**A.P. U.S. Government and Politics Syllabus**

Instructor: William G. Keczkemethy

Course **Text**: Wilson, James and J. Dilulio. American Government. 8th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001

Constitution Resource: We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. CA: Center for Civic Education, 1995

Students are also required to obtain their own copy of one of the following A.P. Government work-books:

* Barron’s How to Prepare for the A.P. Advance Placement Exam, U.S. Government . . .
* Cliff’s A.P.: U.S. Government & Politics
* Kaplan: A.P. U.S. Government & Politics
* The Princeton Review: Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam
* Research & Education Association: The Best Test Preparation for the AP . . .

**Purpose**

The express purpose of this course is to prepare students for success with the A.P. Government Exam.

To this purpose, students shall study political theory and explore the roots, form, and function, of American citizenship and government. Students are required to go beyond simple “understanding” of our government. Students must develop a deep and broad analytical mastery of our system of governance, as well as the relationship, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship.

**Scope**

Our A.P. Government Course runs in tandem with our Constitution Team Program, covering two semesters.

Students meet five days a week for forty-seven minutes. Students are also required to work in teams and conduct out-of-school research, and work sessions. In fact, throughout the year, there are about 4-5 occasions where students are required to attend after-school hearings or practice tests.

**Grading**

This course is not math-based, nor are there an exact number of assignments. The number of assignments may vary based on the progress of the class. Also, while grading multiple-choice tests is completely objective, the grading of hearings and thought-pieces may include some subjectivity. Therefore, grades cannot be based on some exact, yet arbitrary, amount of points gained. **Grades are based on a student’s collective average**. While some bright and savvy students like to “crunch numbers” so they know exactly where they should apply effort to maximize their grades, with this system **the best way to maximize one’s grade is to do one’s best as often as is possible**. The course is Lecture/Text/Research/Writing based, so one must attend class and take notes, consistently read the text, and perform much research and writing to be successful.

Here are the current relative values/weights of assignments and assessments:

(minor changes in values may occur based on assignment/assessment frequency.

Semester II: A.P. Government and Politics

Assignment % of value/weight

**Participation …………………. 10%**

**Gen. Assignments …………… 15%**

**Essays ………………………... 25%**

**Chapter and M.C. Tests ……. 30%**

**After-School A.P. Exams……. 20%**

**Assignment Completion**

This is an advanced, college level course that demands teamwork and timely completion of assignments.

\*All assignments are due on due date, if you can’t get to school, arrange to have assignment brought in.

\*Students alone are responsible for independently finding out what they “missed” due to an absence.

\*Academics take priority over extra-curricular activities: make arrangements with extracurricular sponsors

and coaches at the beginning of the year to be excused to attend mandatory hearings or exams.