



AP Government and Politics

Course Description

This college-level course prepares students to take the **AP exam for American Government and Politics**. The course is designed to teach students to understand and be able to critically analyze important concepts through a more in-depth study of American government and politics. As a college-level course, it is rigorous and demanding. It requires that students put forth their best effort on a daily basis, both in class and outside of class by completing homework. I welcome all students who are willing to work hard, but encourage students to consider another course if they are not willing to review **at least** 1 to 2 hours a night; enhance their understanding of concepts by listening to or reading the news, spend time outside of class experiencing politics and government in action and coming to class and participating in class on a consistent basis. This course is a study of the basic beliefs and ideals which underlie American representative democracy; its historical roots; and how its legal, governmental and economic institutions affect public policy at the state, national, and international levels. Special emphasis is given to preparing the student for the **College Board's Advanced Placement Exam in American Government and Politics on May 9, 2017**. This will necessitate regular writing assignments (at least one per unit) in the AP Government and Politics FRQ writing style with instructor editing and feedback.

Course Objectives

- A) Knowledge of the principles, institutions and processes of the national, state levels of government in the United States
- B) The ability to engage in analysis, synthesis, and effective communication in reading, writing, discussion and in oral presentations. Students will create digital projects that analyze and synthesize the concepts of Federalism, Voting Behaviors, Presidential Power and Roles, Congressional Committee System and Organization, Judicial Review, Appropriation and Budgeting and Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. These digital projects will allow students a more in depth analysis and understanding of new and previously learned information.
- C) Understanding of the organization and power of the Congress, the Presidency, the Judiciary, and the Bureaucracy. This includes the formal and informal powers of these institutions as well as the ways in which they relate to each other.
- D) Familiarity with the complexities and challenges to the US Constitution and development of Federalism. Including creating and editing, individually and in groups, a digital project analyzing and synthesizing Federalism by studying current issues debated in our political system.
- E) An awareness of his or her "role" as a citizen, and how and why his participation is important to the continued success of our governmental system and the crucial role individuals and groups have in any election. Analysis and interpretation of past and future voting behaviors and the possible consequences for the nation.
- F) Knowledge of the historical evolution of the United States party system, the functions and structures of political parties and the effects they have on the political process and elections. Included in this area is an understanding and analysis of the various kinds of interest groups and how the media impact and shape such opinion regarding political culture and behavior.
- G) Understanding of the court system and evolution of public policy concerning civil liberties, civil rights and economic policy.
- H) Data Analysis and Interpretation will provide the opportunity to synthesize new and previous information in order to create a clearer understanding and a more meaningful learning and to provide for greater understanding of the curriculum.
- I) The ability to pass and excel on the AP Government and Politics exam given on May 12, 2015.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Instructor: John Costa

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<COURSE WEBSITE> www.ahsapgov.weebly.com

Room Number: J8

PHONE 352-8316 EXTENSION # 61065

Methodology

Assessments will include exams and quizzes based on student reading, lectures, notes, vocabulary and discussion; Free Response Questions (FRQ's) (will be written at least once per unit) that call for analysis, synthesis and evaluation of course content. Each student will present a Current Connexxions Report that analyzes and connects a current event issue on our nation's political agenda to a students' previous learning. The Current Connexxions report will also provide

regular analysis of information relevant to US Government and Politics including contemporary news sources.

Students will create digital projects that analyze and synthesize the concepts of Federalism, Voting Behaviors, Interest Group Fundraising and Influence, Presidential Power and Roles, Congressional Committee System and Organization, Judicial Review, Appropriation and Budgeting, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

All digital projects and presentations will have students analyze and synthesize information in order to create a better understanding and create new contexts for previously learned information. Each student will create a four part book report each semester about a book of choice regarding current or past political issues. The four part book report will require that students use new information from the book to gain new interpretation of course information and concepts. Each Unit of Study will include Data Analysis and Interpretation of charts, graphs and spreadsheets that will promote greater understanding of the curriculum. Students will include at least one Data Analysis and Interpretation

chart, complete with explanation, analysis and interpretation, embedded in one of their digital projects. Lectures will be given in order to develop the course curriculum and make clear any themes, concepts, objectives, charts, graphs, readings and spreadsheets not understood by the students. Group discussions and presentations as well as formal Socratic Seminar discussions based on primary and secondary readings; graphs, charts and spreadsheets and other sources

will be used in class.

Weighted Grading System

All assignments will be placed under one of the following categories and weighted in accordance to the percent of the overall course grade. Rubrics, scoring guides and specific expectations will be provided for most assignments.

