

## **AP AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & POLITICS (APGOVT)**

### **I. Introduction**

This is essentially a college course that is rather demanding, and is one that requires you to put forth your best effort on a DAILY basis. Due to the challenging nature of the course, an extra grade point will be added to the grade that you earn here. As per CCA's ESLR's, you will have ample opportunity to demonstrate that you are *academically competent learners, effective communicators, productive individuals, culturally aware individuals, and involved citizens*.

**II. Textbook:** Keep your textbook at home. I may ask you to bring it in occasionally, but not often.

### **III. Course of Study**

- A. Constitutional Underpinnings (ch. 1-3, Federalist 51)
- B. Political Beliefs/Political Behaviors (ch. 4, 7, 8, 10)
- C. Interest Groups/Political Parties, Media (ch. 9, 11, 12; Federalist 10)
- D. Institutions (ch. 13-16, Federalist 78)
- E. Public Policy (ch. 17-21)
- F. Civil Liberties/Civil Rights (ch. 5, 6)

In your binder, separate your notes for these units by tab dividers so that you will be organized to prepare for the AP test. **THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!**

### **IV. Attendance**

- A. Regular attendance is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL in this class.
- B. I will strictly enforce the school attendance policy. Students with high numbers of absences may be referred to administration for the attendance review board.
- C. If you have an unexcused tardy, you will not be able to take the daily quiz, and will therefore earn a zero on that quiz.
- D. Tardies: You must be IN YOUR ASSIGNED SEAT when the bell rings.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Tardy = Verbal Warning, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tardy = Call Home, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tardy = Saturday Sch

### **V. Makeup Exams**

- A. In the case of an excused absence, students will have opportunities to makeup missing tests throughout the term. These dates are TBD but they will be approximately twice a month
- B. All makeup tests will consist of **1** FRQ.

### **VI. Classroom Management**

- A. I CANNOT OVERSTATE THE IMPORTANCE OF TAKING EXCELLENT CLASS NOTES. THEY WILL BE OF GREAT HELP NOT ONLY FOR TEST PREPARATION THIS QUARTER, BUT ALSO FOR REVIEWING FOR THE AP TEST IN MAY.
- B. Each one of you is expected to take an active part in class on a daily basis. When you enter this room, be prepared to think, ask questions, and make comments.
- C. DO NOT BRING FOOD OR DRINK TO CLASS
- D. I do not want to either SEE or HEAR electronic devices such as cell phones or iPods. If I either SEE or HEAR them, I will confiscate them and your parent must come to school and retrieve them. I do not need to HEAR such devices to confiscate them. Merely SEEING students check messages, send text messages, play games, or otherwise fiddling around with them will result in confiscation. There are no exceptions. Please do not ask for one.
- E. If you have difficulties with this class, feel free to drop by for extra help.
- F. If special problems arise, see me as soon as possible so that we can work things out.

### **VII. Homework**

- A. Expect nightly reading assignments. TAKE THESE SERIOUSLY! You will be “in the dark” during the lectures and discussions if you do a poor job on the reading or (gulp!) do not do the reading at all! You will also bomb the daily quiz that is based upon the previous night’s reading.
  - B. Late work is not accepted, except in the case of an excused absence.
  - C. If you miss a bellwork due to an excused absence, make sure you write the number of the bellwork at the top of your notes
- VIII. **Cheating:** this is defined as gaining an unfair advantage, or trying to do so.  
Consequences: A zero on the assignment, possible transfer out of the class, and the loss of respect from not only me, but your other teachers, as well. (Yes, word does get out.)

IX. **Grading Categories**

Participation Points	4%
Coursework	33%
Vocabulary	13%
Unit Exams	35%
Final Exam	15%

X. **Grades**

- A. I use the following grading scale:

92	=	A	72	=	C
90	=	A-	70	=	C-
88	=	B+	68	=	D+
82	=	B	62	=	D
80	=	B-	60	=	D-
78	=	C+	below 60	=	F

- B. You quarter grade will be based upon the following factors:

- Daily Quizzes
  - Unit Vocabulary Quizzes
  - 6 Unit Tests
  - Final Exam (Covers all units)
- a. Each daily quiz will be based upon the previous night’s reading assignment. You may use any notes that you take. These quizzes are cumulatively worth many points, so your grade will suffer if you consistently do poorly on them. If you miss a quiz due to an excused absence, you are to turn in a DETAILED outline of the reading assignment upon which the quiz was based.
  - b. There will be a vocabulary quiz towards the end of each unit. When you come to the day before the scheduled unit exam, just expect to take a quiz on the terms in bold print from the assigned reading on that unit. If you miss a vocabulary quiz due to an excused absence, the makeup assignment is to list, define, and write an example of each of the unit terms in bold print. Vocabulary will be quizzed informally every day.
  - c. Most unit tests will consist of a Multiple Choice section (50%) and a Free Response section (50%). If you miss a unit test due to an excused absence, you will make up the test on one of the two makeup test dates. ALL MAKEUP TESTS ARE STRICTLY OF THE FREE RESPONSE VARIETY AND WILL BE TAKEN DURING LUNCH.
  - d. The final exam will be comprehensive, i.e., it will cover material from the entire semester.

**XI. Contact and Support**

- A. I am here to help you succeed! You can come by before class, during lunch, or after school. It is advantageous to schedule time to meet in advance.
- B. If you have questions regarding your grade in the class, or concerns in general, **YOU** (the student) need to contact me. This is a college-level course.

**XII. Suggestions for Success**

- A. Come to class EVERY DAY, ON TIME, and PREPARED
  - Pens (blue/black), lined paper, binder w/ dividers, sharpened pencils (exam day only), erasers (preferably white)
- B. Be organized!
- C. Ask questions
- D. FOLLOW THE NEWS: Note the title of the course: AP Government & **Politics**. Don't forget this. If you correlate theoretical concepts of the course to actual events, you are much more likely to understand and retain material .... Oh, and you'll do a much better job of the FRQ's!
  - a. Change your homepage to newsmap.jp
  - b. Watch a network news broadcast that concentrates on national and international news
  - c. Watch news oriented programs
    - 60 Minutes (ABC, Sunday, 7 pm)
    - Dateline (NBC, Sunday, 7 pm) ... oh, how to choose!!
    - O'Reilly Factor (FOX)
    - Lou Dobbs Tonight (CNN, 4 pm)
    - Election Center (CNN, 5pm)
    - Hardball with Chris Matthews (MSNBC)
  - d. Watch the Daily Show and/or Colbert Report
  - e. Read weekly news magazines
    - Newsweek, Time, Economist, The Week, US News & World Report
  - f. Listen to NPR or politically oriented shows (Rush Limbaugh)
  - g. Saturday morning news programs: all about money & the economy
  - h. Read the LA Times, NY Times, NY Post, Washington Post, Washington Times, Chicago Tribune

I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the aforementioned items on this syllabus.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Student Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian Signature)