AP U.S. Government & Politics Summer Work

Welcome to AP U.S. Government & Politics! Our course will explore the foundations of and levers of power within the American government. We will analyze how differing philosophies have been seen with American democracy and how competing interests and groups can work to influence policy making with our American democracy. Central to American democracy are several core principles including:

- *Federalism*
- *Separation of Powers/Check and Balances*
- *Limited Government*
- *Popular Sovereignty*
- *Judicial Review*

Assignment:

- **Part 1: Building Understanding:** Research and define each of the principles bulleted above. Your notes should go beyond a simple definition, including:
  - Key examples and debates surrounding core principle
  - Explanation of how the understanding/implementation of the core principle has changed over time
  - Explanation of how core principle impacts power in American government
  - **These notes will be collected and you will be assessed on your understanding of these ideas on the first day of class.**

- **Part 2: Application to Current Events*:*** AP U.S. Government & Politics balances studying ideological and abstract concepts with their practical application and impact on the American political system and peoples' lives. Consequently, understanding the current political landscape and building your background knowledge are important to allow you to engage with and fully analyze the content in this course. You will be researching how these principles continue to shape American political discourse.

  - Find and read/listen/watch at least two media sources (newspaper articles, podcasts, news segments) from this summer (June-August 2025) that connect each of the five principles listed above **10 sources total**.

    It is unlikely that the headline or source will name these principles directly, you need to understand each principle so you can see how they are applied and discussed in the news

  - For **each of your 10 sources**, you need to complete the organizer below which includes:
    - Providing a proper citation (including source, date, and name of article/podcast/segment)
    - Brief summary of source and explanation of how it connects to principle
    - Assessment of Bias within the source
    - Reflection

  - Your sources should include a balance of liberal, moderate, and conservative sources (see media bias chart attached)

  - ****A HARD COPY of this assignment is due on the FIRST day of class*****
  - **These sources and reflections will be a summative grade and will serve as your references for a discussion on the first day of class.**

- If you have any questions, email me (sgoepfrich@fairfieldschools.org). I do not check my email every day, but will email back as soon as I see it.

Suggested Resources: This is a starting point, not an exhaustive list. You are welcome to use other sources as well.

Newspapers/Print Sources	Podcasts	Television/News Programs
● *NPR* ● *The New York Times* ● *Washington Post* ● *Wall Street Journal* ● *The Economist* ● *BBC*	● *The Daily Podcast* ● *NPR: Politics Podcast* ● *Five-thirty-eight Politics Podcast* ● *WSJ What's News Podcast*	● *PBS Frontline* ● *60 Minutes* ● *Local News Stations (ex. Channel 8 News)* ● White House Briefings/ News Conferences

Media Bias Charts/Resources:

- Websites to identify media bias:
  - https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/media-bias-ratings
  - https://app.adfontesmedia.com/chart/interactive?utm_source=adfontesmedia&utm_medium=website
  - https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/

THIS CHART MUST BE COMPLETED FOR EACH OF YOUR 10 SOURCES

L: Liberal **sL:** Skews Liberal **M:** Moderate **sC:** Skews Conservative **C:** Conservative

Name:	Date:

Current Events Analysis

Title of Article

Source:	
Publication Date:	
Which of the five core principles are being featured in this article?	

Article Summary & Connection

…with necessary context and connection to the principle explained

Assessment of Bias: ● Where on the political spectrum does this source usually fall? ● Where in the article can you see bias in the reporting?	

Opinion – What are your thoughts and feelings after reading this article?

Question - What question(s) does this raise for you? (Can be topic specific or more general about core principle)