

**Syllabus for Advanced Placement (AP) Government
Alconbury High School, 2005-2006**

Focus: Advanced Placement Government is a course designed to parallel the rigorous academics one would be exposed to and gain in a college-level political science course. It is a course in which the student will learn the various facets of American Government and evaluate the nature and extent to which each of these aspects either contributes to or hinders our democratic form of government. After studying general concepts, the student will interpret U.S. government and politics through the analysis of specific examples. By taking a mostly contemporary look at our society, students will use various higher-level thinking skills not only to interpret trends in politics/society, but also help formulate solid opinions, judgments, and character regarding the necessity of and means of civic participation on the local, state, and national levels. Ultimately, students will gain familiarity with the institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute U.S. politics. Instruction closely parallels concepts and objectives tested on the AP Government Examination.

Textbook: James Q. Wilson and John J. Dilulio Jr. *American Government*. Houghton Mifflin Company. The text will be supplemented with other materials provided by the instructor including primary and secondary source readings, maps, political cartoons, newspapers and magazines, and video and audio presentations.

Instructor: My name is Mr.M, and my classroom is located downstairs in classroom 1 at Alconbury High School. I am looking forward to working with your child and am thrilled to be starting another new school year here in England. I am a firm believer in students effectively using agenda planners. Please review the agenda planner with your child periodically and ask him or her questions concerning daily and weekly assignments and projects. If you would like to meet with me to discuss your child's progress or have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call me so we can get together and talk. I can be reached in my classroom at Alconbury DSN ext. 3421 or e-mail me at Mr.M@eu.dodea.edu.

Course Objectives: Students will:

- a. Master a broad body of information on our country's governmental structure
- b. Demonstrate an understanding of the historical chronology of our political structure
- c. Use historical data to support an argument or position
- d. Interpret and apply data from original documents including graphs, cartoons, letters, etc.
- e. Effectively use analytic skills of evaluation, comparing and contrasting, and determination of cause and effect
- f. Work effectively with others to produce projects and solve problems
- g. Prepare for the Advanced Placement Exam in early May 2006

Organization: Unit assignment sheets will be provided every two weeks. Daily reading assignments, homework, exam dates, and essay deadlines will be included on each. Class instruction will be combinations of lecture, group work, discussion, student questions, and student presentations and projects. Generally speaking, major tests will cover work spanning two chapters of the textbook. Students can anticipate regular daily quizzes to insure they are keeping up with their assigned readings.

Homework: This course demands substantial reading outside of class so that students are prepared to contribute in the discussion of the next day's lesson. Students should expect to devote a minimum of one hour a night reading from their textbook to be prepared for the following day's class. Other out-of-class work will include short written assignments associated with each instruction block we are working on. Overdue/incomplete assignments will not be accepted unless the student has coordinated with and received approval from the instructor in advance.

Grading Procedures: Grades are calculated on the computer using the E-Class grades program. Students should regularly check the system to ensure they are not missing any assignments. The following weights are given to each category to determine a student's grade:

a. class participation/daily work	15%
b. tests	35%
c. written projects/presentations	20%
d. daily quizzes	30%
Total	100%

(Note that essays will be scored using the 1-9 rubric of the College Board exam)

Behavioral Expectations: It is the responsibility of both students and the teacher to create an atmosphere conducive to learning and sharing ideas and experiences. To ensure success for you and your fellow students, it is essential that each student consistently maintain the following:

- a. punctuality
- b. diligence and responsibility
- c. willingness to listen to other points-of-view
- d. willingness to actively contribute your own point-of-view
- e. a safe and orderly environment

Summer Reading Program:

Absences: Students are responsible for determining what assignments they missed and to arrange a time for make-up tests and quizzes. AP Government is a rigorous class. It requires an extensive commitment from students if they plan to be successful. Beginning February 1, 2006, lunch study sessions will be offered. Attendance at the review sessions is not mandatory, but highly recommended.

Classroom materials: Students are expected to come to class with their textbook as well as the following materials:

- a. sufficient pencils and blue/black pens for note taking
- b. ample ruled binder paper for note taking
- c. their agenda planner
- d. a notebook binder with seven sections tabbed as follows:
 - Section 1 – Schedules
 - Section 2 – Vocabulary
 - Section 3 – Lecture/reading notes
 - Section 4 – Chapter outlines
 - Section 5 – Quizzes
 - Section 6 – Tests and graded assignments
 - Section 7 – Other handouts

Advanced Placement Exam: The AP exam for Government will be given in early May 2006. Registration for the exam begins in February. All Alconbury students enrolled in AP Government are required to take the exam.

Parents, if you have the opportunity to visit the school, please stop by my classroom and say hello. I look forward to meeting you and discussing your child's progress in the course. Thanks for your support during the upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

Mr.M
AP Government teacher

Student and Parent: I acknowledge that I have read, along with my son or daughter, the syllabus for AP Government, and understand and agree with the teacher's expectations. I also understand that this course often deals with controversial topics and subject matter.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parents: My son/daughter and I have discussed your policies. I understand and support them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please return this signed form to the teacher during the first week of school.