

2018 AP GOVERNMENT PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS SYLLABUS

Welcome to AP GOV! We are starting a little early due to the fact that there is a ton of information to learn and not a lot of time to learn it. My hope is that if you all can begin learning this now, it will open our class time up for other fun things!!

1. Read each of the following primary sources and complete the Guided Questions: (due in my email by midnight on January 2nd 2018) DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.

John Locke: Excerpts from the *Second Treatise of Civil Government*

Montesquieu: Excerpt from *The Spirit of Laws 1748*

The Declaration of Independence

2. Read through your pocket Constitution. Become familiar with it. Complete the Constitution Study Guide.

3. Begin keeping track of the major events in national politics. You will be very lost if you come in not knowing some of the issues and politicians that are shaping our country. Become familiar with the major politicians/leaders in the news.

Here are a few ideas for how this can be accomplished:

- Bookmark the following websites and check them regularly throughout the course of the summer: www.thehill.com, www.politico.com, www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/
- Get into the habit of watching one of the **Sunday morning talk shows** (Meet the Press on NBC, This Week on ABC, Fox News Sunday on FOX, etc.). Another good habit is to occasionally watch daily political shows like The Rachel Maddow Show on MSNBC (for news with a liberal slant) and anything on FOX news (for a conservative outlook). **IT'S VERY IMPORTANT TO GET BOTH SIDES OF STORY, THE TRUTH LIES SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN. KEEPING UP WITH CURRENT EVENTS WILL MAKE THE CLASSROOM MATERIAL MORE RELEVANT AND EASIER TO APPLY.**
- **Twitter:** @thehill, @politico, @ap_politics, @nprpolitics, @postpolitics
- **Podcasts:** Constitutional, We the People, NPR Up First, NY Times The Daily, NPR Politics Podcast, FiveThirtyEight Politics, NBC Meet the Press, Politico Nerdcast

From this wide variety of sources, you will begin to meet some of the more prominent political actors and commentators on the national scene. You need to be familiar with them before you enter the AP Government classroom for the first time. Pay close attention to the following:

- What are the major issues being debated at the national level?
- Who appears to be defining the **agenda** of which issues are important and which are not?
- Where does Donald Trump stand on the key issues? Who are the other leaders in his administration?
- What are Trump's priorities? What pieces of legislation is he actively fighting for?
- Who are the major players in both parties in the House & Senate?
- Does the Congress appear to be nudging the president in a more conservative or a more liberal direction? How might this be explained?
- What are some recent major Supreme Court decisions?

AP Government can be an interesting, thought-provoking and intellectually stimulating experience, but it requires a group of students who are committed to working at the college level, AND WHO HAVE A DEEP INTEREST IN OUR NATIONAL POLITICAL LIFE. If you have no interest in politics, this course will be neither fun nor interesting – it will just be a lot of very hard, very time-consuming work! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to e-mail me OR come by my room.