Welcome to AP United States Government and Politics! I look forward to working with you this year to help you increase your political understandings of the US Government and prepare you to be successful on the AP Exam.

*Please purchase United States Government & Politics: Preparation for the Advanced Placement Examination by AMSCO, 2015 edition.* This is a review book that you will be able to use all year, and it provides valuable supplemental material to help you prepare for each class unit as well as the AP Exam in May. The cost is $18.95 plus shipping (you can combine your orders with others to save on shipping), and it can be purchased through: [https://www.perfectionlearning.com/social-studies/advanced-placement/united-states-government-politics-ap-exam/united-states-government-politics-preparing-for-the-advanced-placement-examination-46579.html](https://www.perfectionlearning.com/social-studies/advanced-placement/united-states-government-politics-ap-exam/united-states-government-politics-preparing-for-the-advanced-placement-examination-46579.html). Please make sure that you are purchasing the 2015 paperback edition textbook (not the ebook). These books are extremely popular and are often in short supply, so please order immediately.

Throughout the summer complete the following. You will have a quiz the first day of school.

1. Complete a Current Events Journal related to politics or policies of the US government.
2. Memorize the opening lines of the Declaration of Independence (attached).
3. Memorize the Preamble to the US Constitution (attached).
4. Memorize the 27 amendments to the US Constitution (attached).

AP Government is directly related to current events. Everything that we will study relates to how politics and government works in modern America. Accordingly, knowledge of current political and governmental affairs will significantly help you to understand the things we study, and will, in fact, be necessary to succeed in the course. If you know what is going on in the country with respect to politics and government, you will do better in the course.

You should follow major current events by doing one or more of the following on as close to a daily basis as possible:

- Read either the print or online version of a major newspaper.
- Watch a national/international news broadcast (CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, PBS, ABC, CBS, NBC) – not a local news broadcast.
- Read articles from an online political journalism website such as Politico (politico.com) or Five-Thirty-Eight (fivethirtyeight.com)
• Watch daily or weekly news/current affairs programming (Hardball, Meet the Press, Face the Nation, This Week, etc.)

During the course of the summer, keep a current events journal. Type a minimum two paragraphs (complete sentences; approximately 500 words) about the major event or events in American government or politics. In the first paragraph, you should describe the event or events, and in the second paragraph, you should analyze the significance of it and state any opinions, thoughts, or analysis that you might have about it. You must intelligently discuss one particularly important issue twice a month during the summer (June, July, and August—for a total of 6 entries).

Your journal should include information surrounding issues of significance related to American politics and government. Such information would include:

• The Presidency
• Congress
• Major legislation
• Constitutional issues
• Supreme Court debates and decisions
• Political issues
• Foreign policy issues and their relation to the US

With each week’s entry, you must cite in MLA format any news media sources you used. An example is attached below.
Sample Current Events Journal

Sally Student
AP Government and Politics
Sample Current Events Journal for May 18, 2015

Political news this week was dominated by the impending 2016 presidential election. As of now, the focus is on the already large and growing field of Republican primary candidates (the Democratic Party is expected to nominate Hilary Clinton without significant opposition). While several politicians have already declared their candidacy, former Florida Republican governor Jeb Bush and current Wisconsin Republican governor Scott Walker have not, although they are expected to soon. Analysts believe that they are waiting to make an official announcement so that they can continue to raise money for their super PACs (political action committees). The Supreme Court decided in *Citizens United v. FEC* that corporations are protected by the First Amendment and may spend an unlimited amount of money to support or attack a candidate, as long as they are not affiliated with the candidate. This decision gave rise to super PACs, organizations that are allowed to accept unlimited financial contributions from donors that will later be used to support a particular candidate. Until they announce their candidacy, politicians such as Jeb Bush can continue to raise millions of dollars for super PACs that will later support them in the primary elections. Jeb Bush has currently raised the most money of the declared and prospective Republican candidates; he is expected to declare that he has raised “in the high tens of millions.” This war chest could prove valuable to him in a crowded Republican primary contest. The Republican field of candidates is already quite large and the Republican National Committee (RNC) anticipates that as many as twelve candidates may take part in the first primary debate.

This week’s stories show the impact of the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision and the growing influence of money in presidential elections. The amount of money that candidates need to run (and win) a presidential election is absolutely staggering, and serves to increase the influence of corporations and the most affluent Americans who are able to make large campaign contributions. The actions of Jeb Bush and Scott Walker, as well as the other declared candidates who are traversing the country fundraising, show that wooing donors and raising cash has become more important than addressing the concerns of everyday Americans. More money means more access to politicians and candidates for the nation’s highest offices. In turn, wealthy donors could pressure politicians to support policies that will result in making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Meanwhile, working class Americans who cannot afford to make large campaign contributions are left without a voice in the political process. The high price tag of becoming president may also exclude qualified candidates who are unable raise such large amounts of money. It is unclear whether the Supreme Court foresaw these negative outcomes when they made their *Citizens United* decision. The Federal Elections Commission and the U.S. government should seriously consider passing regulations and legislation to limit the amount of money that can be spent in a presidential campaign to even the playing field and allow the candidates to focus on the issues that affect the American people.


In Congress, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.
Preamble to the Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Amendments to the Constitution

Amendment 1 - Freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and petition.
Amendment 2 - Right to bear arms.
Amendment 3 - Citizens do not have to house soldiers.
Amendment 4 - No unreasonable search or arrest.
Amendment 5 - No double jeopardy or no witness against yourself.
Amendment 6 - The right to a speedy and public trial
Amendment 7 - The right to a jury trial in civil matters of $20 and over.
Amendment 8 - No excessive bail or cruel punishment.
Amendment 9 - People get rights not listed in Constitution.
Amendment 10 - Any rights not given to federal government are given to the states and people.
Amendment 11 - Individual cannot sue a state in a federal court.
Amendment 12 - Separate ballots for President and Vice President.
Amendment 13 - Abolish slavery.
Amendment 14 - If you are born or naturalized in the U.S. then you are a citizen of the U.S.
Amendment 15 - You cannot prevent a person from voting because of race, color, or creed.
Amendment 16 - Income tax.
Amendment 17 - Popular election of U.S. Senators.
Amendment 18 - Prohibition.
Amendment 19 - Women get the right to vote.
Amendment 20 - President takes office on January 20th instead of March 4th.
Amendment 21 - Repeal prohibition.
Amendment 22 - President can only serve two terms.
Amendment 23 - Washington D.C. residents can vote for president.
Amendment 24 - Anti poll tax.
Amendment 25 - Rules for Presidential succession
Amendment 26 - 18 year olds get to vote.
Amendment 27 - Congress cannot accept a pay raise until next term.