

AP US Government & Politics Summer Assignment

Part 1: It is essential in the Ap US Government and Politics course to understand the foundation of our system of government, the US Constitution. Thus, your assignment is to create a personalized annotated outline of the entire US Constitution (preamble, articles, and amendments).

Requirements:

1. Read and comprehend the entire US Constitution. You should be able to rewrite the Constitution in your own words.
2. Create an annotated outline of the entire US Constitution (can be handwritten, typed, or whatever works for you)
 - a. Annotate so you understand what each component of the Constitution means in modern-day terms, what changes have been made over time, and how the Constitution is applied today.
 - b. Annotations should be in your own words and voice, not the voice of the Framers (or any 'expert' found through Google -- it is vital to make sense of the text through your own perspective and understanding).
3. You need to understand the Constitution in detail and not simply the main ideas, you also need to be able to locate the principles by Article, section, and clause.
 - a. *For example, the ability to determine the time and place of elections is determined by the state.* This is in Article I, section 4, clause 1.

Note: I will be checking over your outline on the entire Constitution during the first week of school. Create this as if it was your only access to the constitution for an exam.

Example:

- I. Preamble - your translation of what all those goals actually mean (in your own words)
- II. Articles - explain what they do (in your own words)
 - A. Article I: Legislative Branch - what is it? (in your own words)
 1. Section 1. Congress - explain what it is and what function this section provides (in your own words)
 2. Section 2: House of Representatives - explain what it is and what function this section provides (in your own words)
 - a) Clause 1: Elections - explain what it is and what function this section provides (in your own words)
 - b) Clause 2: Qualifications - explain what it is and what function this section provides (in your own words)

Etc... through the very last amendment

Part 2: Another important aspect of this class is making connections between course material and current events. Start following US government and politics-related news stories. Look for daily news stories that portray the national government in action and highlight the issues/crises it must deal with every day. Especially focus on stories that discuss Congress, the Presidency, Federal agencies, and the Supreme Court. You can also follow stories that involve national elections, politics, and politicians. **DO NOT** limit your newly-formed current events habit to just one publication or even type of media -- vary your sources by reading major national newspapers online (*New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc.), politically focused web-only publications (*Politico*, etc.), and national news program on major TV networks (*CBS*, *ABC*, *NBC*, *FOX*), the Sunday morning “interview” shows (*Meet the Press*, *Face the Nation*) and the specialized 24/7 news channels (Fox News Channel, CNN, or MSNBC). Being able to discuss “real world” current events will greatly enhance your understanding of the theoretical concepts in this course. While the US Constitution may be almost 230 years old, dust is far from gathering on this document -- it influences our daily lives on a daily basis. As a result, it is enormously important to have a solid and thorough understanding of the actual content of the US Constitution. However, that is not enough. You must be able to understand *how* the document is reflected in our political system in the 21st century. Part 2 requires no formal work to be handed in, however, it will be very clear who did and who did not do this part of the summer assignment.