



AP U.S. Government & Politics
2017-18 Course Syllabus
Santiago High School
Mr. Jessup



Course Description and Purpose

Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics is equivalent to a college level introductory course in American Government. The primary purpose of the class is to prepare students for the AP exam administered by the College Board in May. **Therefore, students are expected to take the AP exam.** Year-long preparation, study, and guided review will prepare students for success on this challenging exam. Any student in the AP class who commits her/his mind and effort to the task can be successful. It should be understood at the outset that this AP course will be more challenging and time consuming than an advanced level government class. This is a college level course and we are preparing for a college level exam. Students are expected to read the textbook carefully and take written notes for each chapter assigned. In addition to outside readings, papers, etc., students are expected to read daily a well-respected news source like the *Washington Post* in order to keep abreast of current events.

The most important task for students of American Government is to be able to think critically. Students should be able to evaluate American democracy: not only to identify areas of strength, but also to articulate areas where our system fails. When students leave this class they should be able to describe, analyze and discuss how our system works on a sophisticated level. In class there will be lectures, discussions, as well as interactive classroom projects. In addition, we will debate current issues, simulate Congress and other institutions of government. Students are required to work hard, but the experience of this course will also be enjoyable. The classroom is a forum for learning and preparation for the exam, but it is also an environment to interact and discuss social as well as political issues.

Course Materials

1. O'Connor, Karen, Sabato, Larry. American Government: Continuity and Change. 2006 edition. Boston: Longman, 2006.
2. Woll, Peter. American Government: Readings and Cases. ANY edition published after 1990.
3. Matthews, Christopher. Hardball. New York: Touchstone, 1999.
4. To facilitate current events discussions, students are asked to subscribe to a credible written news source: Washington Post, New York Times, US News & World Report, The Wall Street Journal, etc.
5. Notebook: Each student will maintain and bring to class daily a course notebook in a three ring binder.

Major Units of Study

- I. **Foundations of American Democracy (Sept.-Oct.):** The roots of American democracy, Articles of Confederation, the Constitution and motivation of the framers
- II. **Federalism (Oct.)** : Separation of powers, the American system of federalism
- III. **Political Beliefs & Behaviors (Oct.-Nov.):** Political Beliefs and Behaviors: Political Socialization and Culture, Citizen Attitudes, Public Opinion, Voting Patterns, Political Parties, Influence of Interest Groups and PACs
- IV. **The American Political Process (Nov. – Dec.):** Campaigns & Elections, The Impact of Mass Media on Politics
- V. **The Branches of Government (Jan.- Feb.):** Evolution of the American Presidency, Presidential Powers, Presidential Style, Leadership and Character, Domestic & Foreign Policy; Congressional Elections & Demographic Composition of Congress, Powers of Congress, Structure and Organization of Congress, the Legislative Process; Purpose of the Federal Bureaucracy; Structure, powers, policies of the Supreme Court, Landmark cases, Bill of Rights, the Role of the Judiciary in the Development of the Meaning of Rights

VI. **Civil Rights & Civil Liberties (Mar.):** Minority and Special Group Rights, The Incorporation Doctrine, Judicial Interpretation

VII. **Public Policy (Apr.-May) :** The Welfare State, Social Policy, Economic Policy, Foreign and Defense Policy

Grading – The CNUSD grading scale which can be found in the student handbook. As this is a college course, extra credit is only offered on tests and quizzes.

1. **Homework Grades** = 20 %. Generally include notes taken from textbook readings, articles, current events and other assignments given outside of class time.
2. **Quizzes and Timed Writings** = 15%. Quizzes on textbook chapters, etc. and in-class essays.
3. **Daily Grades** = 15%. Material presented in lectures, readings, videos, and other activities from class time, essays, etc. To reflect College Board, scoring the following scale will be used:

Score	Letter Grade	100 Pt. Scale
5	A+ - A	100-93
4	A- - B+	92-88
3	B – B-	87-80
2	C – C-	79-70
1	D – D-	69 - 60
0	F	59 - 0

4. **Class Participation** = 20%. Includes simulation role plays, open forums, class and small group discussions. Attendance is essential for participation, and a general positive attitude towards learning. If students miss an in-class participation assignment, they are required to complete a make-up assignment.
5. **Unit Tests, Projects & Papers** = 30 %. One to two tests will be given per nine weeks grading period consisting of multiple choice and essay questions. Papers and other written projects will also be assigned.

