

Summer Reading - AP US Government and Politics and/or Comparative Government

Your summer reading consists of two books. Book #1 is required, Book #2 is optional. I'm, above all, a practical person. I know that many of you are taking multiple AP classes, and while some of you may have a lot of free time this summer, others may not. Either way, the temptation to wait until the last week to try to do all of your summer assignments is strong. That's why I am requiring the first book, which gives an excellent preview of almost everything we will study in class, and making the second optional. Just as a heads-up, if you don't do it over the summer, you'll have to read this second book during the first quarter and take quizzes on it, so if you have the time, I recommend you do it over the summer! :D

- Book #1 is a general politics primer which you will all read and take a test on during our second class period. It will help bring you up to speed with a nice background on some of the most important issues in politics today.
- Book #2 will be on a policy area of your choosing.

Book #1: *What You Should Know About Politics . . . But Don't: A Nonpartisan Guide to the Issues That Matter, Third Edition* Jessamyn Conrad

As of this writing, this book is \$9.63 on Amazon through the Kindle app, which I definitely recommend if you have a smartphone. I love the ability to highlight and then see all of your highlights in one place. It is also available in paperback, used, for under \$5.

You may, of course, read the entire book, but over the summer you should read An Introduction to Political Affiliations, Chapters 1-8, and Chapter 13. The other chapters we will read over the course of the semester.

What to do with the reading:

1. Take at least one hand-written notebook page of notes on each chapter - they will be graded! You may not catch everything, but summarizing and pulling out key ideas is crucial practice!
 - You will be able to use your *hand-written* notes on the test. (I prefer to type notes, but the era of Google makes it too easy to just share them. At least, if you're going to copy someone else's, you'll have to actually copy them. :D)
 - You are accountable for all the information in those chapters for the test on Day 2, so take notes on anything you do not already know!
2. For each chapter, write down 2-3 thoughtful questions you have - we will hit the ground running with these questions in the very first week. Thoughtful means that it is an open-ended, big-picture question, not something you could find out with an easy Google search (e.g. Which party controls the House of Representatives right now?)

Book #2: Choose one of the policy areas and books below that seems interesting.

If none of these things seem interesting, this may not be the class for you. :/ I advise you to use the "Look Inside" function on Amazon to read the first chapter of a few of them to choose one you will enjoy.

Interested in women's rights?

Because of Sex: One Law, 10 Cases and 50 Years That Changed American Women's Lives at Work, Gillian Thomas

Interested in how money may be corrupting our political system?

Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right, Jane Mayer

Interested in gun rights?

The Second Amendment: A Biography, Michael Waldman

Interested in criminal justice issues, specifically with regards to race?

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, Michelle Alexander

Interested in the death penalty?

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption, Bryan Stevenson

Interested in poverty?

Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City, Matthew Desmond

Interested in citizen movements in gun rights, same-sex marriage, and civil liberties/terrorism issues?

Engines of Liberty: The Power of Citizen Activists to Make Constitutional Law, David Cole

Book #2 Project - This may be typed!

- For each chapter, write a summary of 200-300 words. Make sure this summary is entirely your own work. If you plagiarize, you will receive a 0.
- Locate five news articles *from 2017* (no earlier) that discuss the issues raised by the book. Provide a correctly-formatted MLA citation and a 150-200 word summary of the article's content AND how it relates to the policy issues raised by the book.