

AP Comparative Gov't & Politics



COURSE DESCRIPTION

AP US Government (taken in the fall) and its comparative government counterpart (taken in the spring) are each one semester length college level political sciences courses. In the US government course students will learn about the American political system, specifically the foundations of the Constitution as well as the role political parties, interest groups, and elections play in the American political process. A great deal of attention is spent on the interactions that take place amongst the three branches of government. The AP Comparative Gov't course examines the political systems of not one, but six different countries (i.e. the United Kingdom, Russia, China, Mexico, Iran, & Nigeria). Students will learn the type of government, contemporary political issues, and the way in which politics is carried out in each of those country cases.

THE TYPICAL CLASS – DAY TO DAY

In any given week students may be asked (2-3 times a week) to take hand written notes from an oral / PowerPoint lecture. On other days students may be using their notes to sketch out responses to essay prompts (ex: *Compare and contrast the role political parties and interest groups play in American politics*). From time to time, students do work in groups – from participating in class discussions and to carrying out mini-simulations.

TYPICAL HOMEWORK

At home students are expected to read sections from their textbook that correlate with the information being discussed in class. Students may also be asked to read PowerPoint slides (at home via Schoology) that encompass both notes and video clips of the topic being covered in class. “Module” assignments require students to read outside political science and news articles and then answer corresponding questions. Students who do not make it a habit to do the homework for these courses regularly perform poorly on tests.

ASSESSMENTS

Formative and summative assessments are integrated into these AP Gov't courses. Students are expected to take both computer based formative tests as well in class written short responses to help them, and the teacher, gauge their understanding of course material. At the close of each unit students take a 40 question multiple choice test as part of their summative grade. Furthermore, cumulative FRQ essays are given as summative assessments.