Final Exam 10% - week of January 12-14, 2017

Quarter Final 10% - week of October 19-23, 2016

Weekly Quizzes (Notes and Reading) 10% - at least one per week (Multiple choice, short answer, fill in blank)

Unit Tests with FRQ's 10% - after each unit of study (MC and FRQ) -6 UNITS

Digital Project and Presentations 10% - once per semester individual or group

Data Analysis and Interpretation Worksheets 5% - at least one per unit

Participation 15% - each day and week in class and outside

Homework (Vocabulary and Reading) 30% - daily - approximately 5-9 hours a week

LETTER GRADES TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE OVERALL SEMESTER %

99% - 90% = A

89% - 80% = B

79% - 70% = C

69% - 60% = D

All students and parents are encouraged to check their grade on AERIES each week. Please allow Mr. Costa 24 to 48 hours to grade and record the latest daily assignment or any make-up assignment on AERIES. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE!**

Textbooks

1. George C. Edwards, Martin P. Wattenburg, and Robert L. Lineberry.
Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy 13th ed. (Advanced Placement edition)
New York: Pearson Longman Publishers, 2008.

Supplemental Textbook

Students are strongly encouraged to buy a personal copy of **one** the following book ---
CRASH COURSE - AP US GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS by Larry Krieger

Course Materials

Students will need the following course materials for a successful classroom experience-

- PENCILS/ERASERS AND PENS- MANY**
- HAND HELD PLASTIC PENCIL SHARPENERS- SEVERAL**
- ASSORTED COLOR HIGHLIGHTERS- 6 PACK**
- LINED PAPER FOR WRITING- A LOT**
- 2 or 2 ½ INCH 3 RING BINDER WITH AT LEAST 8 DIVIDERS FOR YOUR NOTEBOOK**
- ANY OTHER SUPPLIES YOU DEEM NECESSARY TO YOUR SUCCESS**

Rules of Conduct

- 1. BE ON TIME AND BE PREPARED-** late students will be marked tardy
- 2. NO JUNK FOOD-** water, coffee, tea, health snacks are ok
- 3. NO PUT DOWNS-** personal, racial, religious, classist, sexist, etc...
- 4. NO SWEARING-** immediate exit from class
- 5. NO CHEATING –** first offense =no credit for that assignment (placed on probation)
- 6. NO SMART PHONES OR LAPTOPS WITHOUT TEACHER PERMISSION-**red, yellow & green
- 7. NO LATE WORK ACCEPTED UNLESS STUDENT OR PARENT CONTACTS THE TEACHER THE DAY OF THE ABSENCE**
- see first page for contact information

GENERAL COURSE OUTLINE AND PRIMARY READING ASSIGNMENTS

UNIT I: CONSTITUTIONAL UNDERPINNINGS OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT

(Chapters 1, 2 and 3)

- A. Considerations that influenced the formulation and adoption of the U.S. Constitution
- B. Separation of powers and checks and balances
- C. Federalism and different types and kinds of Federalism
- D. Theories of democratic government and citizenship

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 5-15%

READINGS

Textbook – Edwards: Chapters 1, 2 and 3

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 4 Figure 1.1 ‘The Political Disengagement of College Students Today’

Woll Reader:

James Madison, “Federalist Paper: 51”

“Founding Fathers: Reform Caucus in Action,” pp. 3–30

Chapter 3: “Federalist Papers,”

“How Not to Read the Constitution,” pp. 4–49

“Antifederalists,” pp. 95–98

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Federalism”

Assessment: UNIT TEST 1= 30 Multiple Choice Questions and FRQ

UNIT II: POLITICAL CULTURE, BELIEFS & BEHAVIORS

(Chapter 6)

- A. Beliefs and behaviors of individuals
- B. Processes by which citizens learn about political culture and politics
- C. Factors that influence citizens to differ from one another in terms of political beliefs and behaviors
- D. The ways how and why citizens act and otherwise participate in political life

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 10-20%

READINGS:

Textbook – Edwards: Chapter 6

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 180- Figure 6.1 ‘The Coming Minority Majority’

Woll Reader:

V.O Key, Jr., “The Responsible Electorate” p. 226

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Voter Behavior”

Assessment: UNIT TEST 2= 31 Multiple Choice Questions and FRQ

UNIT III: POLITICAL PARTIES, ELECTIONS, INTEREST GROUPS AND THE MEDIA

(Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11)

- A. Political parties and elections (including their functions, organization, historical development and effects on the political process)
- B. Interest Groups (including PAC's and NGO's)
 - a. The range of interests that are or are not represented
 - b. The activities of interest groups
 - c. The effects of interest groups on the political process
- C. The mass media, including the functions and structures of the media and the impact of the media on politics

