

AP U.S. Government Summer Assignment (2019-2020)

Welcome to the wonderful world of A.P. U.S. Government and Politics! This course covers a wide variety of topics, including the historical context of the Constitution, the election process, political behaviors, federalism, the structure of the national government, public policy, and civil rights. My goal in this course is to help you develop a deep understanding of the way that our government functions and our government's role in running the nation. At the completion of the course, students have the opportunity to take the A.P. Exam to possibly earn college credit. Students in this course are required to complete a summer assignment to help them to become familiar with some of the essential content that we will examine this year and to prepare you for the workload of the course.

The summer assignment is due on **the first day of school, Tuesday, September 3, 2019**. Assignments should be typed, printed, and a hard copy submitted upon arrival and greeting. It is imperative that students complete and submit the entire assignment by the due date, which is also the deadline date, no exceptions!

Your **summer assignment will consist of two separate activities:**

1. Read the U.S. Constitution and answer the provided Guided Reading questions
2. Research landmark court cases from U.S. history and determine the significance of each on the nation

You will have a test over the Constitution reading and guided reading questions on the second week of school. Your packets will be returned, but it is essential for you to save and print multiple copies for test review prior to the test day, on Thursday. You may wish to make an extra copy of your assignment to study between the date you submit it and the first day of school though.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout the summer, please feel free to email me at Adam_Altman@mcpsmd.org. I will attempt to reply to your email in a timely manner but there may be times when it will take 1-2 days for me to reply. You should not wait until the day before the assignment is due to begin emailing questions, as you will likely not receive a reply in time to address your question.

Note on Plagiarism: Be certain that ALL aspects of your work is in your own words or that proper quotes/citations are used. Plagiarism is both the giving and the receiving of information. Copying from a resource suggested, copying from another resource entirely will result in a zero on the assignment. If you and a peer turn in the same work, you will both receive a zero on the assignment.

ASSIGNMENT 1—U.S. Constitution

1. Read the U.S. Constitution. A digital copy can be found at: www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/overview and/or <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>
2. Answer the guided reading questions below using the text of the U.S. Constitution. NOTE—when you get to the Amendments section, do not just list the summarization listed on the website as they do not provide all of the necessary information!

Part I: Structure of the Constitution—Read each article and summarize the general purpose or subject of the article.

Article I	
Article II	
Article III	
Article IV	
Article V	
Article VI	
Article VII	

Which article of the Constitution is the longest and most detailed? Explain 2 reasons why that may be the case.

Part II: The Amendments—Briefly describe each amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

AMENDMENT	Brief description of the amendment (all parts).
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What are the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution collectively known as? Why is this the case?

Identify the three amendments that were passed in the years immediately after the Civil War. Collectively, what was the goal of all of these amendments?

Identify three amendments that extended suffrage to new groups of people. Briefly explain the historical context/events that likely led to the passage of these events.

Part III: The Three Branches of Government—Use the text of the Constitution to answer the following. Also, when asked **(any question that says “cite” at the end)** give the article, section, and clause # in which the answer is found.

1. List the 6 purposes of the Constitution according to the Preamble.
2. What are the two parts of the Legislative Branch/Congress? (cite)
3. How often are elections for the House of Representatives conducted and who gets to vote in these elections?
4. What are the written requirements for holding a seat in the House of Reps.? (cite)

5. How are the number of seats in the House of Reps. apportioned to each state and how often is this done?
6. What powers of Congress are unique to the House of Representatives?
7. How many Senators does each state have and how were they originally chosen? (cite)
8. How are Senators chosen today? What amendment changed this?
9. How long is a Senator's term of office? How many are elected in each election year?
10. What are the formal written requirements for holding a seat in the Senate? (cite)
11. Who is the President of the Senate? When is the only time that he can vote in the Senate? (cite)
12. What powers of Congress are unique to the Senate?
13. Who presides over impeachment trials and what is required for a conviction?
14. Where do all bills raising revenue begin the legislative process? (cite)
15. What is required for Congress to override a Presidential veto? (cite)
16. List 10 of the powers given to Congress (cite Article and Section)

17. List 4 powers that are denied to Congress. (cite Article and Section)

18. According to Article II and Amendment XII, how many electors does each state receive for President of the United States and how are these electors chosen?

