

AP U.S. Government and Politics (Summer 2020)

In this course, I will expect you to familiarize yourself with the following websites:

allsides.com , which links you to articles and lets you know if the articles are from the “Left” (liberal ideology) “Center,” or “Right” (conservative ideology). Note: parties can change ideologies over time. Currently, the media often uses “Left” or “Liberal” when discussing the Democratic Party or “Right” or “Conservative” when discussing the Republican Party. (You will need to learn to differentiate between a political ideology and a political party, but we will get to that in AP Gov’t.)

realclearpolitics.com , which states that its mission “of our original material... is to give our readers an objective look at the news landscape every single day.” This mission statement means that RCP compiles the articles daily for you...but it does not label the perspective. Instead, you can often see the perspective via the headline. For example, “Majority Leader Sen. McConnell (R-KY) saves the day in the COVID-19 CARE Act!” is from the “conservative” perspective while “Speaker (of the House of Representatives) Pelosi (D-CA 12th) better serves the people with her COVID-19 CARE Act additions!”

Note that *federalism* (national government power/state government power) and *checks and balances* (between the branches of government at the federal level) are foundational concepts from the class to which you should pay attention.

Additionally, the Supreme Court will issue decisions in June (maybe July b/c of COVID) *expanding or limiting* the federal government’s power and/or *balance majority/minority rights* (either expanding or setting parameters around). In these Supreme Court cases, look for *federalism* issues, *Civil Liberties* (protections from the federal/state government from interfering w/ individual rights, i.e. Bill of Rights) or *Civil Rights* issues (typically using the 14th Amendment’s due process clause or equal protection clause).

While there is not an assignment for you to turn in to me, the more you read and pay attention to current events with these ideas in mind (and perhaps even jot them down for your own use), the easier it will be when you go to write your Free Response Questions in this class since you will need to reference “real world” examples.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

-Mrs. Ruane

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