

**Course Overview**  
**AP U.S. Government & Politics 2017-2018**  
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AP US Government and Politics (“AP GOPO”) is a challenging class and places demands upon students equivalent to those of a 200 Level College Political Science Class. As a result, success requires a level of participation, diligence, commitment, effort, and autonomy beyond the ordinary high school expectations. The course will follow the College Board’s Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics curriculum and is designed to prepare you to take (and pass) the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam.

**COURSE CURRICULUM**

APGOPO provides an analytical perspective on US government and involves both the study of general concepts used to interpret American politics and the detailed examination of specific case studies. Topics of focus will include the the various foundational principles of American Democracy, Institutions and Agents of National Government, American Political Ideologies, and the factors that impact US Political Reality.

Classes will consist of lecture and classroom discussion. In addition to the material covered from the assigned text, students will also be expected to be familiar with current events pertaining to national political issues and developments. APGOPO attempts to develop a greater degree of higher-level critical thinking skills by emphasizing analysis and evaluation, and assessments will cover a significantly greater amount of material than in regular high school classes to include some not covered in class. Homework will primarily consist of weekly readings for which the student is responsible for mastery of the information. Assessments will be primarily in the form of multiple choice and extended response question format as well as a limited number of major assignments (essay and project based)

To be successful in APGOPO students must be motivated, self-directed learners with above average reading and comprehension skills and can expect 5-8 hours of homework per week in addition to classroom assignments.

The AGOP” curriculum is very demanding and is predicated on an assumption that students have a detailed and working understanding of the structure, organization, roles and functioning of the federal government as well as the civil liberties and freedoms guaranteed in this nation. As a result, in order to prepare for the class you will need to become very familiar with both the US Constitution and the Bill of rights and the role they play as foundational documents for the American system of government prior to the commencement of the class next fall

**(over)**

## **SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

In order to ensure a common baseline of background knowledge regarding the foundational principles of the US Government, students enrolled in AP GOPO will be required to check out the following text and complete the assignments listed below prior to the beginning of next year:

“*We The People*” (Center For Civic Education...Copyright 1988 17<sup>th</sup> Edition)

After working through the Unit Lessons in the text you will be required to address the *Unit Focus Question*. The method of demonstrating your knowledge of the material covered in each unit is up to you ie write an essay prepare a presentation (Power Point etc), make a video create a website or blog etc as long as it shows a detailed level of comprehension of the material covered. The Summer Assignment will be due NLT then the 5<sup>th</sup> day of class next year and failure to complete it satisfactorily will seriously impede your ability to successfully negotiate the course curriculum necessitating mandatory remediation during the first several weeks of the school year.

*(Unit I & II Focus Question)*

“What are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?”

*(Unit III Focus Question)*

“What was the process by which the Founders created the Constitution?”

*(Unit IV Focus Question)*

“How have the values and principles embodied in the Constitution shaped American political institutions and practices?”

*(Unit V Focus Question)*

“What civil liberties does the Bill of Rights protect and how does it protect them?”

