# Flagstaff Arts and Leadership Academy

**Kuluris**

# AP United States Government and Politics

# Syllabus

# Spring 2015

**Course Objectives** Students will be able to demonstrate**:**

* Knowledge of the principles, institutions and processes of the national, state and local levels of

government in the United States

* The ability to engage in analysis, synthesis, and effective communication in writing and discussion.
* Understanding with the organization and power of the Congress, the Presidency, the Judiciary,

and the Bureaucracy. This includes the formal and informal powers of these institutions as well as the ways in which they relate to each other.

* Familiarity with the complexities of the US Constitution and development of federalism
* An awareness of his or her “role” as a citizen, and how and why his participation is important

to the continued success of our governmental system.

* Knowledge of the historical evolution of the United States party system, the functions and

structures of political parties and the effects they have on the political process. Included in this

area is an understanding of the various kinds of interest groups.

* Understanding of the court system and evolution of public policy concerning civil liberties and

civil rights

* The ability to pass and excel on the AP exam given in May 2014

**Methodology** Specific Assessments in Class: Homework, exams, quizzes, essays and current events:

* Usually reading every night-an average of 10-15 pages in the text, with occasional handouts and other supplemental reading. Students are encouraged to bring their textbook to class everyday. Students are also encouraged to have a small 3-ring binder or substantial folder for handouts. **(See Sample Reading Guide andt the end of the syllabus)**
* Participation in class discussion is mandatory. Everyone should be able to contribute to class discussion at least once per class session.
* There will be quizzes that will include FRQ-style and multiple-choice questions based on readings

and lecture.

* Students will also be expected to frequently write free response questions.

All FRQ’s will be based on the format presented by the AP Government exam.

* Students will examine and interpret numerous charts and graphs.
* There will be one Mid-Term Exam using a format that mimics the actual AP Exam.
* Knowledge of contemporary political events is essential for the analytical focus that must be exhibited

in the class. It is highly recommended that students expose themselves to as many the following

sources as possible: major newspapers (i.e., *Washington Post, New York Times* and *Christian*

*Science Monitor*); major news magazines; television news programs (i.e. “ News Hour,” even

“The Daily Show); major network evening news programs; and public radio-NPR

**AP US Government** This class is taught in 1 semester on a modified block schedule. Classes are 85 minutes in length.

**Schedule (Spring 2014)**

**Course Text:** Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. *American Politics Today*, 3rd Essentials Edition,

2013, WW Norton

**Supplemental Reader:** Serow, Ann G. and Everett C. Ladd, Editors, *The Lanahan Readings in American*

*Polity,* 2011, Lanahan Publishers Inc.

**Current Events Readings:** *The New York Times*

**Calendar** **Topic/Text Chapter Readings**

Week 1 – December 1-8 (3 classes) Introduction Text 1-18

Kammen, *“People of Paradox”*

Bellah, *“Habits of the Heart”*

Week 2 – December 10-15 (3 Classes) Constitution Text 22-48

Hofstadter, *“The American Political Tradition”*

Mill, *“The Power Elite”*

Dahl, *“Who Governs?”*

Madison, *“Federalist 51”*

Week 3 – January 5-9 (2 Classes) Constitution

Small Group FRQ Practice

Week 4 – January 12-16 (3 Classes) Federalism Text 54-83

Madison, *“Federalists 39 and 46”*

**Quiz**  Elazar, *“American Federalism”*

Karch, *“Democratic Laboratories”*

Week 5 – January 19-23 (1 Class) Federalism

Small Group FRQ Practice

Week 6 - January 26-30 (3 Classes) Politics Text 124-153

Judis, *“America, the Liberal”*

**Quiz**  Rothenberg, *“Is 2008 a Realigning Election?”*

Week 7 – February 2- 6 (2 Classes) Political Parties Text 160-186 and 190-223

and Elections Burnham, *“Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics”*

Week 8 – February 9-13 (3Classes) Political Parties and Elections

Individual FRQ

Week 9 – February 16-20 (1 class) **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 10 – February 23-27 (2 classes) Interest Groups Text 228-250

Skinner, *“More Than Money”*

Week 11 – March 2-6 (3 Classes) Institutions: Text 254 -288

Congress Mayhew, *“Congress, The Electoral Connection”*

Binder, *“Stalemate”*

Starobin, *“Pork, A Time Honored*  **Quiz**  *Tradition Lives On”*

Spring Break March 9-13 (3 Classes)

Individual FRQ

Week 12 – March 16-20 ( No Class)

Week 13 – March 23-27 (2 Classes) Presidency Text 292-318

Cairo, *“The ‘Imperial Presidency’*

*Triumphant”*

Troy, *“Leading from the Center”*

Patterson, *“The White House Staff”*

Week 14 – March 30- April 3 (3 Classes) Presidency/ Text 322-349

Bureaucracy Light*, “A Government Ill Executed”*

**Quiz**

Week 15 – April 6-10(2 Classes) Judiciary Text 354-382

O’Brien, *“Storm Center”*

Yalof, *“Pursuit of Justices”*

Week 16 – April 13-17 (3 Classes) Civil Rights/ Text 88-119 and 388-419

Civil Liberties

Individual FRQ

Week 17 – April 20-May 1 (5 Classes) Economic and Text 424-461

**Quiz** Social Policy/ Key, *“Public Opinion and American*

Public Opinion *Democracy”*

Moore, *“The Opinion Makers”*

Small Group Research Project:

What do statistics and data tell us about the political views of the American public?

Sources: Pew Research Center for People and the Press

and The American Community Survey – U.S. Census Bureau

Week 18 – May 4-7 (2 Classes) Foreign Policy/ Text 466-489

Begin Review Zakaria, *“The Post American World”*

Week 19 – May 11 – 15 (2 Classes) Review in-class, after school, Lunch and evening

May 15 Pot Luck Party

AP EXAM – Thursday, May 14

May 18-29 Environmental Economics and Policy

June 1-4 Final Policy Paper due

Sample Reading Guide – This will be the primary homework for this class.

**Reading Guide – AP Government**

**Pages 3-18 – Due at the end of class on Friday, December 20th**

**20 points**

Terms to know: The definitions of these terms are in the margins of the text. I strongly recommend that you get the definitions into your notebook. I am sure it will seem like busy work, but you need to figure out a way to deal with these words. It is essential that you understand them. Please identify terms that you aren’t fully confident with and ask questions in class to better your understanding.

government factions separation of powers checks and balances federalism

public goods collective action problem free rider problem politics

free market economic individualism redistributive tax policies culture wars

ideology conservative liberal

1) Read the introduction on pages 3 and 4. What is the point of this story?

2) What is the classification system developed by Aristotle to distinguish types of government? How can the third type be further refined? 6

3) Summarize James Madison’s basic views on government. Be sure to talk about factions. 7

4) What are the three ways that U.S. government is divided to avoid factions? 7-8

5) Compare the collective action problem with the free rider problem. 8

6) As a review from economics…What are things that government does? 8

7) Explain in basic terms each of the three key ideas about politics. 9

8) Identify the essential points (in bulleted form) for each of three key ideas about politics. 9-14

9) Briefly explain with appropriate detail the sources of conflict in American Politics. 15-18

10) In a short paragraph, summarize the chapter.

\*\*\*Questions 8 and 9 are at the heart of the chapter. Please make sure you understand these topics and get sufficient notes in your responses.\*\*\*