Course Requirements

1. **Reading:** In order for the student to be successful in a college level course of this type, it is essential that students maximize their time and complete all reading assignments prior to class discussion. The readings, source reader, articles, etc., as well as lectures, will figure prominently in quizzes and examinations. The readings are a supplement to rather than a duplicate of the topics discussed in class. There is typically a reading assignment for each class period.
2. **Simulations/Discussions/Open Forums/Debates:** This course will consist of a number of in-class activities and projects that require significant student involvement and initiative. Each unit will include a simulation that includes both a written and class role play component (ex: campaign project, model Congress, mock Supreme Court). Therefore, on a daily basis, class participation is an essential component of this course, and students will be evaluated accordingly.
3. **Current Events:** Knowledge of contemporary political events is essential for the analytical focus that must be exhibited in research papers and in-class discussions. Students will complete a weekly current event assignment. In addition, on every test there will be at least one question related to current event discussions.
4. **Second Semester Culminating Assessment:** A major simulation, debate or project will be assigned second semester. The culminating assessment will be conducted and completed prior to senior exam week. **ALL students are expected to take the College Board’s AP Government exam on Thursday, May 10th at 8:00am.**

5. **CA and US Government Standards:** The curriculum for AP Government is national, established by the College Board, and students prepare arduously for the AP exam in May. Though there are no state standards for AP government, the 12th grade standards may be found at the following link: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/12th>

Policies/Expectations

1. **Late Work:** As AP Government is a college class, assignments are due at the beginning of class. **Late homework will NOT be accepted except as an extra grade.** However, students are strongly encouraged to turn in ALL missing assignments, which not only will assist with content knowledge, but will positively impact the student's overall grade. **Major projects will be penalized 10 points/day late.** If legitimate extenuating and/or emergency circumstances arise (in my judgement), students may request an extension.
2. **Make Up Work:** Any missed work due to absence must be turned in promptly on the **first day back.** If an assignment is given on the day of an absence, then the student must turn in the assignment by the end of the second day after returning. **Within two days of returning to class, the student must request a makeup schedule for all missed assignments, quizzes, tests, in-class group discussion and/or open forums.** Students may make up tests and assignments during Office Hours or before school. It is the student's responsibility to check for all make up work.
3. **Honor Code:** Mr. Jessup takes the Santiago Honor Code very seriously! Honesty and integrity are essential to learn and practice every day. **Therefore, it should be clearly understood that ALL academic work must be completed by the student without collusion from others.** While there are shared group projects, most homework is expected to be completed by the individual. Cheating includes copying homework as well as sharing answers on tests and quizzes. **Cheating will result in a referral, a zero on the assignment and increased scrutiny going forward.**
4. **Environment of Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility:** Students will demonstrate respect, consideration, and tolerance toward fellow students, teacher, guests, substitute teachers, etc. Any behavior that keeps me from teaching and students from learning will not be tolerated. Students are expected to take responsibility for their actions, or inaction. No excuses--take responsibility!
5. **Bullying:** Mr. Jessup takes allegations of bullying behavior very seriously. Please reference the Student Handbook for the school policy on bullying. Please let me know if you are ever made to feel uncomfortable in my class. Your feelings will be held in the strictest confidence and will be dealt with immediately.
6. **Wireless Device Policy:** Use of a wireless device such as a cellphone, tablet or computer without Mr. Jessup's expressed permission is strictly prohibited. For more information, reference the school Student Handbook.

Communication

1. Contact Information:

➤➤ *Email:* For questions and assistance, you may e-mail Mr. Jessup at the following address: cssup@custkl2caus e-mail is the best way to contact me for the quickest response, usually within 24 hours.

2. **Parent Communication:** If a student is in danger of failing, I will contact parents via email unless otherwise requested. Parents are strongly encouraged to periodically check student grades through the "Q" connect parent portal and attend parent conferences. Parents are also welcome to email me periodically requesting updates about grades and missed assignments.
3. **Remind 101:** As a class we will create a Remind 101 account. We will communicate frequently with students re: class updates, deadlines, assignment changes, etc. Students are required to sign-up and use the account. I will be communicating electronically with AP Government students frequently. A Google Mail account is recommended because we will be doing some class assignments and projects using Google Docs. Students who are absent are welcome to e-mail missed homework and assignments to me as an attachment.
4. **Mr. Jessup's webpage:** You will want to visit my webpage often for all things AP Gov. including AP Exam review materials, class assignments, forms and PowerPoints. If you miss a class, go to the website for make-up materials. <http://santiagomrjessup.weebly.com>