

June 2017

Dear GoPos,

Welcome to Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics (APGov). There are 5 important steps you should take to position yourselves for meaningful discourse and maximized achievement in APGov.

1. **Pick up your text books and start reading.** You can get a head start building your foundation in the class by reading the text and building political vocabulary. You may find it useful to get started over the summer so that you can focus on free response questions (frqs) and other summative assessments during the busy school year.
2. **Become informed.** Follow news about the federal legislative, judicial and executive branches. Be prepared to speak knowledgeably about how current events interface with government at an institutional level. Start by reading the New York Times or a comparable publication daily so that you will get supportive details instead of just sound bites about the news. Sign up for news alerts on your phone from biased and unbiased sources. Follow politicians from both major parties on social media.
3. **Prepare for Constitution Day on 9/15.** This gopo superholiday will be upon us almost as soon as we return to school. This year in addition to trivia drop-ins, we are anticipating a visit from your Congressman, Jim Himes. At the assembly for the senior class, GoPos will present three minute video vignettes about how the US Constitution affects our lives today. If you'd like to produce a video on your own or in groups of up to four GoPos, you are invited to start filming over the summer. You can also start to plan and gather materials for your patriotic costume. Many students make use of leftover Independence Day items when constructing their costumes.
4. **Get involved.** We urge you to volunteer for a candidate or a cause of your choice this summer, even if you can only give one hour handing out information, working a phone bank, or canvassing. From such experiences, you will connect to course concepts on a deeper level, contribute to our nation's welfare, become more invested in current issues, and bolster your college applications.
5. **Network with your GoPo classmates.** One of the first concepts you will learn in APGov is the value of collective action. We recommend you create a Facebook group with your fellow GoPos to disseminate interesting articles, debate topics, and share political opportunities over the summer. Just follow the golden GoPo rule of thumb when debating: keep it political, never personal.

So get busy becoming our GoPos and preparing to become the school politicians! If you have any questions, concerns, ideas, articles, opportunities or experiences to share over the summer, don't hesitate to contact us at dbourque@fairfieldschools.org or skempner@fairfieldschools.org

Govlove,

Mrs. Bourque and Mrs. Kempner