

A.P. U.S. Government and Politics (APGov)

FLHS/FWHS

Summer Reading Assignment

Overview

The central focus of APGov summer reading is to examine the role the U.S. Constitution plays in American government and politics today. Government and Politics students will start their summer reading by studying the U.S. Constitution. Students will also read national political news on a daily basis throughout the summer. During six of the nine weeks of summer vacation, students will write analyses connecting their current event articles to the U.S. Constitution and U.S. government/politics curricular questions. One analysis must be submitted per week to turnitin.com over six of the nine weeks of summer.

Turnitin.com Enrollment Information

School	Teacher	Enrollment Password	Class ID
FLHS	Bassett/Bourque	Gopo	8024906
FWHS	MacIntosh/Radovic	APGov	8141954

Resource Selection

1. The U.S. Constitution is readily available through many sources including:

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html

2. Students will read articles published in 2014 from these (or comparable) sources:
 - a. The New York Times
 - b. The Washington Post
 - c. The Washington Times
 - d. The Wall Street Journal
 - e. The Weekly Standard
 - f. The New Republic

U.S. Government and Politics Curricular Question Sets

Students will address six question sets below. Each of the six analyses will address a different question set. Question sets will direct news article selection. Students should read several articles related to each topic before composing their analyses. Analyses, each approximately 500 words in length, will integrate both current events and U.S. constitutional provisions.

1. Is the system of checks and balances set up in Articles I – III of the U.S. Constitution effective at balancing and limiting the powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government?
2. Select three bills or laws which have been considered by the 113th U.S. Congress. How does each piece of legislation connect to the powers granted to Congress in Article I Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution? Have the executive and judicial branches been involved in the creation of policy in these areas?
3. The U.S. Supreme Court is the highest court of the land. Select a case adjudicated in the past calendar year. Which constitutional principles were considered and from which perspectives? Evaluate the impact the decision may have on policy. What impact could concurring or dissenting opinions have on future cases?
4. Judicial Activism is the idea that courts can extend beyond their role of interpreting law and engage in the creation of new policy. Find and analyze an example of the U.S. Supreme Court engaging in judicial activism within the last year. Can you find a basis for or against judicial activism in Article III of the U.S. Constitution?
5. Although the U.S. Constitution does not address or provide for political parties, these organizations wield great power in the U.S. government. Analyze news articles in which the activity of a political party is instrumental in shaping our government policy or legislation. Which part of the U.S. Constitution enables political parties to play a role in government?
6. The Supreme Court has ruled that campaign donations may be considered a form of political speech protected by the First Amendment. Locate news sources which identify the sources of candidates' campaign donations. Hypothesize the effects these funds could have on the upcoming midterm election and a politician's behavior.
7. Describe federalism and the relationship between federal and state powers. Which aspects of the U.S. Constitution provide the framework for this relationship? Describe one conflict between federal and state powers in the news this year, and how Americans are impacted.
8. Media plays a large role in filtering and highlighting the general public's focus on current events. Evaluate the role media plays in agenda-setting for the public and the government. How do the media prime our view of politicians and frame our view of events/policies? How essential is the freedom of the press?
9. How do interest groups, bureaucratic agencies, and congressional committees (also known as iron triangles or issue networks) work to create and influence public policy? Do you think the founding fathers would have predicted this relationship? Do you believe these networks are elitist or pluralist?
10. The President and Congress have delegated power to the federal bureaucracy. Track the implementation of a federal policy by the bureaucracy. Has the U.S. Congress exercised oversight over the process? How involved is the President? Why do you think the bureaucracy has been given a lot of discretion in administering policy?

Scoring Rubric

Students will self-assess each analysis applying the criteria below by circling the appropriate box for each criterion.

Week 1 – date submitted: _____ Name _____

Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle the question set number you are answering.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Week 2 – date submitted: _____ Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(Circle the question set number you are answering. Strike "x" through the question set number answered last week.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Week 3 – date submitted: _____

Name _____

Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle the question set number you are answering. Strike “x” through question set numbers answered in previous weeks.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Week 4 – date submitted: _____

Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle the question set number you are answering. Strike “x” through question set numbers answered in previous weeks.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Week 5 – date submitted: _____

Name _____

Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle the question set number you are answering. Strike “x” through question set numbers answered in previous weeks.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Week 6 – date submitted: _____

Question Set # 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (Circle the question set number you are answering. Strike “x” through question set numbers answered in previous weeks.)

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	Response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	Response does not address an original question set and/or is not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support	Fewer than three sources are utilized, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view.	Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	Answer to question set is thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	Response sufficiently answers question in approximately 500 words. However, answer may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	Response does not fully answer question set or lacks required elaboration.

Staple your self-assessments on top of your printed analyses. On the first day of class, submit a printed version of your self-assessments and analyses to your teacher for grading. Your teacher will score your summer work using the rubric below.

APGOV Summer Assignment
Teacher Scoring Rubric

Name _____

Criteria	Outstanding	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Question Set Selection and Submission	n/a	10-7 points Each response addresses an original question set on time on turnitin.com	6-0 points Responses do not address an original question set and/or are not submitted on time to turnitin.com
Selection and Integration of News Articles	20-18 points At least three esteemed news sources are keenly interpreted and astutely applied in each analysis. The student draws abundant support and employs relevant information to make insightful observations.	17-12 points At least three respectable news sources are interpreted and applied in each analysis. Student integrates articles but discussion could be augmented by increased rigor and improved support in some cases.	11-0 points Fewer than three sources are utilized per analysis, or the sources lack sophistication and reliability. Sources are not aptly integrated.
Application and Evaluation of Constitutional Principles	20-18 points A sophisticated interpretation of constitutional principles is evident in each analysis. Principles are widely connected, thoughtfully explored, and richly evaluated from multiple points of view.	17-12 points Constitutional principles are adequately applied and considered, possibly from only one point of view per analysis, or are unevenly applied.	11-0 points Constitutional principles are misapplied or insufficiently addressed.
Question Set Central Answer	30-25 points Answer to question sets are thoroughly developed and articulately addressed in approximately 500 words per analysis. Awareness of the complexity of issues is evident and depth of thought is demonstrated through inclusion of higher level concepts and abundant support	24-21 points Response sufficiently answers questions in approximately 500 words per analysis. However, some answers may be surface level without convincing evidence of critical thinking and depth of research for full support.	20-0 points Responses do not fully answer question set or lack required elaboration.

Total points earned _____ / 80 possible points