

June 2016

Dear GoPo,

Welcome to Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics (APGov). I am genuinely thrilled to have you in this class during such a dramatic presidential election cycle. I hope you, too, will be excited to engage in high level political analysis in the upcoming school year. You also may become excited to know that we do not have a formal summer assignment for this course due on the first day of class. However, there are 5 important steps you should take to position yourself for meaningful discourse and maximized achievement in APGov.

1. **Pick up your text books and start reading.** You can even get a head start on vocabulary and Lowi readings by following the attached reading guide. You will be defining on notecards the vocabulary terms found in the margins of each chapter, and answering the Lowi reading comprehension questions enumerated in the guide. You may find it useful to get started on these tasks 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.** 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 candidates from both major parties on social media. Look for news items that connect to course terminology on the syllabus and in the text books. By the end of the summer, you should have a firm understanding of salient issues in this election cycle as well as the major candidates' stances.
3. **Prepare for Constitution Day on 9/16.** This gopo superholiday will be upon us almost as soon as we return to school. This year in addition to trivia drop-ins, we will be conducting an Electoral College class competition. You will each represent a particular state's political culture and electoral vote. You should reserve your state before you leave for summer vacation by signing up on a list on my desk in room 205. Throughout the summer you should follow that state's news with particular interest. You can get started researching your state and you can design your Constitution Day costume over the summer (see attached).
4. **Get involved.** I strongly urge you to volunteer for a candidate of your choice this summer, even if you can only give one hour handing out information, working a phone bank, or canvassing. You can also seek out issue advocacy groups and promote a cause instead of a candidate. 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. I 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 my 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 me at [skempner@fairfieldschools.org](mailto:skempner@fairfieldschools.org)

Govlove,

Mrs. Kempner

CONSTITUTION DAY

ELECTORAL COLLEGE COMPETITION

September 16, 2016

Overview: Each gopo will research a particular state’s political culture and electoral vote. This research will be presented on a class map and on your Constitution Day costume. Based on your research, you will join one of three teams: a blue team (safe Democratic states), a red team (safe Republican states) or a purple team (swing states). On Constitution Day, the red team and blue team will try to court electoral votes from the purple team to win the presidential election with 270+/538 electoral votes.

CLASS MAP

What to research for your state:	How to present research for class map:
<p>Check list:</p> <p>___ Number of registered Democrats and Republicans</p> <p>___ Number of registered voters who are unaffiliated/independent</p> <p>___ Voter turnout in last two presidential elections</p> <p>___ Political culture and public opinion in state which could tilt voters one way or the other (state of economy, immigration issues, environment, etc.)</p> <p>Which issues sway voters to which candidate?</p> <p>___ Number of electoral votes (and are they winner-take-all?)</p> <p>___ Which party won the state in each of the last 5 presidential elections</p> <p>___ Are voter identification laws likely to impact turnout? How?</p>	<p>-Get two 4 x 6 notecards</p> <p>-Fold both in half like a book</p> <p>-Color the outside front cover of one notecard red, blue or purple (depending on your state’s electoral leaning)</p> <p>-Write your state abbreviation and number of electoral votes on this cover</p> <p>-Staple the other notecard inside the book cover</p> <p>-Present your research findings inside the notecard book</p> <p>-Do not write on the back cover because the back cover will be glued to our class map.</p>

CONSTITUTION DAY COSTUME

<p>Put together a Constitution Day costume which represents your state’s political culture and electoral vote. You are encouraged to be respectfully creative. You do not need to buy anything for this activity and can also simply attach signs to your normal clothing. As you brainstorm your costume, It might be helpful to visualize an Electoral College team jersey with your state as the player’s name and the Electoral College vote count as your jersey number.</p> <p>At minimum, make sure your shirt includes these elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Your shirt should have an abundance of red, blue, or purple elements to align with your team;</li> <li>-Your shirt should clearly display your state’s abbreviation; and</li> <li>-Your shirt should clearly display your state’s number of electoral votes.</li> </ul>
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## Lowi Text Reading Comprehension Questions

Directions: If you would like to get a head start on course textbook readings for our first two units, you may use these questions as a guide. You can also start defining on notecards vocabulary terms found in the margins of each reading.

### UNIT 1: Political Beliefs and Behaviors

Read p.2-33

1. What is government?
2. Define the six forms of government listed.
3. What are the foundations of government?
4. Why is government necessary?
5. List the five principles of politics.

Read p.378-399

1. How do each influence the formation of public opinion?
  - a. Common fundamental values
  - b. Political socialization
  - c. Political ideology
2. What is the relationship between public opinion and political knowledge?

Read p.489-496 (this reading is outside current chap)

1. How do each of the following impact voter partisan identification?
  - a. Race/ethnicity
  - b. Gender
  - c. Religion
  - d. Class
  - e. Ideology
  - f. Region
  - g. Age

Read p.399-419

1. How do each shape public opinion?
  - a. Government
  - b. Private groups
  - c. Media
2. How do each impact the validity of the poll's results?
  - a. Sampling techniques and selection bias
  - b. Sample size
  - c. Survey design
  - d. Push polling
  - e. Illusion of salience
  - f. Bandwagon effect
3. How does public opinion influence government policy?
4. How did the partisan divide over the war in Iraq influence politicians?

