Instructor Information:

Name: Jamie Parrish

M.A. Curriculum and Instruction, McDaniel College

B.S. History, Secondary Education, Towson University

Contact Information: River Hill High School, Room 233, 410-313-7120 email: jparrish@hcpss.org

website: <http://mrparrishrhhssocialstudies.weebly.com/>

Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics

2014-2015

Course Syllabus and Description

Howard County Public Schools

River Hill High School



**Howard County Approved Textbook**:

Wilson, James, John Dilulio, et al, and . *American Government: Institutions and Policies*. 13. Boston: Wadsworth, 2013. Print.

**Course Description:**

AP Government and Politics is designed for students who have high interest in government and politics and who plan to attend college. The purpose of this course is to prepare students for college-level work. Emphasis is placed on the development of critical thinking and writing skills. Students may earn college credit through the AP Government exam at the end of the year. At the end of this course students will be tested on the Maryland High School Assessment (HSA).

**Course Objectives:**

* Know the important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics.
* Understand typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences (including the components of political behavior, the principles used to explain or justify various government structures and procedures, and the political effects of these structures and procedures).
* Be able to analyze and interpret basic data relevant to U.S. government and politics.

**Course Requirements:**

1. Assignments: Homework consists almost exclusively of reading and writing assignments. All assignments must be either typed or legibly written. All assignments must be of student’s own work.
2. Reading: Reading assignments/syllabi will be available online at the beginning of each unit and will be adhered to. Assignments to aid in comprehension will very often be given along with each reading assignment.
3. Tests: Tests will be given at the completion of each chapter. All other assessments will take place at the teacher’s discretion.
4. Writing: Writing will occur during each chapter. All writing will be peer edited, but the teacher will grade not all writing.

**Necessary Materials**:

* Students should be equipped with the following supplies for this class:
1. A three-ring binder devoted to this class
2. Notebook paper
3. Dividers
4. Highlighter
5. Pen and pencil

\*Students may wish to label their dividers with the following headings: (1) Notes, (2) Homework, (3) Handouts/Articles

\*\*Binders will NOT be collected in this class for a grade

* Students may wish to purchase a review book. I recommend Princeton Review: Cracking the AP U.S.

Government and Politics Exam, This book is available in retail bookstores and from online distribution centers. This book is not approved, adopted, or in any way affiliated with HCPSS.

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|  89.5-100 = A 79.5-89.4 = B 69.5-79.4 = C 59.5-69.4 = D 0-59.4 = E |

**Grading:**

**The grading policy is based on a weighted system**. The graded areas are as follows:

 1.) Tests/quizzes—30%

 2.) Classwork—30%

 3.) Homework—20%

 4.) Projects/Performance—20%

\*\***The County will distribute an interim report card, every five weeks**

* In-class work and homework is assigned for instructional purposes with the understanding that in order to gain the most out of this class, students must complete all assigned work. However, students will be notified in advance if an assignment will be graded. No participation or “busy work” grades will be given. Extra credit will NOT be given on an individual basis.
* Semester exams will be given as per HCPSS and RHHS policies.
* Grades will be issued every academic quarter. Grades will also be available online via Aspen, which your teacher promises to try and update regularly ☺
* Individual grades will not be discussed during class time, but rather in an individual appointment. All discussions will be respectful or will end immediately.
* Homework Free Weekends/Breaks:As per River Hill Policy: Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break, and Spring Break are homework free (AP student may need to prepare for May exams during Spring Break.) Teachers will also keep Homecoming weekend and Prom weekend homework-free and chose two other homework-free weekends throughout the year. The guideline is that teachers should provide students with ample time before the weekend/break to complete an assignment due after a homework-free weekend or break.

**Late Work:**

* Late work will be accepted up to a day with 50% credit unless otherwise specified by the teacher.
* Students will NOT email assignments to the teacher without prior permission.
* Unusual situations and exceptions will be dealt with on an individual basis (death in the family, extended illness)

**Attendance:**

* Howard County Public Schools attendance policies are in effect.
* Regular attendance in class is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL to the successful completion of the course. Students returning from absences are responsible for completing missed assignments promptly. It is the student’s obligation to catch up on lecture notes missed due to absences. Students attending a school function, MUST make arrangements to get work in early. It will be to the student’s best advantage to be in class on all scheduled test days.

**Additional Help**:

If you require additional help at any time, please do not hesitate to ask. I will be happy to provide additional help, but it is YOUR responsibility to make time for extra help

**Email**: jparrish1127@gmail.com

**Classroom Behavior and Other Policies:**

All classroom procedures will be posted in the classroom. There are very few *rules* for behavior, but very high *expectations*. Choose your actions and make your decisions wisely and be aware that all HCPSS and RHHS policies will be in effect in the classroom.

1. Just a fair warning, Mr. Parrish is particularly sensitive to and strict about academic integrity, lying, cell phone usage, and tardiness. It just simply won’t be tolerated.
2. Sleeping is to be done at home, not in class. If you are ill, you will be given a pass to the clinic.
3. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Please consult the student handbook for policies on academic integrity. If you are confused by this policy, please ask for further assistance.
4. This is an advanced level course and you are expected to live up to the advanced academic expectations set for this class. Remember, **lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.**

**Electronic Usage Policy**

We live in every changing world in which new technologies allow us to communicate and learn in new, interesting, and immediate ways. I recognize that your smartphone, tablet, or laptop can be used as an instructional tool. This is why I am instituting a BYOD (bring your own device) Policy for personal electronic devices. Below is a list of guidelines for appropriate use of electronic devices.

* Electronic devices will be allowed for use at the teacher’s discretion.
* Electronic devices will be allowed for approved academic/instructional purposes.
* Some academic/instruction purposes may include but are not limited to:
1. Use during test/quiz review session with websites such as Poll Everywhere or Socrative.
2. The creation of online projects on websites such as Edublogs or Glogster.
3. Accessing school approved resource materials during in-class research sessions for long-term projects.
4. Accessing learning management websites such as Edmodo to check for class assignments and due dates.

With allowing electronic devices in the classroom for instructional purposes I realize that there may be the temptation to use them form non-instructional purposes. The following is a list of non-instructional purposes of electronic devices that will not be tolerated in the classroom. Bear in mind that this list is not conclusive and other activities that interfere with instruction may be added.

1. The sending and receiving of personal communication, i.e. text messages, snapchat, email, and phone calls.
2. The audio and/or video recording of the class.
3. Taking photographs during class.
4. Playing of games.
5. Checking social networking and social media websites such as facebook, twitter, and instagram.

If you are found to be using your personal electronic device in any manner that disrupts your learning or the learning of those around you the following will occur:

1. First Offense: Your device will be confiscated and returned at the end of class and parents will be notified.
2. Second Offense: Your device will be confiscated, handed over to the administration, an office referral will be filed, and your parents will be notified.

Bringing your own device is a privilege. It should also be noted that if inappropriate use of you personal electronic device becomes chronic, the teacher reserves the right deny this privilege to individual students.

**Hawktime**

Hawktime will take place at the end of 3rd period every Monday and 1st, 3rd, and 4th Wednesday of the month. My room will be open for test/quiz make-up, extra help, and make-up work during these times.

**A Personal Note:**

I have every expectation that this will be a successful and happy school year. We will work hard, but it is my great hope that you will enjoy this class. Please do not hesitate to see me if you have any concerns or questions. I look forward to working with you this year.

*“If men were angels, no government would be necessary.” ~James Madison*