**ASSIGNMENT 1 --- The U.S. Constitution (100 points) --- CON-3, CON-4, CON-5, LOR-1, PMI-1**

**Disciplinary Practices: 1a, 1b, 4a,**

**The Constitution** – this is an ***EXTREMELY*** important document for everyone in this country, especially APGO students! Understanding it will provide a great foundation for my class. Therefore, you will READ IT, KNOW IT and LOVE IT by the time you enter my class. *This work will be especially useful for Unit 1 of APGO!*

* **They are due by January 12th– no late work.**
* Your work should be your own. Please **HAND WRITE**, no typed work.

**Part I: Structure of the Constitution—**Read each article and summarize the general purpose or subject of the article. Use words, pictures, symbols, color.

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| **Article Number and Title** | **Summary/General Purpose or Subject**  |
| Article I |  |
| Article II |  |
| Article III |  |
| Article IV |  |
| Article V |  |
| Article VI |  |
| Article VII |  |

Which article of the Constitution is the longest and most detailed? Explain 2 reasons why that may be the case.

**Part II: The Amendments—**Briefly describe each amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Use words, pictures, symbols, color.

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| **AMENDMENT** | **Brief description of the amendment (all parts).** |
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What are the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution collectively known as?

Identify the three amendments that were passed in the years immediately after the Civil War. What was the goal of all of these amendments?

Describe three amendments that extended suffrage to new groups of people. Briefly explain the historical context/events that likely led to the passage of these events.

**Part III: The Three Branches of Government—**Use the text of the Constitution to answer the following. Also, when asked **(any question that says “cite” at the end)** give the article, section, and clause # in which the answer is found.

1. Describe 6 purposes of the Constitution according to the Preamble.
2. What are the two parts of the Legislative Branch/Congress? **(cite)**
3. How often are elections for the House of Representatives conducted and who gets to vote in these elections?
4. What are the written requirements for holding a seat in the House of Reps.? **(cite)**
5. How are the number of seats in the House of Reps. apportioned to each state and how often is this done?
6. What powers of Congress are unique to the House of Representatives?
7. How many Senators does each state have and how were they originally chosen? **(cite)**
8. How are Senators chosen today? What amendment changed this?
9. How long is a Senator’s term of office? How many are elected in each election year?
10. What are the formal written requirements for holding a seat in the Senate? **(cite)**
11. Who is the President of the Senate? When is the only time that he can vote in the Senate? **(cite)**
12. What powers of Congress are unique to the Senate?
13. Who presides over impeachment trials and what is required for a conviction?
14. Where do all bills raising revenue begin the legislative process? **(cite)**
15. What is required for Congress to override a Presidential veto? **(cite)**
16. List 10 of the powers given to Congress **(cite Article and Section)**
17. List 4 powers that are denied to Congress. **(cite Article and Section)**
18. According to Article II and Amendment XII, how many electors does each state receive for President of the United States and how are these electors chosen?
19. What are the formal qualifications to serve as the President of the U.S. as defined in the Constitution? **(cite)**
20. List two powers that the President has that require the “Advise and Consent” of the Senate.
21. List 3 duties of the President under Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution.
22. How may a President be removed from office? **(cite)**
23. What body holds the judicial power of the U.S.?
24. What branch of government has the power to create “inferior courts?”
25. Who appoints and confirms federal judges? **(cite)**
26. How long do federal judges hold office?
27. Over what two types of cases does the Supreme Court have original jurisdiction? **(cite)**
28. What are the two stages of the amendment process? What is needed to proceed through both? **(cite)**
29. How many states were required to ratify the Constitution? **(cite)**

**Part IV: Majority and Super Majority—**Use the Constitution or other resources to complete the following section.

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a super majority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while a super majority requires a 2/3 majority or a 3/4 majority.

VETO POWER

1. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?
2. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?

RATIFICATION

1. Who has the ability to create treaties?
2. What body has the power to ratify/approve treaties?
3. What margin is required to ratify treaties?

IMPEACHMENT POWER

1. What body has the power to impeach (bring charges or indict) a government official?
2. What body has the power to convict an official of charges brought against him in the impeachment process?
3. What margin is required to convict and remove a president?

