

## Welcome to AP US Government & Politics!

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On the following pages, you will find the course syllabus, information from the College Board about constructing an answer to a free response question, and a prompt I would like you to respond to before school starts. Share your doc after making a copy using THIS LINK:

<https://tinyurl.com/389a8bpd>

on or before August 27, 2021. You can also join our group on Schoology, using the following code:

FZGC-G3HZ-ZJKCX

Questions? Contact [adibiasi@upperdarbysd.org](mailto:adibiasi@upperdarbysd.org).

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### Argument Prompt – Summer Assignment

Develop an argument that explains whether the American government has failed to uphold its end of the social contract, obligating “we the people” revolt, or that it should crack down on unruly protestors and rioters to reestablish law and order. (To read up on the social contract, you may want to use this source - <https://www.thoughtco.com/social-contract-in-politics-105424>)

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- Brutus No. 1 - <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/brutus-i/>
- The Declaration of Independence - <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration>
- U.S. Constitution - <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence
  - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed above.
  - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts – here are two videos you may want to refer to or use:
    - Trevor Noah’s argument for rioting - [https://youtu.be/v4amCfVbA\\_c](https://youtu.be/v4amCfVbA_c)
    - Donald Trump’s speech for law and order - <https://youtu.be/C9FAfKbzaM>
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

The College Board rubric I will use to grade your writing can be found on the following pages.

Your argument will not be assessed according to your political opinion. Feel free to express your true opinion, or use this opportunity to argue the opposite of your true feelings. You don’t have to say which you’ve chosen. As a general rule, please do not use the phrases “in my opinion,” “I think,” or any variation. I will only assess your writing using the rubric (<https://tinyurl.com/yy5z3rdd>), not my personal feelings about your position on any topic. Throughout this course, your ability to argue will be challenged, because of the structure of the free response questions on the AP exam.

Following the rubric from College Board, you’ll find the syllabus for our course. Please explore and ask questions, either in our Schoology group or by emailing me.

## Scoring Rubric for Question 4: Argument Essay

**6 points**

| Reporting Category   | Scoring Criteria                        |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
| <b>Row A</b><br>Claim/Thesis<br>(0-1 points)   | <b>0 points</b>                         | <b>1 point</b><br>Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning. | <b>1 point</b><br>Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that restates the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning. |
| <b>5.1A</b>  | <b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b> |  |   |
| <b>Row B</b><br>Evidence<br>(0-3 points)   | <b>0 points</b>                         | <b>1 point</b><br>Provides one piece of evidence that is <u>relevant</u> to the topic of the prompt.             | <b>2 points</b><br>Uses <u>one</u> piece of specific and relevant evidence to <u>support</u> the claim or thesis.   |
| <b>5.1B</b>  | <b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b> |  |   |
| <b>Row A</b><br>Claim/Thesis<br>(0-1 points)   | <b>0 points</b>                         | <b>1 point</b><br>Provides one piece of evidence that is <u>relevant</u> to the topic of the prompt.             | <b>2 points</b><br>Uses <u>one</u> piece of specific and relevant evidence to <u>support</u> the claim or thesis.   |
| <b>5.1B</b>  | <b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b> |  |   |
| <b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To earn two or three points in Row B, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>To earn three points, the response must use one of the foundational documents listed in the prompt.</li> </ul> |   |  |   |

| Reporting Category   | Scoring Criteria   |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Row C</b><br><b>Reasoning</b><br><b>(0-1 points)</b><br><b>EC</b>   | <b>0 points</b>  | <b>1 point</b><br>Explains how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis                              |
|  | <b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>  |  |
| <b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis</li> <li>• Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis</li> </ul>  | <b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A) and support that argument with at least one piece of specific and relevant evidence (earned at least 2 points in Row B).</li> <li>• The explanation of the relationship between one piece of evidence and the claim or thesis is sufficient to earn this point.</li> </ul> |  |  |
| <b>Row D</b><br><b>Responds to Alternate Perspectives</b><br><b>(0-1 points)</b><br><b>EA,D</b>  | <b>0 points</b>  | <b>1 point</b><br>Responds to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal |
|  | <b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>  |  |
| <b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis</li> <li>• May identify or describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective</li> <li>• Refute a foundational document rather than an alternate perspective to the provided claim or thesis</li> </ul>  |  |  |
| <b>Responses that earn this point:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must describe an alternate perspective AND refute, concede, or rebut that perspective</li> </ul>   |  |  |
| <b>Additional Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>• Responses that demonstrate an incorrect understanding of the alternate perspective do not earn this point.</li> </ul>  |  |  |



**Opportunity • Unity • Excellence**

**Course: AP US Government & Politics**

**Section: 0220-1, 0220-2, or 0220-3**

**Semester: Fall 2021 & Spring 2022**

**Teacher Name: Alexander DiBiasi**

**Email: [adibiasi@upperdarbysd.org](mailto:adibiasi@upperdarbysd.org)**

### **COURSE MATERIALS:**

- AP US Government & Politics Course & Exam Description:  
<https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap/2019-05/ap-us-government-and-politics-course-and-exam-description.pdf>
- MyAP:  
<https://myap.collegeboard.org/login>
- Textbook: OpenStax American Government, Second Edition:  
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-2e>

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course detailed in this framework reflects what political science teachers, professors, and researchers agree that a college-level government and politics course should teach students to do: analyze and interpret the Constitution, important political documents, and data to better understand the American national government and the political actors who interact with it.