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 10-20%

READINGS:

Textbook – Edwards: Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 229- Figure 7.1 ‘The Incredible Shrinking Sound Bite’

Woll Reader:

James Madison, “Federalist 10”	p. 176
V.O. Key, Jr., “A Theory of Critical Elections	p. 201
Benjamin Ginsberg & Martin Shefter, “Politics by Other Means	p. 212
<i>Buckley v. Valeo</i>	p. 231

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Interest Groups Fundraising and Influence”

Assessment: UNIT TEST 3= 32 Multiple Choice Questions and FRQ

UNIT IV: THE CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENCY, THE BUREAUCRACY

(Chapters 12, 13, 15)

- A. The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of powers
- B. Relationships among these three institutions
- C. Links between these institutions and political parties, interest groups, public opinion and the media

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 35-45%

READINGS:

Textbook – Edwards: Chapters 12, 13, 15

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 409- Figure 13.5 ‘Presidential Vetoes’

Woll Reader:

Richard Neustadt, “Presidential Power”	p. 296
Constitutional Democracy and Bureaucratic Power	p.351
James Q. Wilson, “The Rise of the Bureaucratic State”	p. 356
Richard F. Fenno, Jr., “If, as Ralph Nader Says, Congress is the ‘The Broken Branch,’ How Come We Love Our Congressmen So Much?”	p. 404

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Presidential Power or Congressional Committee System”

FINAL EXAM = 60 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS AND 2 FRQ's

UNIT V: CIVIL LIBERTIES, CIVIL RIGHTS AND THE COURT SYSTEM

(Chapter 4, 5, 16)

- A. The development of civil liberties and civil rights by judicial interpretation, including, for example:
- A. First Amendment freedoms
 - B. The rights of the accused
 - C. Minority rights and women’s rights
 - D. Impact of the 14th Amendment on the constitutional development of rights and liberties
 - E. Key court decision and legislation effecting civil rights and liberties

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 10-20%

READINGS:

Textbook – Edwards: Chapters 4, 5, 16

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 145- Figure 5.1 ‘Supreme Court’s Standards for Classification Under the equal Protection Clause’

Woll Reader:

<i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i>	p. 116
<i>Brown v. Topeka Board of Education</i>	
<i>Engle v. Vitale</i>	p. 147
<i>Roe v. Wade</i>	p. 156
<i>Marbury v. Madison</i>	p. 432

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and Judicial Review”

Assessment: UNIT TEST 5= 34 Multiple Choice Questions and FRQ

UNIT VI: PUBLIC POLICY AND ECONOMICS

(Chapters 17, 18, 19, 20)

- A. Policy processes and outputs
- B. Policy making in a federal system
- C. Policy making and the economy (budgeting, fiscal and monetary)

Percentage Range for AP Examination..... 5-15%

READINGS:

Textbook – Edwards: Chapters 17, 18, 19, 20

Data Analysis and Interpretation: Edwards p. 607- Figure 19.1 ‘Where’s the Oil? Who Consumes it?’

Woll Reader:

<i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i>	p. 116
<i>Brown v. Topeka Board of Education</i>	p. 118
<i>Engle v. Vitale</i>	p. 147
<i>Roe v. Wade</i>	p. 156

Student Digital Project and Presentation: “Appropriation and the Budgeting Process”

Assessment: UNIT TEST 6= 35 Multiple Choice Questions and FRQ

Review for AP Government and Politics Exam and in class Final Exam

Final Exam (10% percent of final course grade)

- 60 Multiple choice questions and 4 FRQ’s

THE AP GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS EXAM

The AP United States Government and Politics Exam is 2 hours and 25 minutes long. It includes a 45-minute multiple-choice section consisting of 60 questions and a 100-minute free-response section consisting of 4 Free Response Questions.

AP EXAM GRADES

The Readers' scores on the free-response questions are combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions; the weighted raw scores are summed to give a composite score. The composite score is then converted to a grade on AP's 5-point scale:

AP GRADE QUALIFICATION

- 5 Extremely well qualified
- 4 Well qualified
- 3 Qualified
- 2 Possibly qualified
- 1 No recommendation

AP Exam grades of 5 are equivalent to A grades in the corresponding college course

AP Exam grades of 4 are equivalent to grades of A-, B+, and B in college

AP Exam grades of 3 are equivalent to grades of B-, C+, and C in college

Sample - Multiple-Choice Questions 50 % of the Exam Grade

The following sample questions reflect both the topics and the levels of difficulty in questions found in the actual exam.

