

AP American Government and Politics / Honors Economics

Summer Assignment, Information and Recommendations: 2017-18

The Course

This course is about citizenship. It is our goal to have each of you leave this class having the knowledge needed to participate meaningfully in our American political culture. For our society to remain strong and free we must have our citizens constantly participating in a dialogue that improves America. This means that we all take the duties of citizenship seriously by constantly questioning our government institutions and vigilantly protecting our natural rights. The first step in fulfilling these duties is acquiring the conceptual knowledge needed to understand government and critically think about its purpose.

Summer Notebook Requirement

The most significant problem students have encountered in the past has been a lack of familiarity with, or genuine interest in, politics and economics. **If you intend to take this course you must overcome this.** In order to help you do this you will be required to keep up with political news on national and international issues over the summer. There are a variety of ways to do this. You can read a news magazine¹ or one of the major newspapers² on a regular basis. You can watch television, but we ask that, for this assignment, you focus on serious news. PBS has a nightly show: [The News Hour](#). On Friday nights PBS offers a half hour weekly summary of political news: [Washington Week in Review](#). On PBS, also see: [Moyers](#) and [Need to Know](#). [BBC NEWS](#) from the UK is often available on various stations and is excellent: check your cable or online for times. On the radio you could listen to [Left Right & Center on KCRW \(89.9\)](#) every Friday. This 30 minute show features political commentary from intelligent representatives of very different political perspectives. It is available on the web and as a podcast so you can listen whenever and wherever you like. (Check the [LR&C site](#) for podcasting links and streaming audio archives.) You can also catch a lot of [public radio](#) (NPR) programming on [KPCC \(89.3\)](#) throughout the day. Some of it is pretty good. Many of these programs are also available as podcasts. Overall, you should **vary your sources**: you will not get full credit if you use only one source for all entries. Inappropriate sources will receive no credit.

Notebook Assignment

Obviously the manner in which you keep up with the news is up to you. The summer is about 9 weeks long. We require that you keep a **NEWS NOTEBOOK** (on American politics and economics) that includes at least 5 entries of about one *typed* page each. **Do not record “news” of kidnappings, car chases, robberies, or celebrity deaths.** As sad as these events are bound to be they will have nothing to do with this course and will be treated as if you recorded nothing at all. Here are some examples of interesting headlines from the LA and NY *Times* that would **grab your attention**: “Court Extends Curbs on the Death Penalty in a Florida Ruling;” “Senate Democrats Turn Focus to Local Issues for Midterms;” “House overwhelmingly approves bill to curb NSA domestic spying.” On the other hand here are some headlines from the same papers that would be **safe to ignore**: “Focus on Isla Vista killer is criticized;” “Shelly Sterling reportedly trying to sell the Clippers, and quickly;” “Ex-Girl Scouts official gets prison time in embezzlement case.”

At the top of each page - date each entry - and fully identify the source or sources of the information: that means title of the story, publication, and author (if available). Only writing out a long web URL, <http://www.latimes.com/world/afghanistan-pakistan/la-fg-obama-troops-afghanistan-20140528-story.html#page=1>: is **not** a citation. You will need to make appropriate **commentary** along with your summary of events. You should be analytic in your commentary. What is the story saying about the way American politics and/or economics work? Please write legibly.

Do not procrastinate. **Do not even think of copying another student’s notebook.** If you are caught you will begin your senior year with an unpleasant plagiarism conviction. Each entry must be 100% your own work!

When is this Notebook Due?

The **NEWS NOTEBOOK** will be due **Thursday, August 24th**. Submit your News Notebook to **turnitin.com**:

Turnitin.com	
Class Id:	15460176
Key/Password:	Irvine

¹ The choices are varied, but we suggest one of the following: [Time](#), [Newsweek](#), [US News and World Report](#) or [The Economist](#). All of these are more or less objective in their reporting. American based magazines (that are still in print form) are very inexpensive. *The Economist* may be the best, but it is British and expensive (most stories are available online for free though).

² Newspapers of record include [The Los Angeles Times](#), [The New York Times](#), [Wall St. Journal](#), and [The Washington Post](#).

Failure to turn in your notebook will result in a zero on the assignment. A rubric is provided on the following page.

But I don't like the news...

If you don't actually enjoy watching, listening or reading any these suggested sources keep in mind that [Last Week Tonight](#), [The Daily Show with Trevor Noah](#) and [The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore](#) and other satirical TV shows will seem a lot funnier if you understand what they are talking about. And, at the very least, keeping up with the news will make you feel more informed, might impress your friends and family, and will certainly help you contribute to class discussions. AP Gov is not a history class. Thus, current political developments are a regular part of the curriculum, and are reflected on the AP exam. You will not be successful in the class if you only read the textbook.

