

Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics



Congratulations on your choice of AP U.S. Government and Politics. You could have taken the easy way out and coasted in regular U.S. Government. I will do everything I can to reward you for this decision.

This course is designed to teach you something about how people behave politically, and about the design of the American political system. As we move along, I hope that you will develop an interest in and an ability to intelligently and civilly discuss public issues, as well as an appreciation of your responsibility in our collective effort to enjoy and improve upon our traditions of liberty and justice.

My expectations of you must be understood at the outset. This is an AP class; therefore you will need to devote time outside of class to reading and studying the material. There will be assigned seats, and there will be no cliques. You will need to come to class with a notebook, alert and ready to contribute. I must emphasize how important it is to have an organized **three ring binder** with you every day.

Beginning halfway through the first quarter, anyone not in “**good academic standing**,” which means having an overall average of 80%, must schedule with me a review session once a week until you return to “good academic standing.” Miss a session and I call your parents. Miss a second session and we schedule a meeting in guidance to discuss whether AP Government is your best option.

I expect you, though I cannot force you, to take the **AP Exam next May 5**.

The three legged stool you see at the top of this page illustrates the three pillars that serve as the **foundation for success** in this course: 1) Good reading and writing skills, 2) High interest level that connects our curriculum with real events, and 3) Steady commitment of time to reinforce the subject matter.

If you comply with all of this, I expect you to look upon this experience as both educational and enjoyable. I believe that whatever grade or national exam score you earn is secondary to **honoring the process** of being an advanced placement student.

On the other hand, if you chose this course only because your friends did so, it’s the most convenient fit into your schedule, you like the thought of telling your grandmother you’re in an AP class, or it’s an easy way to raise your GPA, **please reconsider your decision** because it is likely you will not be happy here.

The reading will be mainly from collected outside articles that are attached to the 25 units of class notes. I can email you these notes, which you may then print and place in your notebook. You can also choose to access these notes and assignments from *Sharepointe*. The important thing to understand is that both your class participation and

activities grades will come from your interaction with these notes, so choose the way that works best for you.

My school email address is paul.meyerholz@vbschools.com and my home address is pdm56@cox.net. I will also (eventually) get a message by phone at 648-5650 ext. 77155. I would like your email address, if you have one, to facilitate communication between us. You should always check in with me when you miss a class, so you will be fully prepared for the next class.

The first time you are tardy to class each nine weeks will bring a warning from me. The second time gets you a 20-30 minute detention, the third time a Wednesday detention, and additional times tardy call for 1-3 days of ISS.

You will be evaluated each quarter in the following way:

- 20% - class participation, notebook checks
- 25% - projects and activities
- 25% - in-class essays
- 30% - notes, readings, and vocabulary quiz questions

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I would like you and a parent to sign below, signifying that you have read and understand these expectations.

Have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing you in September.

D. Meyerholz

(Student signature and email address)

(Parent signature and email address)

Salem High School is dedicated to serving the entire community by encouraging enrollment for all students who demonstrate a willingness to rise to the challenge of rigorous, college-level Advanced Placement coursework.