



AP Government Course Information and Summer Assignment

Mr. Moreno: moreno.d@monet.k12.ca.us

Course Remind Code:

Enter this number: 81010

Text this message: @apgopo23

Course Description:

This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the operation of the American national government. To accomplish this, students will develop analytic tools for interpreting, understanding and explaining political events in the country. The 5 units that the course covers include:

1. **Constitutional Concepts** such as checks and balances, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, federalism, and limited government. Other important documents include The Declaration, Articles of Confederation, **Bill of Rights**, Federalist Papers)
2. Policy making institutions such as the **executive, legislative and judiciary branches**
3. **Civil liberties** (Bill of Rights) and **civil rights (14th Amendment – Equal Protection)**
4. **Public opinion** (this usually involves statistics about political belief) and voting behavior
5. **Political participation** (Political parties, Elections, Interest groups and the media)

We will consider and discuss current developments as examples to provide a foundation for understanding national politics in the United States. Students will prepare to vote and assume the responsibilities of an informed citizen.

Due Dates:

The **Summer Awareness Assignment will be due on the first day of class (August 8th)**. Turnitin.com will be used to submit the Summer Awareness Assignment. Directions for submission will be made available when Schoology is activated for our class.

2022 Summer Awareness Assignment:

To help you start thinking politically, I am giving you a **current event** assignment this summer. Your assignment is to keep up with current events starting with the week we get out of school and continuing through the week of our return (May 30th - August 8th = 10 weeks). In particular, you are asked to find and relate this news to our government and how it operates.

Your source must be a legitimate source (no blogs, no opinion pieces, no satirical sites like *The Onion* -- as much as I like all of these myself). Over the course of the summer, you should use articles from at least three different sources in order to review a variety of reporting styles.

Then, record some basic information about the stories you choose to follow. At a minimum, you must include the following:

1. Source and date (MLA NOT required, but is a helpful guide)
2. A brief summary of the story
3. A connection statement

Sources:

I find that mainstream sites are usually the easiest to use. You may read your news, watch your news or listen to your news (podcasts). I like the News App on my phone. If you use the news app you can select sources like the AP News. This would be helpful since it is pretty much the raw feed of the Associated Press. Reuters news media (international) also has a news app, as do most mainstream media sites.

If you aren't sure which sites are slanted or moderate, a great site to use is www.allsides.com. This site aggregates news and categorizes it as left, center and right for you. If you are struggling at all with identifying bias in the media, this could be a very good source for you. It's good to read from a variety of sources. This might provide a good opportunity for doing so....and as a matter of fact, I want you to read from at least three different sources particularly for this reason.



(Example from 05/15/2017 - Allsides.com)

Directions - Summary:

I want no more than 3 - 4 sentences summarizing what the news event is about. You need enough information to be able to explain it fully. We will use your information in an activity the first week.

You'll want to make sure you pick an article and topic that is current and offers you enough information to complete this task. You'll also need to read the article carefully so you can gather enough information to complete this task.

Directions - Connection statement:

While I understand that at this point you may not be aware of the AP Government content (although it is very well integrated with US History), I want you to try to at least categorize news into where you think it might fit in the curriculum.

Use the course description that I have provided for the course. I would like for you to think about where each of your news stories will intersect with our curriculum and make a statement that makes a connection and explains briefly (in a sentence or two) why you placed it there. Many news stories will have more than one possible connection. Make as many as you reasonably can explain. This is a good warm up for the class itself.

Course Credit:

You will receive up to 5 points for each complete entry, up to a **total of 50 points**. This assignment will be ongoing and may lead to a brief presentation and discussion in class.

Answers that are vague, lack depth, incomplete, plagiarized, rely on direct quotes (not in your own words), or short will earn **ZERO CREDIT FOR THAT WEEK** (this amounts to a 10% deduction on the grade). So, read the articles carefully, give them thought, and show that you're not just reading headlines/skimming.

Submission:

You will submit your completed work to an entry using Schoology and TurnItIn.com when school starts. In the meantime, you may start a Google doc to record your entries. The news journal must be kept in a timely manner... in other words, don't do all of them in the last 2 weeks of the summer! Overall points will be deducted for those who submit their journal with evidence of procrastination.

Sample from Week of 7-15, 2017 - YOU MUST FOLLOW THIS FORMAT!

“North Korea: New long-range missile can carry heavy nuke” (make this a live link if you can)

Date 05/15/2017

Source: [Associated Press](#)

Summary (3-4 sentences): Over the weekend, North Korea appears to have successfully tested a new rocket launching system that flew higher and farther than any others in their quest to create an ICBM that could reach U.S. targets. While the U.S. itself is out of range, our holdings and those of allies of the United States are definitely within range of North Korea. This makes this an important foreign policy problem for the current administration.

Connections (separate from the summary and another 3 - 4 sentences): This connects to the powers of Congress and the President (Institutions of National Government) and how they might respond to this threat in defense of the U.S. and our allies. It could also tie to Political Beliefs and Behaviors in how citizens respond and believe the role of our government should be to handle this potential threat. It could also tie to the unit on Public Policy as it deals with agenda setting and the potential foreign policy and military policy that we will enact in response to these threatening actions by North Korea. This could also tie to the unit on the mass media as how they choose to report this type of information has an impact on our policymaking institutions and the public and their opinion on what type of action (if any) is best.