

# AP United States Government & Politics ~ Syllabus

Mista Bale • Lynbrook High School • Room 503 • Jeffrey\_bale@fuhsd.org

## About the Class

**Introduction.** This course is designed to give students a thorough understanding of and critical perspective on the system of United States government and politics.

AP Government and Politics is a tightly structured, highly demanding, fast paced college-level course. By fast paced and demanding I mean that you study a *year's* amount of curriculum in only *one* semester. This schedule is unlike any other AP course at Lynbrook and requires a more intense work ethic by students.

- The course is designed around the assumption that all students enrolled in the class will properly prepare for and take the AP exam in May.
- Students are expected to *actively participate* in all activities and discussions in order to be successful in the class; indeed, participation is a significant part of your grade.
- You can expect significant amounts of reading in this course—about 50 to 80 pages per week—both from the textbook and supplemental sources. There is a good deal of written reflection on these readings and significant in-class teacher and student-led discussion of the readings. Students need to come to class clearly knowing the material assigned. Reading will likely be the bulk of your out of class work.
- Unit exams will model the actual AP exam experience—a combination of multiple choice and essay.
- All class lectures and materials should be found and available on [www.mistabale.com](http://www.mistabale.com)

## **Grading & Assignments**

- ◆ Grades are in weighted categories. I only use whole numbers in my grades. My grading program (Schoology) automatically rounds up on my end, so technically while 80% is the base for an “B” a 79.5 will show and count as a grade of a “B.”

<u>Grade Categories</u>		<u>Grade Cut-Offs</u>	
Exams (6) =	40%	100 – 90% =	A
Reading Checks (12) =	30%	89 – 80% =	B
Homework/Classwork/Participation =	30%	79 – 70% =	C
		69 – 60% =	D
		59 - 0% =	F

- ◆ Assignments during this semester will be turned in one of two ways: paper submission in class and digital submission (Schoology) – but it will be specified for the assignment what I want well in advance (generally it will be digital submission). I will always accept a paper copy if you prefer that method. For discussions of certain readings, you may want to have your digital copy available to reference.
- ◆ **Late work will receive 50% credit.** Communicate with me before.

## **Attendance Issues**

Your attendance in class is the most important aspect of the learning experience and is your top priority. Attendance will be a major factor in determining your active participation grade. Review the Daily list on this topic and add the following stipulations.

- ◆ **Make-up tests and quizzes for verifiable excused absences will be taken on a day and time of my choosing, and may be cumulative to that point in the semester.**

- ◆ **If you are on campus the day an assignment is due but missed class, the assignment is still due that day.** You may drop the assignment off in my class, submit it online, or email me the assignment if appropriate for the task and if not told not to beforehand.
- ◆ See me about missed assignments **before** a planned absence (e.g., family vacations, school events, etc.) if at all possible – it simply makes things easier for us both, and that’s what we like.
- ◆ It is your responsibility to pick-up missed work by consulting with me immediately upon your return; otherwise, I will assume a no credit option for missed work you didn’t ask about.
- ◆ I will adhere strictly to the school attendance policy for all matters not listed here.

### ***Class Rules/Policies***

I love teaching seniors for many reasons – and one of those is that classes usually display maturity and I have the fortunate ability to talk to you as emerging adults. I want to treat you with the utmost respect, and in turn, please treat all members of the class with the same.

- ◆ **Rule #1: Ask Permission... for things like use of restrooms or the drinking fountain.**
- ◆ **Rule #2: Be Respectful... in your choice of language, tone, promptness in getting to class and not interrupting the educational process, your attentiveness, and other matters that are pretty common sense. Respect goes a long way in really making a class a great place to be.**
- ◆ **Don’t Cheat... consult the LHS Academic Integrity Policies and the FUSDH academic policies which apply to all classes... or inquire with me if you have even the slightest concern. Better safe than sorry!**

### ***Office Hours***

My prep periods are 6 and 7 this year and I welcome you to come ask questions, discuss content, or seek help for the material. I welcome email questions as well. I hope to be of assistance to you this semester.