

AP Comparative & US Government Summer Assignment

Welcome to AP Comparative and US Government! We will be contrasting political systems, institutions and events affecting governments and individuals around the world with special focus on the US, UK, Russia, China, Iran, Nigeria and Mexico. As a seminar-style class, I look forward to our discussions next year.

This is your opportunity to gain a more sophisticated understanding of political systems. You have two summer assignments for this course, both of which I hope will be enlightening and give you a good introduction to the class content.

1) Read Fareed Zakaria's book *The Future of Freedom*

(2003 & 2007 editions available—available at bookstores & copies at Fairfax & WSHS libraries)

This book will introduce you to many of the concepts we will be studying next year. Zakaria is a columnist for *Newsweek* and has superior insights into the challenges confronting the world in the 21st century. This is a very readable book that covers many of the comparative countries and concepts we will be reading about next year. We will have a discussion about this book on the first day of class and I will refer to Zakaria's book often during the course, so it is imperative that you devote time to evaluating *The Future of Freedom*.

After reading the book, you will write five short essays, **TYPED** (@ 250 words each=1page) in response to the questions I pose below related to the book. These essays will be due the first day of class. The five questions that I want you to respond to in writing are:

- 1) What does Zakaria mean by "Illiberal Democracy"? Why does he think that the number of governments that can be characterized as illiberal democracies are increasing?
- 2) According to Zakaria, what is the relationship between economic growth and democratization? Are you persuaded by his explanation? Why?
- 3) How does Zakaria differentiate "democracy" from "liberty"? Do you find his distinction useful? Why?
- 4) Why did liberal democracies flourish in North America and Europe earlier than in other continents? Do you agree with Zakaria's reasoning? Why?
- 5) How does Zakaria account for the failure of liberal democracy to flourish in the Middle East? Why does he think that Islamic fundamentalism has become increasingly influential?

2) US Constitution Assignment (attached)

This assignment will give you a good basic understanding of the important elements of the Articles of the Constitution and its Amendments. This assignment will be due the second week of school, but if you want to get ahead, it is an excellent assignment to finish ahead of time.

If you have any questions during the summer, please email me at elizabeth.jacksonpettine@fcps.edu. Thanks and see you in September.

Ms. Jackson

US Constitution Assignment

Online Constitution available at

http://www.constitutioncenter.org/ncc_edu_Text_of_the_Constitution.aspx

1. Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in one to two sentences in the chart below.

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

2. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House of Representatives? _____

3. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?

4. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for the President?

5. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called expressed powers.

a. Identify two expressed powers of the president.

b. What are the expressed powers of the vice president?

c. Identify three expressed powers of Congress.

6. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of the government must have control over the other branches. Look at the first three articles of the Constitution and identify one of each type of checks and balances. Indicate where each power is listed in the Constitution.

a. A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

b. A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch: _____

This is found in Article/Section? _____

7. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

8. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

PART II - MAJORITY OR SUPERMAJORITY?

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a supermajority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while a supermajority involves a 2/3rds

or 3/4ths majority vote. Most elections in the US require a plurality, or the most votes, but not necessarily a majority.

1. What body(ies) have the power to override a presidential veto? _____
 - a. What margin is required to override a presidential veto? _____
 - b. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described? _____
2. What body has the power to ratify treaties? _____
 - a. What margin is required to ratify treaties? _____
 - b. Where in the Constitution is the ratification power described? _____
3. To impeach means “to bring charges against” or “to indict.”
 - a. Which body has the power to impeach the president? _____
 - b. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described? _____
4. What body has the power to convict the president of charges brought against him in the impeachment process and thereby remove him from the presidency? _____
 - a. What margin is required to convict and remove a president? _____
5. What body has the power to accept or reject a president’s nomination to the Supreme Court? _____
 - a. What margin is required to elevate a nominee to the Court? _____
 - b. Where in the Constitution are judicial nominations described? _____
6. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president? _____
 - a. What margin is required to chose the president? _____
 - b. In which two parts of the Constitution is the Electoral College described?
_____ & _____
7. A filibuster is a procedural method to “talk a bill” to death and prevent a vote on a measure.
 - a. What body has the ability to filibuster? _____
 - b. How many votes does it take to invoke “cloture” and end a filibuster? _____
8. The Constitution specifies a 3/4ths majority or just one process. What is it? _____
9. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?

10. What are two ways that amendments to the constitution can be ratified?

Part III - Amendments to the Constitution

The first ten amendments to the Constitution protect citizens from the will of the majority. In other words, no majority could vote to take away these rights. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

1. Outline the general purpose of the first 10 Amendments (Bill of Rights).

Amendment 1	
Amendment 2	
Amendment 3	
Amendment 4	
Amendment 5	
Amendment 6	
Amendment 7	
Amendment 8	
Amendment 9	
Amendment 10	

2. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of women? _____

3. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of African Americans? _____

4. Which Amendment finally made a federal income tax Constitutional? _____
5. Find the Amendment that changed the method of election of US Senators _____. How were they chosen before this was ratified? _____

6. Which Amendment concerns voting rights in DC? _____ What rights to they have to representation at the national level? _____
7. The 25th Amendment describes the sequence of events that would install the vice president as acting president against the will of the president. Outline how that is supposed to happen. _____

8. Which Amendment allowed 18 year-old high school students to vote?_____

9. Bonus. The person from each class who can best come up with a mnemonic or other good memorization device to remember all the Amendments will receive 5 bonus points in the first quarter. Describe it below.