Dear Future AP Government Student,

Greetings from Ms. Boudalis, Mr. Mandel, and Mr. Zito! In a few short months, one of us will be teaching you in Advanced Placement Government and Politics!!! Even though you have yet to complete this school year, we’re already thinking about next year (and hopefully you are, too!). There are several fairly easy things that you can do between now and September that will help you prepare for this class. Before we explain, we would like to tell you a little bit about the AP Government course since students will often arrive on the first day of school with a few misconceptions.

First of all, AP Government is actually two separate AP courses that are taught together: AP United States Government and Politics and AP Comparative Government and Politics. This means that we are covering two curriculums at twice the pace, and it also means that you will be taking two separate Advanced Placement exams in May. We know the prospect of taking two AP exams for just one class might sound horrible now, but it does mean that you can earn up to six college credits. What makes this class difficult at times during the school year is that there is A LOT of reading and we tend to move at a pretty rapid pace so you really have to maintain your focus and level of effort (no senior slump for you!).

However, there are a few things that you can do that will give you a jump-start on the course and better prepare you for the challenge from day one. Probably the easiest and most effective way you can do this is by reading at least one newspaper daily. You will never go wrong with the Washington Post, the New York Times, or a weekly publication such as The Economist that has an international focus. The point is to start familiarizing yourself with contemporary political issues in our country and in the six countries that we study in Comparative (Great Britain, Russia, China, Mexico, Iran, and Nigeria).

We would also strongly recommend that you obtain a copy of the United States Constitution and read it before school starts. Our first major unit of study will be on the Constitution so it is extremely important that you familiarize yourself with the document in the months ahead. We have attached an assignment to accompany your reading of the Constitution that will be the basis of one of your first assignments (and quizzes) during the school year. Doing this assignment over the summer means you save yourself a homework assignment during the busy start of the school year!

We look forward to meeting you in the months ahead. Have an awesome summer and we’ll see you on your first day as a senior in high school!
PART I: THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article I</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article II</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article III</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article IV</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article V</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article VI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Article VII</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Identify two powers denied from Congress in the Constitution.
2. How does the House of Representatives determine the rules of proceedings (the ability to have debates, riders, etc)

3. Identify two powers the Constitution prohibits from the States.

4. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House?

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

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

7. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called express powers.
   a. Identify two express powers of the president.

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

   c. Identify 10 of the 27 enumerated powers of Congress (choose the 10 you think are most important).

8. 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 can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

b. A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch: _______________
   This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch: _______________
   This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch: _______________
   This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch: _______________
   This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch: _______________
   This can be found in what article/section of the Constitution ______________

9. The court of original jurisdiction is the first court that hears a case. Appellate courts hear cases on appeal from lower courts. Although the Supreme Court functions primarily as an appellate court, it is the courts of original jurisdiction in certain kinds of cases. What are those?

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

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

   **PART III. MAJORITY AND SUPERMAJORITY**

   The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a supermajority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while supermajority requirements can involve a 2/3 majority or a 3/4 majority. Most elections in the United States require a plurality, or the most votes, but not necessarily a majority.

1. a. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?
   
   __________________________

b. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?
   
   __________________________

c. What body has the power to ratify treaties?
   
   __________________________

   d. What margin is required to ratify treaties?
3. To impeach means "to bring charges against" or "to indict".
   1. What body has the power to impeach the president?
      ________________________________
   2. What vote is required to impeach? ____________________

4. a. 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?
       ________________________________
   b. What vote is required to convict and remove a president?
      ________________________________
   c. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?
      ______

5. a. What body has the power to accept or reject a president's nominations to the
    Supreme Court?
      ______
   b. What margins is required to elevate a president's nominee to a seat on the Court?
      ______

6. a. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the total number of
    electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?
      ______
   b. What margin is required to choose the president?
      ______

7. The Constitution specifies a three-fourths majority for just one process. What?

8. List all parts of the Constitution that require a supermajority. For each, explain why
    you believe there is a supermajority requirement
9. See Article VI. Explain the supremacy clause in your own words

10. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?

11. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?
Part III. THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Some parts of the Constitution require a simple majority, others a supermajority, while still others protect citizens from the will of the majority. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights protect citizens from the will of the majority. In other words, no majority could vote to take these rights away. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

12. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of women? ______________

13. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of African Americans? ______________

14. How were US Senators chosen before the Seventeenth Amendment? 

________________________

15. Identify by number amendments that
   a. Extended individual rights _________________________________
   b. Extended civil rights (including voting rights) __________________
   c. Prohibited certain practices by states _____________________________
   d. Changed specific language in the Constitution ________________