

# AP US GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## Summer Assignment: 2018-2019

AP US Government and Politics requires different thinking and writing skills than you may have used in US History or previous history courses. Writing for AP Government requires a strong understanding of political vocabulary, as well as the ability of analysis of abstract concepts and principles. You must develop an understanding beyond basic memorization and recitation of facts and key terms. Throughout the year, you must become aware of the United States political process in general and specifically, have an opportunity to explore your political self and where you fit into our political world today. This 3-part summer assignment is MANDATORY and is designed to help you transition from thinking historically to thinking and writing from an AP level political perspective.

**DUE DATE:** Wednesday, the first week of full classes in September.

***No summer assignment will be accepted LATE! If it is AUGUST and you find you haven't started this assignment, you are probably in the wrong class.***

### **Assignment 1:**

#### **Part I: Read Article III of the US Constitution.**

1. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Supreme Court?
2. What process is established to select members of the court? Why was it created this way?
3. How many members currently serve on the Supreme Court? Name them and who appointed them.

#### **Part II: Research the 42 Supreme Court cases listed below:**

1. Using a spiral or black and white notebook, create a journal in which you record the following information for each case:
  - A. The Constitutional Question that is brought by each case.
  - B. Background of each case (minimally 4 to 5 sentences).
  - C. Opinion (decision) of the Court.
  - D. Long Term results, impact or precedent for each case.

Note: The journal must be **HAND WRITTEN!** Students will be expected to be familiar with these court cases as they will be discussed during the course. Information can be found on many reliable websites, such as [www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org) or [www.landmarkcases.org](http://www.landmarkcases.org).

1. McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
2. Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)
3. Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
4. Gitlow v. New York (1925)
5. Korematsu v. United States (1944)
6. Bush v. Gore (2000)
7. Mapp v. Ohio (1961)
8. Engle v. Vitale (1962)
9. Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
10. Barron v. Baltimore (1833)
11. Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)
12. Lemon v. Kurtzman (1973)
13. Roe v. Wade (1973)
14. United States v. Nixon (1974)
15. Buckley v. Valeo (1976)
16. Baker v. Carr (1962)
23. Clinton v. New York (1998)
24. Griswold v. Connecticut (1965)
25. Grutter v. Bollinger (2003);  
related case: Gratz v. Bollin
26. Marbury v. Madison (1803)
27. United States v. Morrison (2000)
28. Weeks v. United States (1914)
29. Wolf v. Colorado (1946)
30. Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)
31. Malloy v. Hogan (1964)
32. Miranda v. Arizona (1966)
33. Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)
34. New York Times v. Sullivan (1964)
35. Lawrence v. Texas (2003)
36. McConnell v. FEC (2003)
37. Palko v. Connecticut (1937)

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| 17. Gregg v Georgia (1976)  | 38. Smith v. Allwright (1944)                            |
| 18. Regents of California v. Bakke (1978)                           | 39. Clinton v. Jones (1997)                              |
| 19. Schenck v. United States (1919)                                 | 40. Immigration & Naturalization Service v. Chada (1983) |
| 20. Kelo v. City of New London (2005)                               | 41. Webster v. Reproductive Health Services (1989)       |
| 21. Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey (1992) | 42. Citizens United v. FEC (2010)                        |
| 22. United States v. Lopez (1995)                                   |  |

**Assignment #2:** The US Constitution. Read the US Constitution and answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Please include the question (as it will help you to know what you will be studying). All MUST BE HAND-WRITTEN.

**Part I: THE STRUCTURE OF THE US CONSTITUTION:**

1. Read each of the 7 Articles of the US Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in one or two sentences. (Label each: Article I, Article II, Article III, Article IV, Article V, Article VI and Article VII.)
2. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House of Representatives?
3. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?
4. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for the President of the US?
5. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to federal office holders are called express powers.
  - a. Identify two express powers
  - b. What are express powers of the Vice President?
  - c. Identify two express powers of Congress.
6. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of government must have control over the other branches. Look at the first three articles of the Constitution and identify one of each type for each of the three branches. Indicate where each power is listed in the Constitution.
  - a. A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
  - b. A power that the executive branch has over the judicial branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
  - c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
  - d. A power that the legislative branch has over the judicial branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
  - e. A power that the judicial branch has over the executive branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
  - f. A power that the judicial branch has over the legislative branch:
    - i. This can be found in what article and section of the Constitution?
7. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?
8. What power does the constitution give the President in the area of war?

**Part II: Majority and Supermajority:**

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a supermajority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while supermajority requirements can involve 2/3rds majority or a 3/4ths majority. Most elections in the US require a plurality, the most votes, but not always a majority.

9. Veto Power
  - a. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?
  - b. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?
  - c. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described (article and section)?
10. Ratification
  - a. What body has the power to ratify treaties?
  - b. What margin is required to ratify treaties?
  - c. Where in the Constitution is the ratification power described (article and section)?
11. Impeachment Power
  - a. What body has the power to impeach the president?
  - b. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described (article and section)?
12. Conviction
  - a. What body has the power to convict the president of charges brought against him in the impeachment process and thereby remove him from office?
  - b. What margin is required to convict and remove a president?
13. Nomination Process
  - a. What body has the power to accept or reject a president's nomination to the Supreme Court?
  - b. what margin is required to elevate a president's nominee to a seat on the Supreme Court?
  - c. Where in the Constitution are judicial nominations described?
14. Elections
  - a. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the total electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?
  - b. What margin is required to choose the president?
  - c. Where in the Constitution is the Electoral College described (article and section, there are 2 parts)?
15. The Constitution specifies a  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority for just one process. What is that process?
16. See Article VI. Explain the supremacy clause in your own words.
17. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?
18. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?

### **Part III: Amendments to the Constitution**

Some parts of the Constitution require a simple majority, others a supermajority, while still others protect citizens from the will of the majority. The first 10 Amendments to the Constitution, The Bill of Rights, protect citizens from the will of the majority, which means, no majority vote can take these rights away. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

19. For each amendment in the Bill of Rights, identify the right(s) protected.
20. Which amendment(s) to the Constitution protect the right(s) of women?
21. Which amendment(s) to the Constitution protect the right(s) of minorities?
22. How were US Senators chosen prior to the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment?
23. The 25<sup>th</sup> Amendment describes the sequence of events that would install the Vice President as acting President against the will of the President. Outline the sequence of events.
24. How many times is the word privacy mentioned in the Constitution (articles and Amendments)?

## **Assignment #3: Required reading and reflection paper**

### **Part I: Just Mercy, A Story of Justice and Redemption**

1. Read *Just Mercy, A Story of Justice and Redemption*.

Stevenson, Bryan. *Just Mercy, A story of Justice and Redemption*. New York, Spiegel & Grau, 2014.

2. Write a 2-3 page reflection paper on the book. Here are a few pointers on writing a reflection paper:

- Writing reflection papers on books is important because it enables you to evaluate your experience after reading a book. Remember that a reflection paper is not just a summary of opinions and experiences nor should you just recap the events or story line of the book. The reflections, analysis and discussion should be based on personal opinion and should reference and discuss specific aspects. Reflective writing allows you a chance to connect to and engage with a reading critically.
- Although a reflection paper has a personal nature, you should not simply put your thoughts on a paper. Since it is an academic assignment, your introduction should be clear with a thesis statement. A good way of writing the introduction of a reflection paper is describing your initial expectations and attitude towards the book that you read. Let readers know what your first impression towards the book was and what your experience was after reading it.