Strongly Advised Summer Reading:

The AP Exam

It is expected that those taking this course will take the AP Government and Politics Exam. However, no matter what you are still obliged to take part in exam preparation and to take practice AP exams (both multiple choice and free response) that will count in grades for both semesters.

AP Gov Review Book

It is highly recommended that you get a copy of one of the many AP review books available. In our opinion the best are those published by Crash Course (the shortest), The Princeton Review or Barron's. [Buying them through Amazon.com](#) will be cheaper. Note that if you buy more than \$25 worth of materials at once there is no shipping fee – if you remember to click all of the right buttons. Overall, a review book from the last couple of years is fine.

Name: _____

Per: _____

Date: _____

Summer News Notebook Assignment – Rubric

Notebook includes a minimum of 5 entries on <i>relevant</i> topics in US national politics/economics, or key int'l issues; irrelevant entries receive a zero!	30	
Entries are approximately one page each. Notebook is well organized and easy to follow, and entries are spaced out properly throughout the summer.	10	
Appropriate news sources (not some random guy's blog) are <i>used</i> and <i>cited</i> (title, author, source and date, not just a long URL); variety of sources is used	10	
Notebook includes some relevant student commentary, beyond just summary of political/economic issues	10	
TOTAL POSSIBLE	60	

News Entry Dates

- June 12th-25th
- June 26th – July 9th
- July 10th – 23rd
- July 24th – August 6th
- August 7th – 20th

TEMPLATE

News Article 1 June 12 – 25

AP Government – Summer News Article Journal

Date:	Source:
Title:	Author:
Summary of Article:	
Commentary / Reaction / How does this article relate to American government and/or economics? (Apply what you learned through your research of the Constitution)	

Summer Reading Assignment

The United States Constitution Scavenger Hunt

Name: _____

Directions: AP United States Government students should read the Constitution and complete the following questions directly on this handout. This assignment is **due August 24th (A-Day) or August 25th (B-Day)**. We will discuss this during the first week of school and **there will be a quiz on the material** during the first week of school.

PART I: THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in sentence format in the chart below.

Article I	
Article II	
Article III	
Article IV	
Article V	
Article VI	
Article VII	

2. Compare Article I with Article II. Which Article is longer and more detailed? Why do you think that this is the case?
3. Identify two powers denied from Congress in the Constitution.
4. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House?
5. What eligibility standards does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?
6. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for the President?
7. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called *expressed powers*.
 - a. Identify two expressed powers of the President:
 - b. Identify the expressed powers of the Vice-President:
 - c. Identify five expressed powers of Congress:
8. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of the government must have the ability to limit the power of the other branches. Look at the first three articles of the Constitution and identify one of each type of checks and balances. Indicate where each power is listed in the Constitution.
 - a. A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch:
 - a. This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?
 - b. A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch:
 - a. This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?
 - c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch:
 - a. This power can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?

- d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch:
 - a. This power can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?

- e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch:
 - a. This power can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?

- f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch:
 - a. This power can be found in what article/section of the Constitution?

- 9. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

- 10. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

Part II: The Amendments to the Constitution

The first ten amendments to the Constitution, also known as the Bill of Rights, protect citizens from an abuse of power by the government. The only way to change them is to amend the Constitution through a democratic process. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

1. Outline the general purpose of the first ten amendments.

1st Amendment	
2nd Amendment	
3rd Amendment	
4th Amendment	
5th Amendment	
6th Amendment	

7th Amendment	
8th Amendment	
9th Amendment	
10th Amendment	

2. What is the total number of Amendments to the Constitution?
3. Summarize the last amendment to the Constitution.
4. When were the first ten amendments to the Constitution ratified?
5. Which amendment(s) address and protect the rights of women?
6. Summarize what this/these amendment(s) say.
7. Which amendment(s) protect the rights of African Americans?
8. Summarize what this/these amendment(s) say.
9. Summarize the sixteenth amendment.
10. Summarize the seventeenth amendment.
11. How were U.S. Senators chosen before the seventeenth amendment?
12. Identify by number, amendments that

- a. Extend individual rights
- b. Extend civil rights (including voting rights)
- c. Prohibited certain practices by states
- d. Changed specific language in the Constitution

13. Summarize the twenty-second amendment.

14. Outline the sequence of events that occurs in presidential succession according to the twenty-fifth amendment.

15. Summarize the twenty-sixth amendment.

16. How many times does the word “privacy” exist in the Constitution Articles/amendments)?

17. In the first amendment, what are the two separate clauses that detail religion?

18. What do each of these clauses mean?