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description defines what representative colleges and universities typically expect students to know and be able to do in order to earn college credit or placement. Students practice the skills used by political scientists by studying data, political writings from the founding era to the present, the structure of the government as established by the Constitution, and constitutional interpretations handed down by the Supreme Court. Students will show mastery of these skills on the exam through a variety of means, including concept application, data analysis, Supreme Court case comparisons, and writing political science arguments.

For a detailed course description from the College Board, please use this link:

<https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap/2019-05/ap-us-government-and-politics-course-and-exam-description.pdf>

## **DISTRICT GRADING POLICY:**

Grading Scale:

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

F = 59% or below

## **COURSE GRADING:**

- Your grade will be based on total points.
- All assignments will be based on a point system, so the point value of each assessment will determine its weight for the final grade
- As long as you take the AP Gov Exam, your final grade will be determined by your 1st Marking Period Grade (25%), 2nd Marking Period Grade (25%), 3rd Marking Period Grade (25%), and 4th Marking Period Grade (25%).

## **HOMEWORK:**

- Reading the Textbook
- Analyzing Essential Questions and Objectives
- Practice FRQs
- Participating in Schoology Discussions and submitting Schoology Assignments/Assessments
- Answering questions in our AP Central Classroom and on Albert.io

## **SCHOOLY PROCEDURES:**

- BE ON TIME – submit assignments before or on their due date, and use catch-up days to make up work you didn't complete on the day it was assigned.
- COMMUNICATE – message your instructor or send them an email whenever you have a question or need help.
- SHOW RESPECT – To the teacher and fellow classmates in all responses on Schoology discussions and correspondence.

## **COURSE UNITS AND OBJECTIVES:**

- **Unit 1: *Foundations of American Democracy***
  - Essential Questions
    - Why are there debates about the balance of power between the federal and state governments?
    - Is the Bill of Rights necessary? Why or why not?
    - How does the Constitution affect you and the choices you make?

- How has a balance between governmental power and individual rights been a hallmark of American political development?
  - How did the US Constitution emerge from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government?
  - How did the US Constitution create a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved?
  - How does Federalism reflect the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments?
- Objectives:
  - Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution.
  - Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the US
  - Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in US foundational documents.
  - Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.
  - Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.
  - Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and “checks and balances.”
  - Explain the implications of separation of powers and “checks and balances” for the US political system.
  - Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.
  - Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.
  - Explain how the distribution of powers among three federal branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- **Unit 2: *Interactions Among Branches of Government***
  - Essential Questions:
    - Which branch of government is the most powerful? Why?
    - Are there really checks and balances when one political party controls all three branches of government? Why or why not?
    - In what ways has the evolution of government powers affected Americans and their daily lives?
    - How is the republican ideal in the U.S. manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch?
    - How has the presidency been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers?
    - How does the design of the judicial branch protect the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice?
    - How does the federal bureaucracy implement federal policies?
  - Objectives:
    - Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.

- Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.
  - Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.
  - Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.
  - Explain how the president's agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.
  - Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.
  - Explain how communication technology has changed the president's relationship with the national constituency and the other branches.
  - Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.
  - Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.
  - Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.
  - Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.
  - Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.
  - Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.
  - Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration.
  - Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.
- **Unit 3: *Civil Liberties & Civil Rights***
    - Essential Questions:
      - In what ways does the Constitution attempt to limit abuse of government powers?
      - How can individuals and groups help protect civil liberties and civil rights?
      - Why have Supreme Court decisions about civil liberties and civil rights changed over time?
      - How are provisions of the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals?
      - How have protections of the Bill of Rights been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties?
      - How have the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions often been used to support the advancement of equality?
      - How is public policy promoting civil rights influenced by citizen-state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time?
      - How is the Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen-state interactions?
      - How at times, has it restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them?

