

Syllabus Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics
Grade 12
PENINSULA CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Course Title: United States Government and Politics Advanced Placement (AP)

Prerequisites: United States History

Course Goal: Understand the fundamental principles, organization, and responsibilities of the American government to include the agents and their effect on the political process of determining public policy.

Course Objectives: The student will:

- Become an informed and active citizen
- Understand the organization and functions of the American government
- Understand and appreciate the US Constitution and the role of US Supreme Court decisions
- Understand the evolution of federalism and the concept of collective versus individual liberty
- Analyze the political process in our representative form of government

Enabling Objectives: Specified in class and included at the beginning of each chapter of the text.
Refer to <http://rbelkowskipchs.weebly.com>

Content Topics:

- Fundamental principles of government and American government
- The US Constitution; creation and meaning
- Federalism
- Branches of American government; organization, functions, responsibilities
- Bureaucracy and the national budget
- Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- The political process; parties, polls, media, campaigns
- Creation of domestic policy
- Creation of foreign and military policy

Basic Text: Bardes, Barbara A., Mack C. Shelley II and Steffen W. Schmidt. *American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials*, West Publishing Company, St Paul, 2000. There will be extensive supplemental readings in this college level course both from the internet and from materials distributed in class.

Expectations:

- Students will need to maintain a steady pace with required readings and assignments.
- Students will be expected to read and watch the national and local news and understand its relevance to the study of government.
- Students must understand that assignments will take between 1 and 1 1/2 hours per night with additional time required for major assignments.
- Come to class prepared: Participation grade will be lowered if you are not prepared for class.
- Turn in work on time.

Late Policy

1. Major assignments:

- a. If an assignment is late the highest grade that may be awarded is 69/F. After seven days, the student will receive a zero.
- b. The teacher reserves the right to announce a “drop dead” date. If the work is turned in after that date—whether or not you are in school—the resulting grade will be zero.

2. Minor assignments:

- a. Work assigned prior to student's absence will be due when the student returns.
- b. Work assigned during a student's absence will be due on a date agreed upon by the teacher and the student.
- c. Planned absences require the student to inform the teacher in advance and develop a plan for completing all work to be missed.
- d. Missed tests and quizzes will be made up after school on the day after the student returns unless otherwise coordinated with the teacher.
- e. Minor assignments: lose 10% per day for days 1, 2, and 3; after day 3 the grade is 0%. Homework is due at the beginning of the class period and will be considered late after that point in time.
- f. If a student is in school on any part of the day on which the assignment is due, even if not this class, assignments must be turned in on that day or they will be late.
- h. Any exception to these policies is at the discretion of the teacher for exceptional situations.

Independent/Group Projects: Special projects as assigned.

Evaluation: A point system is used to evaluate student performance. The average is derived from dividing the points possible into the points accumulated. This puts a premium on the student to complete **all** assignments since points are cumulative for each semester.

Exams: Mid Term and End of Term exams will be administered.

Mid Term Exam is 20% of the Mid Term grade.

End of Term Exam is 20% of the End of Term grade.

Final Course Grade is the Average of Mid Term and End of Term Grades.

Grading Scale: The Peninsula Catholic grade scale will be used.

Materials required:

1. Three-ring notebook to be used exclusively for American Government
2. Loose leaf paper
3. Pocket folders fitted to the three-ring notebook for supplemental readings
4. Black or Blue ink pens, these are the only color allowed on homework or in class assignments

Intellectual honesty, integrity and respect: Students are expected to abide by the highest moral and ethical standards of conduct in the preparation and presentation of graded materials and will abide by the

PCHS Honor Code. Such standards are founded on the basic concepts of honesty, integrity, and respect for self and others. The **PCHS Honor Code** is based on the premise that PCHS students will not cheat, lie, or steal, nor tolerate those who do. During the course the following will apply: on written assignments and tests the student will hand write "I will abide by the Honor Code".

Test and Quizzes: All work must be performed individually using only the resources specifically authorized by the teacher.

Homework Assignments: Students are expected to complete homework assignments individually, unless otherwise specified by the teacher, as a means to enhance the learning and mastery of critical information. When answering "Main Idea" and/or "Critical Thinking" questions the students will use their own words.

Research assignments and projects: All work must be original to the individual or assigned group. All research assignments will be typed, double-spaced, MLA standard for internal and works cited documentation and in 12 point font. In addition to the paper copy, research papers are to be copied on 3 1/4" diskettes and turned in at the time of the paper. All research assignments are subject to review by utilizing [turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) to ensure the work is original to the student with proper documentation.