

June 5, 2017

Dear Students,

I wanted to take a minute and welcome you to AP US Government for next school year. This is my third year teaching the course, and I am excited about getting to know you as we explore the political culture of the United States. I am teaching this course because I want students to develop their own political beliefs and to take an active role in our democracy. We need young leaders with a strong sense of political efficacy to stand up and voice their opinions and get involved in their communities. It is my hope that this course will provide you with the knowledge and tools that you need to interact with your government in the future.

This class is more interesting when we can make connections between the concepts in our textbook and current events, so it is important that you pay attention to what is going on in the news this summer. While this is considered an off-year for elections, our current political climate is by no means boring and there is no way of predicting what events will transpire throughout the course of the year. I would like to get to know your interests better as I gather materials for the course this summer. Please respond to this e-mail if there are some issues that you care about, and I will try to address them in the context of our standards. We will also participate in a simulation next year that involves writing laws with groups of middle school students. Having a few key issues that you feel passionately about and are willing to follow in the news will make this a more dynamic experience for everyone!

Your summer assignment will involve creating an annotated bibliography with 10 or more entries about current events that relate to this course. Topics should include Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy (departments and agencies under the executive branch), the Supreme Court, elections, federalism, foreign and domestic policy, and civil rights and liberties. As much as possible, we will use examples from the news to understand the political concepts, so please get into the habit of scanning the headlines each day.

Although this is not a history course, we will be looking at historical examples for many concepts. It would help if you had a working knowledge of US History, especially as it relates to the writing and interpreting of the Constitution. A great way to review history this summer would be to watch Crash Course US History online. As you watch these videos, pay attention to political issues, especially as they relate to the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Constitution. If you have a solid grasp of US History and would like some advanced reading for this course, I will work with you on choosing some books about political thought that match your interests. There are many recent books about politics that are thought provoking and enjoyable to read.

Finally, we will use Schoology as a platform for this course. This will allow us to have a discussion board, take tests online, post assignments, and share interesting information and links. I do not anticipate that students will have access to Schoology over the summer, but you can check the site towards the end of August to see if the course is available. I will also e-mail you the syllabus before school starts via g-mail, and I will check my g-mail account in case you have any questions about the summer assignment.

I hope you have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Amy Jo Ross
Teacher, Rota Middle High School
amy.ross@student.dodea.edu

AP GOVERNMENT SUMMER ASSIGNMENT
DGF ROTA HIGH SCHOOL

PART I: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CURRENT EVENTS

Hopefully, you have been scanning the headlines and gathering some interesting articles that relate to the topics in this course. The next step is to create an annotated bibliography with your articles. Please refer to this link to better understand how to make an annotated bibliography.

<http://guides.library.cornell.edu/c.php?g=32342&p=203789>

Start by using citation machine to make your bibliography. You may use MLA (usually for the humanities) or APA (usually for social sciences) as a format. Regardless of which style you choose, you should follow the rules and create a professional bibliography. Most universities have online style guides to help you, such as the Purdue Owl.

<http://www.citationmachine.net/>
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/>

Then, write a substantial paragraph about each entry. At the minimum, this should include a brief summary of the article and an explanation of why you chose the article. You may also choose to discuss the author's intent or bias in writing the source, how it relates to other sources, or the relevance of the issue to our government.

The annotated bibliography will be due the first week of school. We will start off the year with a discussion of your articles and your interests in US Government.

STEP II: REVIEW US HISTORY

Although this is not a history class, there are historical examples in your textbook, and you will find that many of the issues our founders grappled with are still pertinent today. If you are rusty on US History, you should consider watching CRASH COURSE US HISTORY or reading some basic information on early US History, especially as it relates to the writing of the Constitution and Supreme Court cases.