NOMINATION PROCESS

1. What body has the power to accept or reject a president’s nominations to the Supreme Court?
2. What margin is required to elevate a president’s nominee to a seat on the Supreme Court?

ELECTIONS

1. If no candidate for president wins a simple majority of the total electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?
2. What margin is required to choose the president?

**Part V: Important Constitutional Clauses—**The following are important clauses listed in the Constitution or the Amendments. For each, describe the clause in your own words and explain why the clause is so important.

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| **Name** | **Description** | **Importance** |
| **Full Faith and Credit Clause** |  |  |
| **Commerce Clause** |  |  |
| **Supremacy Clause** |  |  |
| **Necessary and Proper Clause (Elastic Clause)** |  |  |
| **General Welfare Clause** |  |  |
| **Establishment Clause** |  |  |
| **Free-exercise Clause** |  |  |
| **Due Process Clause of 5th and 14th Amendments** |  |  |
| **Equal Protection Clause** |  |  |

**ASSIGNMENT 2 — Court Case Study (100 points) --- CON-2, CON-3, CON-5, CON-6, LOR-2, LOR-3, PMI-3, PRD-2**

**Disciplinary Practices: 2a, 2b**

One of the most difficult aspects of this course for many students are the landmark court cases from U.S. history. The Supreme Court has made rulings on cases that have had considerable impacts on the US. In the pages below are 15 landmark court cases that we will discuss this year.

For this assignment, you will research essential information for 10 cases that you choose. If you complete all 15 cases, you receive extra credit on the assignment. For each case, you should provide the following information (an example, *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, is provided): Case name, year of decision, amendment that the case relates to and/or Constitutional issue, and brief summary of the ruling/significance of the case, and explain a connection to a foundational document other than the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

The primary website recommend for this assignment is: [www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org) , but there are others.

Cases:

1. ***McCulloch v. Maryland***
2. ***US v. Lopez***
3. ***Baker v. Carr***
4. ***Shaw v. Reno***
5. ***Marbury v. Madison***
6. ***Engel v. Vitale***
7. ***Tinker v. Des Moines***
8. ***Wisconsin v. Yoder***
9. ***Schenck v. US***
10. ***New York Times Co. v. US***
11. ***McDonald v. Chicago***
12. ***Gideon v. Wainwright***
13. ***Roe v. Wade***
14. ***Brown v. BOE***
15. ***Citizens United v. FE***

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| **Case/Year** | **Decision** | **Amendment/Issue** | **Significance/Implications** | **Foundational Document Tie** |
| *Lemon v. Kurtzman* 1973 | 8-1for Lemon | 1st Amendment Freedom of Religion case related to the Establishment Clause | Direct government assistance to religious schools is unconstitutional. Ruling created the “Lemon Test” to be used to determine if government actions violate establishment clause.  |  |
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**Additional five cases:**

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| **Case/Year** | **Decision** | **Amendment/Issue** | **Significance/Implications** | **Foundational Document Tie** |
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**ASSIGNMENT 3 --- Current Events Journal (100 points, total) --- PRD-3, MPA-1, MPA-2, MPA-3**

**Disciplinary Practices: 1a-e, 2d, 3a-d, 4a-d (depending on article topic chosen).**

AP Government is more directly related to current events than any course you will take in high school. Everything that we will study relates to how politics and government works in modern America. Accordingly, knowledge of current political and governmental affairs will significantly help you to understand the things we study. It will, in fact, be necessary to succeed in the course. Knowing what is going on in the country with respect to politics and government, will help you do better in the course.

You should follow major current events by doing one or more of the following on at least a weekly basis:

* Read either the print or online version of a major newspaper.
* Watch a national/international news broadcast (CNN, MSNBC, FOX News, PBS, ABC, CBS, NBC) – not a local news broadcast.
* Read major news magazines or political journals (Time, Newsweek, US News and World Report, The Economist, The Atlantic, The New Yorker)
* Read articles from an online political journalism website such as Politico (politico.com) or Five-Thirty-Eight (fivethirtyeight.com)
* Watch daily or weekly news/current affairs programming (Hardball, Meet the Press, Face the Nation, This Week, etc.)

