2. Role as party leader, chief executive, chief legislator, commander in chief, crisis manager

Unit #6: The Federal Budget & The Bureaucracy (Ch. 14 & 15)

- A. The Federal Budget
 - 1. Sources of Revenues & Major Expenditure
 - 2. The budgetary process
 - 3. Causes of growing deficits
- B. The Bureaucracy
 - 1. Who are they?
 - 2. The four types of federal agencies
 - 3. Iron triangles

Unit #7: The Federal Courts (ch. 16)

- A. Describe the functions of federal district courts, courts of appeals, and the U. S. Supreme Court
- B. Summarize the procedure of the Supreme Court including the “rule of 4” and opinion writing.
- C. Analyze the contrasting positions of judicial restraint and judicial activism.

COURSE FINAL: MOCK AP EXAM

AP EXAM – May 12th (MORNING SESSION)