**Primer Packet (AP US Government and Politics)**

Understanding the following topics and concepts—prior to entering the course—provides a necessary foundation for any student interested in taking the AP Government and Politics exam.

*Done well, it can serve as the beginning of an excellent AP exam study guide.*

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Packet must be **completed fully**, with questions **answered specifically**, or it will not be collected.
2. Packet due **by the time the first class meets**—no exceptions.
3. For EVERY QUESTION students **must cite the sources** they used (specific website, book/author)
4. It is imperative that **students do their own work**. Copying from each other will be considered an act of **academic honesty** and treated accordingly. (A very bad way to start one’s senior year.)

*Failure to follow these requirements will disqualify students from the AP course.*

Part One – Non-Essay Responses

*This information can be found in the course textbook, most AP prep books, or with a targeted web search.*

*\*Citing ALL sources is required*

1. Create a chart or graphic that correctly shows the **interrelationships** between the following things:
   1. the three principle branches of the government including
   2. the **houses of Congress**,
   3. the top **levels of the executive branch**,
   4. the three **levels of the judicial branch**.
   5. Include in your graphic *at least two* **checks and balances** each branch has on the others.
2. Create a chart or graphic that depicts all the **“linkage institutions”** (parties, interest groups, etc.) that connect the people to policymakers in Washington, as well as the all the **methods** **that policies are implemented** (laws, executive orders, etc.)

1. Create a table or graphic the lays out the **two kinds of federalism**. This should include a brief description, along with an example, of each.
2. Create a table or graphic that explains the difference between **elitism, pluralism, and hyper-pluralism**. Be sure to include examples as part of your descriptions.

1. Create a bulleted that includes descriptions of all the **advantages of incumbency**.
2. Create a table or graphic that lists three Supreme Court cases that demonstrate the doctrine of **selective incorporation**. Include which Amendments to the Bill of Rights each case addresses, along with a brief description of how it addresses that Amendment.

Part Two - Essay Responses

*This information can be found in the course textbook, most AP prep books, or with a targeted web search.*

*\*Citing ALL sources is required*

**Answer the following questions based on the chart/s you made in Part One.**

1. Of all the “linkage institutions,” which do you believe is the most important to the functioning of democracy?

Provide three detailed reasons, with examples, to support your answer (3-5 paragraphs)

1. Of the three theories of government (elitism, pluralism, hyper-pluralism), which do you think best describes what’s currently happening in Washington?

Provide three detailed reasons, with examples, to support your answer (3-5 paragraphs)

**Answer the following questions based on your own research (using any credible sources you choose.)**

1. If you were a member of Congress interested in power, and could pick any committee on which to be the Chairperson, which committee would you choose?

Provide three detailed reasons, with examples, to support your answer. (3-5 paragraphs)

1. What do you believe was the most important three moments in the history of election campaign finance?

Provide detailed reasons, with examples, to support your answer. (3-5 paragraphs)

1. Choose three Supreme Court cases that address a similar issue.

Analyze the three cases by describing the facts of each case, the precedent each case sets, and how each case handled the issue differently. (6-8 paragraphs)