

AP U.S. Government and Politics
2008-2009

I. INTRODUCTION

American Government is a survey course that provides students an analytical approach to government and politics in the United States. With this study, students will grasp an understanding of the institutions, groups, and beliefs that comprise the American political system. The study of concepts and analysis of specific examples will provide the student a profound perspective detailing American citizenship.

II. LEARNING AREA

A. CONTENT STANDARD: A student shall demonstrate understanding of the foundations, rights and responsibilities of United States citizenship including how the United States government, as established by the Constitution, embodies the principles and ideals of a democratic republic; the rights and responsibilities of United States citizens, non citizens, and dual citizens; and the formal and informal structures within which interests groups exercise power, by:

1. Examining the foundational documents, including the US Constitution and Bill of Rights relating to citizen rights.
2. Examining existing issues involving rights, roles and status of individuals in relation to the general welfare of society.
3. Analyzing how citizens can affect policy.
4. Observing, analyzing, and interacting with an actual or simulated governmental process.

B. THE AP CHALLENGE: Advanced Placement offers to provide high school students the rigors of post-secondary education. Interested students will find a vast array of challenges throughout the year long course, including analytical study, research, and the development of fundamental process inherent at the collegiate level.

1. The rewards are:

- a) COLLEGE CREDIT based on your scores earned on the College Board exam scheduled May 4, 2009. A 60 point multiple choice exam (50 percent of total) 45 minutes; and four essay questions in 100 minutes, (50 percent of total) will culminate into a: 5 = extremely well qualified 4 = well qualified 3 = qualified 2 = possibly qualified 1 = no way. The college of your choice will dictate how that College Board examination score will be credited in your program. Most colleges provide credit for "3, 4, or 5."
- b) GRADE POINT BOOST Milan Schools have mandated that all AP courses be granted a 1.25+ grade point adjustment based on one's final grade. For example: A = 4 X 1.25 = GPA of 5. B = 3 X 1.33 = GPA of 4. C = 2 X 1.50 = GPA of 3.0
- c) A RIGOROUS LEARNING EXPERIENCE-- AP American Govt + Politics course will be based on the precedent that one will receive what one deserves. Students are expected to provide (on average) at **least one hour of study time each day.**

III. SYLLABUS: A course outline is provided for each of the 10 units. Course objectives, reading assignments, and terminal objectives will be part of each syllabus. It is strongly recommended that you keep up with the heavy reading material.

IV. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: Course material is presented in four formats: lecture, seminar, small group discussion or application, **and personal study time.** One of the goals is to teach you how

to think rationally and write analytically.

V. EVALUATION: There will be at least 10 examinations. Exams will have a multiple choice exercise and responses to analytical free-response question. Short “position” papers (not more than three pages) will also be assigned periodically. Constant emphasis will be placed on writing thesis statements, developing analytical essays, and demonstrating an understanding of visually presented information (charts and graphs).

VI. Current Events: Students are required to watch one hour of national political news programming per week. Every Monday/Tuesday, students will submit a one-page summary of the issues discussed in the programs. Recommended programs to watch include:

Washington Week in Review (PBS)

This week with George Stephanopoulos (Sunday - ABC)

Meet the Press (Sunday - NBC)

McLaughlin Group

The News Hour with Jim Lehrer (PBS)

VII. Policies

A. **ATTENDANCE:** For excused absences, make-up work is accepted following this formula: Miss 1 day -- work due 2nd day back ; miss 2 days -- work is due 3rd day back; miss 3 days -- work is due 4th day back.

B. LATE WORK: Will be accepted if you are in SRT remediations for AP Government.

C. Final grades will be determined on a total point format. All exams are closed note. Students scoring a 4 or 5 on the College Board Final exam will receive an “A” for the course.

VIII. Competition

Students will be attending a We the People Competition. The competition will be held at the high school and during the day. Attendance at the competition is mandatory and will count as major grades for the course.

IX. Materials:

A. Edwards, George, and Lineberry, Robert, Government in America, People Politics and Policy, Addison Wesley, New York, 2006

B. Ladd, Everett C., and Serow, Ann G., The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity, Lanahan Publishers, Baltimore, 2004.

C. Center for Civic Education, We the People, The Citizen and the Constitution, 2003

D. 2" binder and 3/5 cards