

Summer Assignment : AP US Government and Politics

Welcome to Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics or more affectionately known as GOPO. Teaching this course is simultaneously fun, rewarding, and intimidating. Stories about politics fill the 24-hour news cycle. Government officials sometimes make surprising decisions with uncertain consequences. Electoral outcomes are difficult to predict and interpret. This means that you and I will be frequently studying a moving target.

The redesigned AP U.S. Government course presents an exciting opportunity for you to obtain the knowledge, skills, and reasoning practices to enable you to understand and participate in government and politics throughout their lives. The new AP exam focuses on disciplinary practices and reasoning processes that require our students to think like political scientists, and apply those skills to real world scenarios.

This summer assignment will help you get a head start on our journey. I have assigned two argument questions (your responses must be no longer than one page double spaced) and one critical thinking project.

ARGUMENT QUESTION ONE:

During the ratification debate, Federalists and Anti Federalists disagreed over the scope and meaning of the necessary and proper clause appearing in Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution. In particular, the two aides debated whether that clause would lead either to eliminating state governments entirely or at least rendering them powerless. Does the past 230 years of constitutional history prove the arguments of the Federalists? Or does it prove the arguments of the Anti Federalists? Defend your position using relevant evidence or reasoning from at least one foundational document from the list below, as well as your knowledge from your study of how the necessary and proper clause has been applied and construed over time. Identify at least one argument that would be made by opposing side, and explain why that argument is less convincing.

- *Articles of Confederation*
- *Federalist No. 51*
- *U.S. Constitution*
- *McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)*
- *Brutus No. 1*
- *United States v. Lopez (1995)*

In your response, be sure to:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question.
- Support your claim with at least two pieces accurate and relevant evidence.
- Use reasoning to organize and analyze your evidence.
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspectives using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

ARGUMENT QUESTION TWO:

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, enacted in 1993, required a national system of instantly run a background check on people who wanted to purchase handguns. Montana and Arizona challenged the part of the law that required state officials to conduct the background checks.

Construct an argument that the provision of the Brady Act requiring state officials to conduct background checks is constitutional or unconstitutional. Defend your position using evidence from at least one required document from the list below, as well as your knowledge of federalism and the Constitution. Identify at least one argument that would be made by an opponent of your argument and explain why that argument less convincing.

- *U.S. Constitution*
- *McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)*
- *United States V. Lopez (1994)*

In your response, be sure to:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question
- Support your claim with at least two pieces of accurate and relevant evidence
- Use reasoning to organize and analyze your evidence
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal

CRITICAL THINKING PROJECT:

This project takes you beyond the AP Exam to think critically and creatively about the Constitution and federalism. Create an artistic analogy that represents the U.S. system of government and label the following parts:

- Citizens
- The Congress
 - **At least one** of the following powers
 - Makes laws
 - Overrides presidential vetoes
 - Budgetary authority
 - Senate confirms appointments
 - Senate ratifies treaties
- The President
 - **At least one** of the following powers
 - Veto of laws
 - Commander-in-Chief
 - Appointment power
 - Signs treaties

- The Supreme Court
 - Judicial review
- The bureaucracy
 - Implements laws
- The states
- Local governments
- Police powers

Use poster paper, and make your artwork colorful. Your artwork can be drawn by hand, or you can create a collage. Your goal is to illustrate how the institutions and levels of government work together.

Argument Essay Rubric

A good response should:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question and establishes a line of reasoning (0-1 point)
- Describe one piece of evidence that is accurately linked to the topic of the question (the first of 3 point); use one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument (the second of 3 points); use two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument (the third of 3 points)
- Explain how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis (0-1 point)
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal that is consistent with the argument (0-1 point)

Presentation Rubric

Speaking Skills	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Delivery/Volume	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mumbles or speaks too quickly or slowly Speaks too softly to be understood Frequently uses filler words Does not adapt speech/vernacular for the context/task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks clearly most of the time Speaks loudly enough for the audience to hear most of the time but may speak monotone Occasionally uses filler words Attempts to adapt speech/vernacular for the content and task but is unsuccessful or inconsistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaks clearly, not too quickly or slowly Speaks loudly enough for everyone to hear and in an enthusiastic way Rarely uses filler words (like, um, okay, you know, kind of, etc) Adapts speech/vernacular for the content and task 	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus Changes tone and pace to maintain interest
Eye Contact/ Posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not look at the audience, reads notes or slides Does not face the audience Fidgets, slouches, appears nervous 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes infrequent eye contact/ reads notes or slides most of the time Shows some poise/confidence (only a little fidgeting or nervous movement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeps eye contact with audience most of the time. Only glances at notes or slides Looks poised and confident Stands up straight 	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus Memorizes presentation and rarely if ever looks at notes
Content	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
Introduction/ Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not have either an introduction or conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has an introduction and conclusion but they are not clear or interesting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation begins with a clear focus/thesis Concludes with highlights of key ideas and a strong final statement 	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus Asks the audience a thought provoking discussion question
Topic Development/ Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not meet requirements for what should be included in the presentation Uses time poorly; the whole presentation or a part of it is too short or too long, Content does not relate to the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets most requirements for what should be included in the presentation Some content may be unclear and repetitive presentation of the topic Organizes time well; though timing is off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets all requirements for what should be included in the presentation Has a clear and interesting presentation of the topic, related to topic and not repetitive Organizes time well; no part too short or too long 	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus Presentation includes outstanding visuals
Knowledge of materials being presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information being presented appears to be new and not clearly understood No explanation given of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat weak grasp of and understanding of the material Some information is irrelevant, develops ideas and uses a style appropriate to the purpose, task and audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation shows full grasp and understanding of the material Selects information, develops ideas and uses a style appropriate to the purpose, task and audience 	all of <i>Practitioner</i> plus Presentation content exceeds expectations of project description