



AP US Government & Politics
Summer Assignment
Mr. Falkowski
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Dear Student:

Welcome to AP U.S. Government and Politics! This course provides an in-depth study of both government and politics specifically in the United States. Students will analyze various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that embody U.S. government and politics. In order to prepare for this challenging course, students will be required to complete preliminary coursework detailed below.

Current Event Scrapbook: Over the course of the summer, you will collect ten current events (roughly one per week) dealing with American politics. This can pertain to local, state or national politics, especially in light of the elections next November. The specifics of the current event scrapbook are on the second page (back side). This will be due on the **first day of school**. Failure to submit this assignment on time will result in a zero as a test grade. No exceptions will be made.

Remember, you chose to be in this class and your success will depend upon your willingness to prepare for it. In the event you lose this copy, log onto www.thefalkowskination.weebly.com and go to the AP Gov tab. Please note that I will be temporarily “off the grid” during part of August, but all e-mails will be responded to in July and early August. Should you have any questions during the summer, please e-mail me at kfalkowski@vtsd.com.

Regards,

Mr. Falkowski

Creating a Government Summer Scrapbook

Throughout the course of the summer, you will find and analyze a total of ten current event articles based on the six units listed below. The scrapbook can take the form of a notebook, an actual scrapbook, or some other creative way to represent the current events. In addition, you must include the article (newspaper article, online website) in the scrapbook. Each current event must come from a different news source (MSNBC, FOXNews, CNN, The Hill, Politico, etc.). You should not include more than three current event articles for a specific unit. These units include:

1. **Constitutional Underpinnings of Government** – This includes the Constitution and interpretations of it, as well as federalism (relations between the federal and state governments).
2. **Institutions of Government** – This includes Congress, the President, the judicial branch(including the Supreme Court), and the federal bureaucracy.
3. **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights** – This may include current Supreme Court cases.
4. **Political Beliefs and Behaviors** – This includes voter behavior, political participation, public opinion, and American political culture.
5. **Linkage Institutions** – These are institutions that connect the people with their government. They include political parties, interest groups, mass media, and elections.
6. **Public Policy** – This includes specific policy issues, such as environmental, economic, social welfare, or foreign policy ideas.

For each article, you will have **a total of two paragraphs**. Please complete the following:

1. Write the appropriate heading for the article. This should include the title, author, source, and date of article.
2. Include printed article in scrapbook
3. Write a **1-paragraph summary** of this article
4. Provide a well-thought out and well-reasoned **1-paragraph** responding to the following questions:
 - a. What is at the heart of this conflict? Be specific.
 - b. How do the opinions of Democrats and Republicans differ on this issue, if at all?
 - c. How does this relate to the specific unit? Remember, no more than three articles per unit.

Due the first day of school