



Reynolds High School

AP GOVERNMENT



2025/2026 School Year

Building Relationships for Academic Success

"Sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation." Nelson Mandela

Instructor Name: *Mr. May*

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Room Number: 624

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Required Textbooks/Materials: *American Government: Institutions and Policies 16 edition*. Notebook, pen/pencils and your laptop

Course Description

AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level year-long course that not only seeks to prepare students for success on the AP Exam in May, but also provide students with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that are currently shaping American politics and society.

It is important to note that this course is not a history course; it is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system and the behaviors and attitudes that shape this system and are the byproduct of this system.

AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices through the use of a set of reasoning processes.

Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, by the end of the course, students will be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well-reasoned, thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

The Reasoning Process in this course include: Definition/Classification: Demonstrating knowledge of course concepts *Explain-Process: Explaining political processes *Explain-Causation: Explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors *Explain-Comparison: Explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes and behaviors.

Grading Policy Description

Your grade will be based on your written responses to various items such as;

- Free Response Questions (FRQ's): these will cover the Unit Topics.
- Written Responses to various Supreme Court Cases, the Required Documents and various articles that you will be presented with.
- Current Events Notebook
- Civics Project
- Unit Tests

Plagiarism: You are required to do your own work. Plagiarized work will not be accepted and for term papers, these will be checked with an online program.

Letter Grade Description & Percentage Breakdown

Grade Percentage	Letter Grade	Description
100-90	AH	The student fully understands the content and the course objectives have been mastered and completion of the AP Government and Politics Exam in May of 2025
89-80	BH	The student understands the content and course objectives at an above average level.
79-70	CH	The student understands the course content and course objectives at an average level.
69-60	D	The student does not understand the course content and a minimum of course objectives are met.
59-0	F	The student has not met a sufficient number of course objectives to pass a minimum level and receives no credit.

TEST MAKE-UP: tests **can only be made up with an Excused Absence.**

Course Schedule/Outline of Units

Dates	Topic
September	Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy: Ideals, types, Power, Challenges of the Articles of Confederation, Ratification, Principles, Relation between Federal and State governments and Federalism in Action
October	Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government: Congress, Structures, Powers and Functions of Congress, Roles and Power of the Executive, Checks on Presidential power, expansion of Presidential power, The Judicial Branch, the Court in Action, Bureaucracy and policy making
November	Wrap-up Unit 2 begin Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Due to the holiday season this Unit will last through January.)

December	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights: The Bill of Rights, Due Process, Individual Freedom and Public Order and Safety, Right to Privacy, Rights of the Accused.
January	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Social Movements and Equal Protection, Government Responses, Balancing Minority and Majority Rights, Affirmative Action End of Semester One: MIDTERM
February	Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs; American attitudes about Government, Political Socialization, Changes of Ideology, Measuring and evaluating Public Opinion, Economic Policies Civics Project Overview
March	Unit 4 continued: Ideology and Policy making, Ideology and Social Policy. UNIT TEST AND FRQ Unit 5: Political Participation; Voting Rights and behavior, Voter turnout, Political Parties, How and why Political Parties change, Third Party Politics
April	Unit 5 continued: Interest Groups, Elections, Campaigns, Propaganda, and the impact of Media on the collective mind of American citizens. UNIT TEST and FRQ AP EXAM PREP THROUGH THE REMAINDER OF APRIL
May	<u>AP EXAM: Tuesday May 5th, 2026</u> Economics Unit
June	Civics Project Presentations

Class Expectations (i.e. POWER) The key aspect in class is respect for yourself and those around you. Be prepared for class, be on time, and be engaged in the class. (this is a key component) This course required you to think, reflect, and be able to communicate those aspects through speaking and writing.

Homework policy: Coursework will be completed in the virtual setting and work will be completed and turned in through OneNote/Schoology.

Schoology is utilized and you will access it through your Chromebooks.

Test Retakes: Students can retake tests when necessary.

Internet Resources: If students miss class, they can find the day's class work posted on ***Schoology.com***. Also, grades will be update on a regular basis and these can be accessed through Synergy student or parent portal.

Late Work Policy: Late work will be reduced by 10% each day it is late and once it hits half credit you can submit for 50% of the grade prior to the start of new unit. *If you are **overwhelmed** with the course load you are taking the key is to speak to me before you get to far in the hole with the work.*

- ✓ When we discuss current or historical issues in class, I hope you will feel comfortable in expressing yourself and your views; everyone's opinion is valuable to our discussions. I encourage you to freely express your views, but in a way that is respectful of, and protects the dignity of, your peers; therefore, putdowns and insults, including those based characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion, appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc. are unacceptable.
- ✓ You may be aware that on college campuses, some professors began noticing around 2013-2014 that many students were asking for protections from words, books, ideas, images and speakers, indicating that they would suffer medialized harm or damage if they were not given "trigger warnings" and "safe spaces" from material they might disagree with or find upsetting.
- ✓ Studying the topics that make up the course of Government, involves content that is potentially controversial and/or upsetting, we will examine aspects of the history of the formation of government that our society generally sees as positive, along with much darker aspects. The latter will involve language, images, and ideas that are offensive to most of us in 2019; however, I would be failing you as your instructor if I did not ask you to grapple with the darker parts of our past in order to gain a fuller understanding of where we've been, develop insights into where we are today, and formulate ideas on how we can be a better society going forward.
- ✓ So, I will not infantilize you by seeing you as so fragile, so at risk of being harming or damaged, as to need "protection", from words, books, ideas, imagery and speakers. We will all see and hear things we are disposed to disagree with, but intellectually, a properly conducted history class is going to be a place where your ideas may be challenged, refined, harmed and perhaps even destroyed, and that's as it should be.

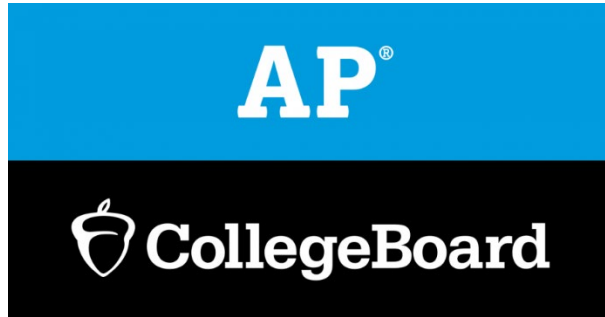
AP Government Syllabus for School Year

2025/2026

Mr. May



Overview of the Course and AP Exam Introduction to AP U.S. Government and Politics



The Course consists of:

- Review before each unit test (much of this will require self-direction)
- A unit exam at the end of each unit that will be administered over two class periods (one period for the multiple-choice questions and one for the FRQ's)
- Two weeks of review for the AP Exam at the end of the course
- Expectations are that if you are taking the course, you will take the exam.

AP Government Exam:

- Timing: One hour and 20 minutes for Free-Response Questions (4 questions)
 - 50% of total
 - Concept Application: Apply political concepts in real-world scenarios
 - Quantitative Analysis: analyze data
 - SCOTUS Comparison: compare the decisions and implications of different Supreme Court cases
 - Argumentative Essay: develop an argument using required foundational documents as evidence
- Timing: One hour and 40 minutes 55 question multiple choice exam. 50% of total.

Exam Date: Wednesday May 6th, 2026