Students often ask whether they should guess on the multiple-choice section. Students who have some knowledge of the question and can eliminate one or more choices will usually find it advantageous to select the best answer from the remaining choices. An answer key to the sample multiple-choice

- **Directions:** Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case and then circle in the corresponding letter.

1. In the organization of government, the principle of federalism is illustrated best by the

- (A) president's power as commander in chief
- (B) separation of powers between the United States Supreme Court and Congress
- (C) representation system for electing senators
- (D) qualifications for the office of president
- (E) federal bureaucracy

2. All of the following contribute to the success of incumbent members of Congress in election campaigns EXCEPT:

- (A) Incumbents usually raise more campaign funds than do their challengers.
- (B) Incumbents tend to understand national issues better than do their challengers.
- (C) Incumbents are usually better known to voters than are their challengers.
- (D) Incumbents can use legislative staff to perform campaign services.
- (E) Incumbents often sit on committees that permit them to serve district interests.

3. Which of the following is NOT a core value of United States political culture?

- (A) Legal equality
- (B) Political equality
- (C) Economic equality
- (D) Freedom of religion
- (E) Freedom of speech

Sample- Free-Response Questions – 50% of the Exam Grade

In the free-response section of the exam, students have 100 minutes to answer **four questions**. The score on each response will account for one-fourth of the student's total free-response score, so students should spend approximately one-fourth of their time (25 minutes) answering each question. The questions generally ask students to integrate knowledge and respond to questions from the different content areas. They may require a discussion of examples, the elucidation or evaluation of general principles of U.S. government and politics, and/or the analysis of political relationships that exist and events that occur in the United States. Students are expected to show

both analytic and organizational skills and to incorporate specific examples in their responses. A student may be expected to interpret and analyze material in a table, chart, or graph and draw logical conclusions from such data in relation to general concepts or relationships in politics. Students should read each question carefully and perform the tasks asked for by each question.

- **Directions:** You have 100 minutes to answer all four of the following questions. Unless the directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. Spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 minutes) on each question. In your response, use substantive examples where appropriate. Bullet responses are allowed.
1. **While interest groups and political parties each play a significant role in the United States political system, they differ in their fundamental goals.**
 - (a) Identify the fundamental goal of interest groups in the political process.
 - (b) Identify the fundamental goal of major political parties in the political process.
 - (c) Explain two different ways by which interest groups support the fundamental goal of political parties in the political process.
 - (d) For one of the forms of support you described in (c), explain two different ways in which that form of support helps interest groups to achieve their fundamental goal in the political process.

FOR MORE PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS GO TO >

http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2086.html

SPECIAL NOTES

- **All** students are expected to take the AP Government and Politics Exam on May 9, 2017
- **No late work accepted unless the student or parent/guardian contacts the teacher the day of the absence or before- see page 1 for contact information**
- **All make up work is due the next day it is received**
- **All make up quizzes will be given during lunch on Tuesday before school or Wednesday's lunch**

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of Instructor: John Costa

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Email: dcosta@rusdlearns.net

E-mail: dcosta@rusd.k12.ca.us

COURSE WEBSITE> www.ahsapgov.weebly.com

ARLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

AP GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Please return this completed form, including all pertinent signatures, by September 2, 2016

This Advanced Placement course in US Government and Politics will offer your student intense, high quality instruction that will prepare to him/her to meet the standards needed for 21st Century college learning. Successful AP course completion (grade of "C" or higher) and exam results ("3" or higher) will provide your student a significant advantage in the college admission process by indicating a student's desire and ability to succeed in a rigorous curriculum. In addition, scoring a "3" or higher may qualify your student for college credit depending upon the University and policy.

Student name – please print clearly

AP GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
(Advance Placement student)

LISTED BELOW ARE CONDITIONS, ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS THAT WILL PROVIDE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS IN AP GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Participation in AP Government and Politics indicates a student's willingness to:

- Maintain good attendance
- Assume responsibility for learning
- Prepare for class daily
- Participate fully in classroom activities
- Make up missed assignments and quizzes promptly
- Seek all available help when necessary
- Take the AP Government and Politics Exam on May 9, 2017

As an Advance Placement teacher I will support student learning through:

- High instructional standards
- Student focused instruction
- Regular review of assignments and progress
- Timely disclosure of make-up assignments
- Regular communication with parents
- Learner support beyond regular classroom meetings – (Wednesday @ lunch/selected Saturday's)

The Advance Placement courses are developed by the College Board in partnerships with colleges and universities all across the USA therefore, course content cannot be modified. While the above conditions, attitudes and actions will create a favorable environment for student success in this AP course, they do not provide a guarantee of any particular grade or score on the AP exam.

Student signature

Date

Parent signature

email

dcosta@rusd.k12.ca.us