

American Government AP

(www.montgomerybell.com/~coversa/govapdescription.htm)

Information For Parents

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In preparation for the National Advanced Placement Examination in United States Government and Politics, this course is designed to provide an intensive study of the history, institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute political life and activity in the United States. Students will master the foundations, principles, and practices of government. This mastery will form the base upon which analytical frameworks for understanding political realities will be built. Analytical rigor will be achieved through examination of both historical and contemporary controversies. Each student will produce several analytical essays which convey clear and concise political thought and argumentation.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- 1) To master the history, evolution, structures, principles, and powers embodied in the United States Constitution.
- 2) To master an understanding of American political life and culture throughout history, with an emphasis on the modern milieu.
- 3) To develop, articulate, and defend individual points of view regarding salient issues in contemporary political America.
- 4) To identify, analyze, and compare political positions put forward by public policy pundits.
- 5) To improve skills of analysis, organization, independent and critical thinking.

TEXT

Theodore Lowi and Benjamin Ginsberg, American Government: Freedom and Power (7th edition), New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002.

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

If your son is having problems in government, please encourage him to speak with me right away. Knowledge in this course is cumulative and concepts which are not learned initially may prove troublesome later. I am fortunate to have developed a fairly good relationship with most of the students in this class, and they are very eager to share troubles with me, but no one is above frustration during the year. The greatest help you can offer is daily conversation about political issues and ideas that are important to you. I challenge the boys to defend their political views fully, and my greatest strength is an ability to articulate many points of view. The boys learn more when the class discussions seriously challenge them to defend their views. Your interest in sharing their political development with them is an irreplaceable benefit to them.

Controversial Issues To Discuss At Home

Abortion	Affirmative Action	Environmental Regulations
Gun Control	Criminal Rights	Workplace Regulation
The Merits of an Independent Prosecutor	Military Spending	The Media's Role in Politics
Welfare	Balanced Budget Amendment	Social Security Reform
Capital Punishment	Campaign Finance Reform	Health Care Financing
Education Reform	Taxes, Lotteries, and Budget Cuts	Character and Politics