

**AP Core – U.S. Government and Politics
Summer Assignment 2022**

We will be starting the year at full speed so please understand that these assignments are all due on the first day of school. Type all answers on a Google Doc with your name in the title (example: HenryClay APGovsummer)

If you have any questions during the summer about any part of this assignment, you may email me at aleslie@wusd.org

1. *Politics vs. Government/Governance*

One of the most important distinctions for this course is the difference between politics and government. To start with a solid foundation of these terms, please complete the following tasks:

- A. Watch the following video and write a paragraph that summarizes the video (including his distinction between Politics and Government, but also the other key points he makes). This should be one 5-8 sentence paragraph.
 - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrk4oY7UxpQ>
- B. Write the definitions of the following Political ideas or Maxims (taken from a book called Hardball by Chris Matthews). Look-up each term on the internet and write the definition (there are several places to find these, including quizlet). I will be quizzing on these so make sure you understand their meaning:
 - o Retail vs. Wholesale Politics
 - o All Politics is Local
 - o Don't Get Mad; Don't Get Even, Get Ahead
 - o Leave No Shot Unanswered
 - o Only Talk When it Improves the Silence
 - o Spin (political spin)
 - o "The Press is the Enemy"
- C. Finally, find **two (2)** current event articles from this summer to summarize (for the articles, don't print it out, just list the title, date, and news source - which needs to be from a major newspaper: Washington Post, NY Times, Wall Street Journal, Press Democrat, etc.). For each article write two paragraphs; one summarizing the **POLITICS** of the event, and the other explaining the role of **GOVERNMENT**. Each paragraph should be at least 5-8 sentences long. You may struggle with the difference, but do your best and use what you garnered from part A and B for your summaries. The articles should be on an important national event, and should be a news article, not an opinion, analysis, or editorial.

2. Political Paper

This should be a separate Google Doc, again with your name in the title (e.g., FrederickDouglass.PolPaper).

You are to write paper (usually 3 pages or so, 1.5 - 2 spacing) that discusses your political ideology as it stands at this point in your life. You will need to start by going to www.politicalcompass.org, and take the test on your political ideology and see where you place on the graph (You **DO NOT** have to print out your graph, but do include your score, e.g., Economic left/right: +3.5 - put on top of paper). The graph may be confusing to you, but try to make some sense of it – we will discuss them in class.

Your paper should be organized in the following way (i.e., make each bullet a paragraph of 4-8 sentences):

- An introduction and overview as to who you are, how political you are (or are not), and why you think this is. You can discuss your family's politics, issues that you have been interested in, or simply why politics has never been a part of your life.
- At this point, please explain what label you would put on yourself at this point in your life (the political compass test could be referenced here). You can pick from **conservative, liberal, or libertarian**. I do ask that you pick one and clearly define it as best you can (look them up and read about them if you need to). I understand that most people don't fit neatly into these categories, but for this paper please explain what the term means to you and why you labeled yourself that ideology. Be general and use an example or two.
- For the next *one to two paragraphs*, please pick two (2) specific issues that you see as important and detail what actions the federal government should take in regards to the two issues (e.g., climate change, military/foreign policy, taxes, social issues, guns, abortion, business, etc.). Explain what you think the role of the government is in regards to the chosen issues (e.g., "the federal government should raise taxes on gas and use the money to fund solar power technology because..."). You may do more, but try to look into at least 2-3 in some depth. If you can avoid using "I think..." every sentence, it would be most appreciated.
- For the last paragraph, try to put yourself in a political party (Democrat or Republican). You may have to go to their websites to find their positions on certain issues – it is usually on the website under "issues" - but explain your reason. You will not have to share your positions from this paper, this is just a reflection at this point in time.

Good Luck with this, and try to be reflective. You will be writing some letters to your elected representatives this year, so hopefully this will get you thinking about some issues that speak to you.

3. News Test

This one is very simple: on one of the first days of class you will be given a test on the **major** news events of the summer. Something is newsworthy when a citizen in a democracy should know it in order to make an intelligent decision -- and this test will be only on the major stories of the summer.

In case you were wondering...ANYTHING dealing with a celebrity, a grisly murder of a government teacher, or some old lady living with a thousand cats is NOT news. Focus on being informed, not entertained (not that I am saying that it has to be boring to be news... okay, it has to be boring to be news). So, watch the news, read a newspaper, listen to news radio, even a comedy show; just stay informed. National and international stories will be the focus with maybe a few state issues as well; and don't neglect the economics/business stories. **Pay attention to the big stuff and you should be fine.**

So, grab a book or a newspaper, head to the river - and contemplate how you can let your magnificence illuminate the world.