

AP United States Government and Politics
Summer 2017 Assignment
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Textbook:

- *American Government, Roots and Reform*. Karen O'Connor, Larry Sabato and Alixandra Yanus, 2012 AP edition, Pearson. (Same book as last year. You will not need this book until the first day of school.)
- *American Polity*, Ann Serow and Everett Ladd. 5th edition

A big part of the AP Government and Politics course, and therefore the AP test, involves a study of the party system, development of policies and the impact of media. That is the rationale for this summer assignment. You will be examining the work of an American personality, whether it is a politician, or a news or radio commentator, to consider their views of the government or policies. Then you will compare those views to the views of others.

Essential Questions:

1. How does one's perspective shape their political views?
2. How do conflicting views shape government policy?

Task:

1. Select a book on American politics or policy to evaluate how different people interpret or view American government. Go to the library, or purchase any book online that interests you. Books can be on the media, society, government, global warming, religion, immigration or any current issues. (This leaves lots of leeway!) Many political figures have written books as well as the tv personalities who have their own shows on Fox News, CNN or MSNBC.

As you read:

- Think about the issue on which the author is focusing as well as his or her view of that issue. (i.e. What is the author's bias and how do you know? Use specific evidence to support your work.)
- Consider the author's background and how that might influence his or her position on the issue.
- Identify problems that may arise within the government, especially if this is an issue that would require a policy or law. (Consider your findings in step 2.)

2. Once you have identified the author's views on their issue(s) written about in their book, you should use television and print to find the other side of the issue. Do not go crazy with research. Perhaps create a **chart** that includes the sources (2 or 3 should be sufficient) and view of each. For example, you have read a book that presents a conservative view of global warming. You may use MSNBC, the Huffington Post and a work by Al Gore to find the opposing view. (This information should be used as counterpoints in your book review.) We will be using lots of these different sources throughout the course so I would like you to begin familiarizing yourself with what is available.

3. Write a book review. This should be a critical analysis of the book, not a summary! I want to read your thoughts concerning the book. When considering how to present your review, keep the essential questions in mind. Addressing those could help you get to the key information in your book without simply summarizing.

I am envisioning this paper in a few distinct parts. The **introduction** should include the author's background as well as his or her issue being discussed. Remember, this background could be important in shaping the author's perspective. The **body** should include several paragraphs addressing the reasons the author has taken up this issue, how it is being handled in the government, as well as counterpoints you gathered from step 2. The **conclusion** is where you should present your own conclusions about the book, the issue, and its link to the government.

- This review should be 2-4 pages, double spaced in Arial or Calibri with one inch margins.
- This should conform to collegiate-level standards in grammar, style and spelling. Therefore, you may need to write multiple drafts before submitting your final paper for grading.
- PROOFREAD!!! And better yet, get someone else to read your work to eliminate typos and other errors.
- Be sure to cite any information including quotes from another source. Do not pull sentences or paragraphs from The NY Times, for example, without giving credit. This is considered plagiarism. Any ideas, even when paraphrased, are the intellectual property of another and you **MUST** give credit. Plagiarism will result in a zero for the assignment, and a meeting with a parent and guidance to review the student's qualifications to remain in this class. In college, plagiarism can get you kicked out! Develop good habits now that you can take with you when you leave Gilbert! When in doubt, cite it! If you need help with this, please, please email me. I'm happy to help.

Grading:

This will be a 100 point assignment. The book review will be 75 points and the "chart" examining the opposing points will be worth 25 points. Don't wait until the last minute, and if you have any concerns feel free to email me. I will check my email periodically over the summer.

Due the FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. No late work will be accepted and incompleteness will result in a meeting with guidance to discuss your continued enrollment in the course.