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AP US Government and Politics – Summer Assignment
Due: August 28, 2026
Exam Date: May 6th *(tentative)*

Overview of the Course

This course is designed to be equivalent to a one-semester introductory college course. This course introduces students to key political ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize American political culture. The course examines politically significant concepts and themes, which facilitate applying disciplinary reasoning, assessing causes and consequences of political events and interpreting data to develop evidence-based arguments.

Course Content

The AP U.S. Government & Politics course is organized around five units which focus on major topics in U.S. government and politics. These units are:

- Foundations of American Democracy
- Interaction among Branches of Government
- Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
- American Political Ideologies and Beliefs
- Political Participation

The Exam

The AP exam will take place on **May 6th**. As you probably already know, the school requires that anyone enrolled in an AP class takes the AP test. This is a great opportunity for you to demonstrate the knowledge you have acquired and earn college credits at a **severely** discounted price. Three hours long, the exam comprises 55 multiple choice questions and 4 Free Response questions. We will spend time during the year specifically practicing and preparing for the exam itself.

I hope that AP Gov can be a positive place for you to explore the workings of this great country we live in. However, this is a class that is designed to replace an actual college class and will be treated as such. You will be held to high standards and will be expected to put in the work and time associated with a college-level course. I'm always here to help answer questions and assist wherever I can.

The Assignment (50 points total):

Step 1: Get some index cards. I know many of you may use Quizlet and after you complete the assignment you are more than welcome to do that as well. However, this will give you the opportunity to blend visual *and* kinesthetic learning as you write out very crucial information that will help you succeed in the class. All index cards must be written in your handwriting. No typed material.

Step 2: In order to become familiar with the nine foundational documents you will create an index card for each one. On the index card you should include the following: **(30 points)**

Front of the Card	Back of the Card
1. *Federalist* No. 10 2. *Brutus* No. 1 3. The Declaration of Independence 4. The Articles of Confederation 5. U.S. Constitution 6. The Bill of Rights 7. *Federalist* No. 51 8. Letter from a Birmingham Jail 9. *Federalist* No. 70 10. *Federalist* No. 78	**WHO** wrote it? (This can be a group author; ex: Congress) **WHEN** was it written? (The year suffices.) At least one of the following… **WHAT** was discussed? **WHAT** should we remember about it? **WHY** do we care today?

Step 3: There will be much new vocabulary that we'll be using in class this year. I want you to get somewhat familiar with key terms in advance of the class starting. There are 20 terms listed below. These terms will be addressed in Unit I of the course and we will make reference to them throughout the year. Please complete an index card for each one with the definition. **(20 points)**

I want you to excel in this class and I am happy to help in achieving that goal. If at any point you have questions on anything, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. I look forward to working with you this coming year ☺
~Mr. VanDereedt

TERMS TO KNOW

1. Checks and balances
2. Civil liberties
3. Civil rights
4. Commerce clause
5. Concurrent powers
6. Cooperative federalism
7. Dual federalism
8. Elastic clause
9. Enumerated powers
10. Impeachment
11. Implied powers
12. Judicial review
13. Limited government
14. Lobbying
15. Logrolling
16. Popular sovereignty
17. Representative democracy
18. Republic
19. Reserved powers
20. Inherent powers