Read p.420-445

1. What is adverse-selection problem?
2. What is the moral hazard problem?
3. How does the government regulate the electoral composition?
4. How are elections impacted by the government's control of the criteria for winning and electoral districts?
5. What is the impact of each of the following decision-making processes?
  - a. The Electoral College
  - b. Frequency of elections
  - c. Size of districts
  - c. Ballot
6. How is each of the following considered aspects of direct democracy?
  - a. Referendum
  - b. Initiative
  - c. Recall

Read p.445-464

1. What weight do voters assign to each of the following?
  - a. Partisan loyalty
  - b. Issues
  - c. Candidate characteristics
2. What were the Democrats' opportunities in 2004?
3. What was the Republican strategy in 2004?
4. How did the 2004 election play out?
5. Explain the results of the 2006 election.
6. How do each factor in campaign finance?
  - a. Individual donors
  - b. PACs and 527s
  - c. Candidates
  - d. Independent spending
  - e. Public funding
7. How has BCRA impacted campaign finance? How does it impact democracy? (Note – some changes have been made since this book was published which we will discuss in class)

Read p.464-475

1. Why is voter turnout so low?
2. Is it rational to vote?
3. Why do elections matter as political institutions?
4. Why were voters pessimistic about the future in 2006?

Read p.476-506

1. Why do parties form?
2. What functions do they perform?  
(You have already read this section on voter demographics, but review it.)
3. Outline the six party systems.
4. Do you believe we are in the sixth party system?

## UNIT 2: Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media

Read p.506-521

1. Why do many minor parties have short lives?
2. How do single-member districts and the plurality system impact minor parties?
3. What became of the two most successful 3rd party efforts in the 20th century?
4. What are the six elements of new political technology used by parties?
5. What does it mean that parties have shifted from being “labor-intensive” to being “capital-intensive”?
6. What three tasks do party conventions perform?
7. What role does the party committee play?
8. What is the main task performed by congressional campaign committees?
9. In which three tasks are state and local party organizations active?
10. Why do national parties transfer money to state/local parties?
11. What services do parties provide for candidates?
12. What is the concern for moderate Republicans?

Read text p.522-538

1. How do interest groups enhance democracy?
2. How do interest groups represent the evils of factions?
3. Provide examples of economic interest groups.
4. What do all interest groups require?
5. Why is it asserted that interest group membership has an upper-class bias?
6. Why do interest groups form?
7. What is the prisoner’s dilemma?
8. How/when is there logic in collective action?
9. What is the free-rider problem, and what is the solution to it?
10. What are the 4 selective benefits of interest groups?
11. How do political entrepreneurs dissolve the paradox of collective action?

Read text p.560-574

1. List trends associated with
  - a. Broadcast media
  - b. Print media
  - c. The Internet
2. Name the commission which regulates radio and tv.
3. What was the impact of the 1996 Telecommunications Act? (Include the impact on ownership discussed on p.571)
4. How does the government regulate political content of broadcasts?
5. Which regulation is no longer enforced?
6. List the 4 cases discussed and state how they impacted freedom of the press.
7. What are the three major news magazines? What is the main cable news source?
8. What is the impact of the homogenization and nationalization of news?

Read text p.574-585

1. Is there a liberal bias in the news?
2. What impact does selection bias have? Is the impact more significant than ideological bias?
3. What are the implications of each these news sources?
  - a. Leaks
  - b. Press releases

c. Hiring reporters

4. What is the impact of news catering to an upscale audience?
5. What is the relationship between media and conflict?

Read text p.74-109

1. How does the physician-assisted suicide case illustrate both federalism and separation of powers?
2. What powers are granted to the national government? To state governments?
3. How are states obliged to one another through
  - a. Full Faith and Credit and
  - b. Privileges and Immunities?
4. What limitations are placed on states?
5. Explain the cases which addressed the issue of how to divide power under dual federalism.
6. Which clauses have the federal government used to extend its power?
7. How have grants-in-aid been used to extend federal influence?
8. What is the issue with unfunded mandates? How did UMRA address this?
9. How do block grants give more power to states?
10. What is the impact of devolution?
11. Which two amendments have been used to bolster arguments for states' rights? What has the Supreme Court had to say about this issue?
12. List checks and balances powers.
13. Which is the preeminent branch?
14. What is the most important indication of the intention of legislative supremacy?
15. According to James Madison in Federalist 51, why is it important that the interests of individual political actors be connected with the constitutional rights of their offices?
16. Explain the meaning of this phrase: "...'presidential government' seemed to supplant legislative supremacy after 1937..."
17. Does the Supreme Court frequently review constitutionality of the president's acts? Identify trends and cases.
18. Has the Court upheld executive privilege? The line item veto?
19. How was the Court ruled on detainees in the War on Terror?
20. How was welfare reform part of devolution?
21. Why have immigration protection rules drawn fire?