

AP U.S. Government Summer Assignments

Mr. Yoder
B127

RATIONALE: AP U.S. Government is designed to introduce you to the structure and function of the United States government. Prior to entering the classroom, this course requires a basic understanding of the inner-workings of our government, as well as an appreciation of current issues revolving around its functioning. To best prepare you for the rigors of this course, you will be required to read debate excerpts and expand your knowledge of current issues in American government.

BOOK/WEBSITE:

You Decide 2005: Current Debates In American Politics, by John T. Rourke
<http://www.ablongman.com/YouDecide/>

- **Pick up book in the PHS library as soon as possible.**

ASSIGNMENT #1:

- Read the following debates from the book:
 - *Federalism (Gay Marriage)
 - *Civil Liberties (Internet Access)
 - *Political Culture (Immigration)
 - *Presidency (War Powers)
 - *Education (Affirmative Action)
- Read the following debate on the Web:
 - *Anti-Terror Legislation (Civil Liberties vs. Government Protection)
- Choose five of the above debates and type a summary of the arguments made for each side of the issues. Responses to each topic should be approximately one word processed page in length (1/2 page for each side of the argument) and include the majority of reasons given in each debate. Following each summary should be a statement of your opinion with a brief explanation for it (2-3 sentences). **Each summary will carry a point value of 15 points; 75 points collectively.** Estimated time for completion 5-6 hours.

ASSIGNMENT #2:

- Choose one of the above debates and write a two-page paper defending one side of the argument. Your response should include the majority of reasons given in the reading, as well as several new arguments gathered from other sources. You must include at least three new arguments for your opinion. These arguments must come from at least two other sources and be cited in your paper using a Works Cited page. **This portion of the assignment will be worth 35 points.** You will find the Position Paper Rubric on the next page. Estimated time for completion 1-2 hours.
- All work will be double-spaced and word processed using Times New Roman font, 12 point.
- **All work is due on the first day of school!**

Position Paper Rubric – 35 points

Criterion	Insufficient	Limited	Adequate	Proficient	Exceptional
<p>Format (introduction, position, analysis, conclusion, presentation) 5 points possible</p>	Elements missing; minimal organization and lack of flow.	Some elements missing; regular breaks in organization; flow breaks down.	All elements present with occasional disorganization and flow interrupted.	All elements well presented; well organized and flows smoothly	All elements thoroughly presented; extremely well organized, allowing smooth & logical flow; crisp and ready for publication.
<p>Mechanics 5 points possible</p>	Frequent errors; seriously impairs flow/meaning of paper.	Regular errors; flow/meaning of paper breaks down.	Errors noticeable, and on occasion, detract from flow or meaning of paper.	Some errors, which are minor in nature, & don't detract from overall meaning of paper.	Essentially faultless; errors may result from risk-taking and do not detract from meaning of paper.
<p>Positions (articulates positions completely; shows understanding) 15 points possible</p>	Positions incomplete; ineffective explanation (minimal information); failure to appreciate points of view.	Positions partially presented; weak information; shows lack of relevant data; little appreciation for points of view.	Positions adequately presented; some imbalance in positions; some information missing or gaps in explanation; some attempts to appreciate points of view.	Positions completely presented; strong, relevant understanding of positions and an effort to appreciate points of view.	Two or more positions thoroughly presented; comprehensive, reveals mature and insightful understanding of the positions and a solid appreciation of points of view.
<p>Analysis (compare/contrast, evaluate positions) 10 points possible</p>	Little or no examination of data (information); lacks comparison, contrast, and evaluation.	Some examination of data (information); little comparison, contrast and evaluation.	Adequate examination of data (information); some degree of comparison, contrast & evaluation.	Skillful examination; shows strong degree of comparison, contrast, & evaluation.	Demonstrates thorough examination of data (information); shows advanced degree of comparison, contrast, & evaluation.