**\*\*Note: It is good to vary your sources when viewing so you can get various perspectives on the same issue. All news reports are not equal and will cover different sides/aspects of the story.**

* Beginning the week of December 17st and ending the week of January 7th, create a current events journal entry, jot down notes and sources as you see or hear them.
* Choose one current even during that time, type minimum two paragraphs (complete sentences; ~250 words) about the major event or events in American government and/or politics from the week you choose.
	+ In the first paragraph, you should describe the event or events.
	+ In the second paragraph, you should analyze the significance of it/them and state any opinions, thoughts, or analysis that you might have about it/them. You should relate the issue to a foundational document; i.e. U.S. Constitution, a Federalist Paper, or a political process or ideology.
	+ you must cite any news media sources you used
* Your journal entry should deal with issues that are of significant importance to American politics and government. Such things include what the president is up to, what Congress is debating or legislation that they are passing, constitutional issues or major federal court decisions concerning them, debates over political issues in America, international crises or foreign policy issues that somehow affect the US or that our government must deal with, etc.

**ASSIGNMENT 3 SAMPLE**

Sally Student

AP Government and Politics

Sample Current Events Journal for May 18-22, 2015

Political news this week was dominated by the impending 2016 presidential election. As of now, the focus is on the already large and growing field of Republican primary candidates (the Democratic Party is expected to nominate Hilary Clinton without significant opposition). While several politicians have already declared their candidacy, former Florida Republican governor Jeb Bush and current Wisconsin Republican governor Scott Walker have not, although they are expected to soon. Analysts believe that they are waiting to make an official announcement so that they can continue to raise money for their super PACs (political action committees). The Supreme Court decided in *Citizens United v. FEC* that corporations are protected by the First Amendment and may spend an unlimited amount of money to support or attack a candidate, as long as they are not affiliated with the candidate. This decision gave rise to super PACS, organizations that are allowed to accept unlimited financial contributions from donors that will later be used to support a particular candidate. Until they announce their candidacy, politicians such as Jeb Bush can continue to raise millions of dollars for super PACs that will later support them in the primary elections. Jeb Bush has currently raised the most money of the declared and prospective Republican candidates; he is expected to declare that he has raised “in the high tens of millions.” This war chest could prove valuable to him in a crowded Republican primary contest. The Republican field of candidates is already quite large and the Republican National Committee (RNC) anticipates that as many as twelve candidates may take part in the first primary debate.

This week’s stories show the impact of the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision and the growing influence of money in presidential elections. The amount of money that candidates need to run (and win) a presidential election is absolutely staggering, and serves to increase the influence of corporations and the most affluent Americans who are able to make large campaign contributions. The actions of Jeb Bush and Scott Walker, as well as the other declared candidates who are traversing the country fundraising, show that wooing donors and raising cash has become more important than addressing the concerns of everyday Americans. More money means more access to politicians and candidates for the nation’s highest offices. In turn, wealthy donors could pressure politicians to support policies that will result in making the rich richer and the poor poorer. Meanwhile, working class Americans who cannot afford to make large campaign contributions are left without a voice in the political process. The high price tag of becoming president may also exclude qualified candidates who are unable raise such large amounts of money. It is unclear whether the Supreme Court foresaw these negative outcomes when they made their *Citizens United* decision. The Federal Elections Commission and the U.S. government should seriously consider passing regulations and legislation to limit the amount of money that can be spent in a presidential campaign to even the playing field and allow the candidates to focus on the issues that affect the American people.

Bash, Dana. "Election 2016: The Dirty Little Secret of Presidential Announcements - CNNPolitics.com." CNN. Cable News Network, 18 May 2015. Web. 19 May 2015.

Silver, Nate, and Harry Enten. "Jeb Bush Has The Cash, But Not The GOP Support." FiveThirtyEight. 28 Apr. 2015. Web. 19 May 2015.

Stokols, Eli. "Florida Quietly Sets up an Epic 2016 Primary Clash." POLITICO. Web. 19 May 2015.