- Why do some people choose to participate in government while others do not?
    - How does your social network affect your political beliefs?
  - Objectives:
    - Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
    - Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.
    - Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
    - Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
    - Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation.
    - Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.
    - Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.
    - Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
    - Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.
- **Unit 4: *American Political Ideologies & Beliefs***
  - Essential Questions:
    - How do our core beliefs about the role of government affect our behavior?
    - How does our view of what freedom is shape our opinions?
    - Why are some opinion polls better than others?
    - How can policy-makers use information from political science to make decisions?
    - How are citizen beliefs about government shaped?
    - How is public opinion measured?
    - How do widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies?
  - Objectives:
    - Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government.
    - Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.
    - Describe the elements of a scientific poll.
    - Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.
    - Explain how ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.
    - Explain how U.S. political culture (e.g., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.
    - Describe different political ideologies on the role of government in regulating the marketplace.
    - Explain how political ideologies vary on the government's role in regulating the marketplace.
    - Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of the government in addressing social issues.
    - Explain how different ideologies impact policy on social issues.
- **Unit 5: *Political Participation***
  - Essential Questions:
    - Why do some people choose to participate in government while others do not?



- How does your social network affect your political beliefs?
- How do factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation?
- How do political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers?
- Why do both sides of the political spectrum continue to contest the impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules?
- How do the various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically?
- Objectives:
  - Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation.
  - Describe different models of voting behavior.
  - Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.
  - Describe linkage institutions.
  - Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.
  - Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.
  - Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidate success.
  - Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.
  - Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.
  - Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.
  - Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential election.
  - Explain how the Electoral College facilitates and/or impedes democracy.
  - Explain how the different processes work in U.S. congressional elections.
  - Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.
  - Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.
  - Explain the media's role as a linkage institution.
  - Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.

## **COURSE PACING:**

| <b>Week of</b> | <b>1st Marking Period Units</b> |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>9/7</b>     | <b>Unit 1: Topic 1</b>          |
| <b>9/13</b>    | <b>Unit 1: Topics 2 &amp; 3</b> |
| <b>9/20</b>    | <b>Unit 1: Topics 4 &amp; 5</b> |
| <b>9/27</b>    | <b>Unit 1: Topics 6 &amp; 7</b> |

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 10/4                     | Unit 1: Topics 8 & 9                         |
| 10/12                    | Unit 1: Review & Test                        |
| 10/18                    | Unit 2: Topic 1                              |
| 10/25                    | Unit 2: Topics 2 & 3                         |
| 11/1                     | Unit 2: Topics 4 & 5                         |
| End of Marking Period 1  |  |
| Week of                  | 2nd Marking Period Units                     |
| 11/8                     | Unit 2: Topics 6 & 7                         |
| 11/15                    | Unit 2: Topics 8 & 9                         |
| 11/22                    | Unit 2: Topics 10 & 11                       |
| 11/29                    | Unit 2: Topics 12 & 13                       |
| 12/6                     | Unit 2: Topics 14 & 15                       |
| 12/13                    | Unit 2: Review & Test                        |
| 12/20                    | Unit 3: Topic 1, 2, 3, & 4                   |
| WINTER BREAK - 12/24-1/1 |  |
| 1/3                      | Unit 3: Topics 5, 6 & 7                      |
| 1/10                     | Unit 3: Topics 8, 9 , & 10                   |
| 1/18                     | MID TERM WEEK                                |
| End of Marking Period 2  |  |
| Week of                  | 3rd Marking Period Units                     |
| 1/24                     | Unit 3: Topics 11, 12,& 13                   |
| 1/31                     | Unit 3: Review & Test / Unit 4: Topics 1 & 2 |
| 2/7                      | Unit 4: 3, 4, 5, & 6                         |
| 2/14                     | Unit 4: 7, 8, 9 & 10                         |
| 2/22                     | Unit 4: Review & Test                        |
| 2/28                     | Unit 5: Topics 1 & 2                         |
| 3/7                      | Unit 5:Topics 3, 4, & 5                      |
| 3/14                     | Unit 5:Topics 6 & 7                          |

|                         |                                |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3/21                    | Unit 5: Topics 8 & 9           |
| End of Marking Period 3 |                                |
| Week of                 | 4th Marking Period Units       |
| 3/28                    | Unit 5: 10 & 11                |
| 4/4                     | Unit 5: Topics 12 & 13         |
| 4/11                    | SPRING BREAK                   |
| 4/18                    | Exam Review                    |
| 4/25                    | Exam Review                    |
| 5/2                     | AP Gov Exam TBD                |
| 5/9                     | TBD                            |
| 5/16                    | TBD                            |
| 5/23                    | TBD                            |
| 5/31                    | TBD                            |
| 6/3-6/8                 | FINALS/End of Marking Period 4 |

*This schedule is a plan, and may change due to the current climate and culture of the nation, and decisions made by local, state and national government officials about our ability to work and learn in the building and/or at home.*

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Cheating, copying, and plagiarizing are forms of dishonesty. Students caught copying will receive a zero for the assignment or test. Allowing someone to copy your completed paper will result in a zero for you as well.

Plagiarism: *to use the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own words or ideas.*

Source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize> **Do not copy directly from the Internet source and try to turn it in as your own work.** Changing one or two words from an Internet source is still plagiarism. Read the information, process the information, and then rewrite the information in your own words. Students who plagiarize receive a failing grade for that assignment.