19. What are the formal qualifications to serve as the President of the U.S. as defined in the Constitution? (cite)

20. List two powers that the President has that require the “Advise and Consent” of the Senate.

21. List 3 duties of the President under Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution.

22. How may a President be removed from office? (cite)

23. What body holds the judicial power of the U.S.?

24. What branch of government has the power to create “inferior courts?”

25. Who appoints and confirms federal judges? (cite)

26. How long do federal judges hold office?

27. List five types of cases that federal courts may try, according to the Constitution.

28. Over what two types of cases does the Supreme Court have original jurisdiction? (cite)

29. What are the two stages of the amendment process? (cite)

30. How many states were required to ratify the Constitution? (cite)

Part IV: Majority and Supermajority—Use the Constitution or other resources to complete the following section.

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a super majority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while a super majority requires a 2/3 majority or a 3/4 majority.

VETO POWER

31. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?

32. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?

RATIFICATION

33. Who has the ability to create treaties?

34. What body has the power to ratify/approve treaties?

35. What margin is required to ratify treaties?

IMPEACHMENT POWER

36. What body has the power to impeach a government official?

37. What body has the power to convict an official of charges brought against him in the impeachment process?

38. What margin is required to convict and remove a president?

NOMINATION PROCESS

39. What body has the power to accept or reject a president's nominations to the Supreme Court?

40. What margin is required to elevate a president's nominee to a seat on the Supreme Court?

ELECTIONS

41. If no candidate for president wins a simple majority of the total electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?

42. What margin is required to choose the president?

Part V: Important Constitutional Clauses—The following are important clauses listed in the Constitution or the Amendments. For each, define the clause in your own words and explain why the clause is so important.

Full Faith and Credit Clause—

Commerce Clause—

Supremacy Clause—

Necessary and Proper Clause (Elastic Clause)—

General Welfare Clause—

Establishment Clause—

Free-exercise Clause—

Due Process Clause of 5th and 14th Amendments—

Equal Protection Clause—

ASSIGNMENT 2—Court Case Study

One of the most difficult aspects of this course for many students are the landmark court cases from U.S. history. The Supreme Court has made rulings on cases that have had considerable impacts on the US. Below are 15 landmark court cases that we will discuss this year.

For this assignment, you will research essential information for 10 cases that you choose. If you complete all 15 cases, you receive extra credit on the assignment. The summer assignment test will have a section over these court cases. For each case, you should provide the following information (an example, *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, is provided): Case name, year of decision, amendment that the case relates to and/or Constitutional issue, and brief summary of the ruling/significance of the case.

The primary website that I would recommend for this assignment is: www.oyez.org

Cases:

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|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> | 7. <i>Tinker v. Des Moines</i> | 13. <i>Roe v. Wade</i> |
| 2. <i>US v. Lopez</i> | 8. <i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i> | 14. <i>Brown v. BOE</i> |
| 3. <i>Baker v. Carr</i> | 9. <i>Schenck v. US</i> | 15. <i>Citizens United v. FEC</i> |
| 4. <i>Shaw v. Reno</i> | 10. <i>New York Times Co. v. US</i> | |
| 5. <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> | 11. <i>McDonald v. Chicago</i> | |
| 6. <i>Engel v. Vitale</i> | 12. <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> | |

Case	Year	Amendment/Issue	Ruling
<i>Lemon v. Kurtzman</i>	1973	1 st Amendment Freedom of Religion case related to the Establishment Clause	Ruling created the “Lemon Test” to be used to determine if government actions violate establishment clause.

Optional court cases

