

AP Government & Politics/Honors Economics Course Introduction and Overview (2020-2021)

Dear Students:

We will spend the next 10 months studying American political, governmental, and economic systems. It's an exciting time to study politics, and I'm looking forward to helping you make sense of what's occurring and how it all works.

Here's how the College Board describes the AP Government & Politics course:

“AP U.S. Government and Politics provides a college-level, nonpartisan introduction to key political concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the constitutional system and political culture of the United States. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behaviors. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments. In addition, they will complete a political science research or applied civics project.”

One of our goals this year will be to create a “political classroom” where everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves, listening to others, and debating the controversial issues of the day. Disagreement is welcome; incivility is not.

Another one of our aims is to instill the importance of being connected to the world around us. In order to keep abreast of the latest happenings, we will start every class with current events. We will also analyze news items, identify bias, and practice talking about politics.

I'm aware that seniors have a lot on their plates with the college application process, and I limit homework as much as possible in recognition of that. What homework there is consists of following current events, preparing for quizzes and tests, and posting seminar reflections. Everything else we will handle during class. I expect students to check Aeries, Moodle, and email, regularly for course updates.

My expectation is that you will make every effort to attend class and to let me know in advance of your planned absences. I ask that you do that simply to develop good habits for the future. You are responsible for your whereabouts and for establishing a reputation of integrity and reliability, and one of the ways to do that is to keep the people who count on you informed. Pretend I'm a new boss or college professor you want to impress and act accordingly.

Here are some course specifics:

Grading Policy:

I will assign grades on the following scale:

90-100 – A 80-89 – B 70-79 – C 60-69 – D 0-59 – F

I will weight the grades as follows:

Tests, quizzes and timed writes: 40%

Current events, seminar reflections, and FRQ practice: 30%

Final Exam: 30% (the 2nd semester final exam score includes a project).

Extra Credit/Grade Bumps/Test corrections

I do not accept independent extra credit assignments. Upon request, I will bump either 1st or 2nd semester grades 3, 4, or 5 points for commensurate scores on the AP exam. **There are no test corrections offered in this course.**

Classroom Rules and Expectations:

Students are expected to conform to all CHS and CUSD attendance, academic honesty, and behavioral policies, and any such issues will be dealt with according to the prescribed procedures. Additionally, I expect all students to adhere to the following guidelines concerning classroom behavior and conduct:

1. Be **present**.
2. Be **civil**.
3. Act with **integrity**.
4. **Cooperate**.

Late work policy:

I will accept late work at a 50% penalty. Late work is any assignment not turned in on the due date, excused absences excepted. First semester late work must be turned in prior to the start of finals. Second semester work must be turned in prior to the start of AP testing.

Moodle/Aeries/Remind:

I will maintain a web page for this class on **Moodle** where you will find weekly syllabi, handouts, discussion forums and links to helpful websites and documents. There is a link to Moodle on the CHS website. All grades will be posted to the **Aeries** gradebook promptly, and I expect students to check Aeries and to inform me of any errors. I will use **Remind** (it's a text message/email notification service) to communicate with you about matters pertaining to the course.

Albert.io/AP Classroom: **Albert.io** is a website containing dozens of AP style multiple choice questions designed to help you check your understanding. This year, the College Board has created a website called **AP Classroom**, which contains practice questions and a self-assessment tool so that you can gauge your progress. I strongly encourage you to use both of these resources. We will learn how to use AP Classroom together.

**AP Government & Politics/Honors Economics
Course Agreement/Video Permission Slip**

By signing below, I am acknowledging that I have reviewed, I understand, and I intend to abide by the course requirements and expectations. **I also agree to sit for the AP Government & Politics Exam on May 3rd.** (CUSD covers the test fee).

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature:

I have reviewed the course description with my student.

Parent/Guardian name _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian

Signature: _____

I plan on using videos to supplement the course materials, and some of these videos are R-rated.

Here are some examples of videos I have used in the past:

The Big Short -- describes and explains the causes of the mortgage crisis.

Wag the Dog -- depicts the President's use of media to manipulate public opinion

All The President's Men -- describes the events surrounding Watergate.

Frost/Nixon -- Nixon's views about the scope of presidential power.

Please place a check next to your preference below:

_____ My student **MAY** watch R-rated content in AP GoPo/
Honors Economics

_____ My student **MAY NOT** watch R-rated content in AP
GoPo/Honors Economics. (I will provide them with an alternate
activity related to the course content being covered by the video.)