

AP US Government and Politics Portfolio

Key Questions

What is the purpose of the portfolio?

--engage students in self-directed learning as it relates to American Government and Citizenship
--engage students in tasks and discussions of civic virtue, common good, and active citizenship
--engage students in the practice of self-reflection as it pertains to learning in and outside of class
--encourage students to become effective citizens with characteristics noted in "The Civic Mission of Schools" by the National Council for the Social Studies...

The Civic Mission of Schools report, written by a coalition of scholars and practitioners, set forth the requirements of competent and responsible citizens. According to that report, competent and responsible citizens share four common traits:

...**Informed and thoughtful.** They have a grasp and an appreciation of history and the fundamental processes of American democracy, an understanding and awareness of public and community issues, an ability to obtain information when needed, a capacity to think critically, and a willingness to enter into dialogue with others about different points of view and to understand diverse perspectives. They are tolerant of ambiguity and resist simplistic answers to complex questions.

...**Participate in their communities.** They belong to and contribute to groups in civil society that offer venues for Americans to participate in public service; work together to overcome problems; and pursue an array of cultural, social, political, and religious interests and beliefs.

...**Act politically.** They have the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to accomplish public purposes--for instance, by organizing people to address social issues, solving problems in groups, speaking in public, petitioning and protesting to influence public policy, and voting.

...**Moral and civic virtues.** They are concerned for the rights and welfare of others, socially responsible, willing to listen to alternative perspectives, confident in their capacity to make a difference, and ready to contribute personally to civic and political action. They strike a reasonable balance between their own interests and the common good. They recognize the importance of and practice civic duties such as voting and respecting the rule of law.

What categories of work will it include?

--Expository essays, reflective essays, original works/creations, "Letter to Reader", Annotated Bibliography

What are the end targets for the portfolio?

--In conjunction with the National Council for Social Studies learning outcomes, students will focus on the following practices of active citizenship in our democracy:

- Embrace core democratic values and strive to live by them.
- Accept responsibility for the well-being of oneself, one's family, and the community.
- Has knowledge of the people, history, and traditions that have shaped our local communities, our nation, and the world.
- Has knowledge of our nation's founding documents, civic institutions, and political processes.
- Awareness of issues and events that have an impact on people at local, state, national, and global levels.
- Seek information from varied sources and perspectives to develop informed opinions and creative solutions.
- Ask meaningful questions, analyze, and evaluate information and ideas.
- Use effective decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Actively participates in civic and community life.

What are the criteria for evaluation? What is the rubric?

An extensive rubric is included in this packet. Please note that not every section carries the same weight as the others. In general “descriptive” pieces will be worth less whereas “creative” pieces will be worth more. There is little to be learned in simply reasserting what is already known in this content. To create something new or show reflection is the key to success in this portfolio.

Please note that 85% of the portfolio requires you to do something with the information learned and show me that you learned it and can properly apply the concepts.

What are the self-reflection questions?

The most important part of the portfolio is the reflection on your learning. This section must include a reflective essay addressing the following prompts:

- Where were you at the beginning of the learning process?
- What did you accomplish during the learning process?
- What role did feedback (both internal and external) play in your learning?
- Where are you now?

What's in the portfolio?

--Intro "Letter to the Reader" (1 page)

...This introduces the reader to the contents and conclusions found in the portfolio. It is in some ways a roadmap of what to expect as the reader encounters the material. In another, more important, way it is a map of the thinking and growth of the understanding of citizenship experienced in the process.

--Application of citizenship concepts

...Of the skills of effective citizens defined by the National Council of the Social Studies (NCSS) pick 2 concepts and illustrate your own skills and justify with evidence the fact that you have achieved this benchmark. Your evidence might be an essay, an artifact with accompanying reflection, video reflection, conversation/dialogue transcript, etc.

From the NCSS...

An effective citizen:

- Embraces core democratic values and strives to live by them.
- Accepts responsibility for the well-being of oneself, one's family, and the community.
- Has knowledge of the people, history, and traditions that have shaped our local communities, our nation, and the world.
- Has knowledge of our nation's founding documents, civic institutions, and political processes.
- Is aware of issues and events that have an impact on people at local, state, national, and global levels.
- Seeks information from varied sources and perspectives to develop informed opinions and creative solutions.
- Asks meaningful questions and is able to analyze and evaluate information and ideas.
- Uses effective decision-making and problem-solving skills.
- Actively participates in civic and community life.

--Citizenship Bibliography

...One of the easiest and most effective ways to engage in the work of citizenship is to pay attention to what is going on in the news. Unfortunately, many young people today don't pay attention to the news, let alone read it. If we are lucky young people are getting their news filtered through the "twitterverse" and get slanted and sound-bite news of less than 140 characters.

Your task for this section of the portfolio is to keep a log of the news that you read (and I mean FULLY read) online, in the newspaper, links from Twitter feeds, from television shows (hint: 60 minutes is a good place to start!). You will need to create a running bibliography of these sources with notes about your content and observations from the article as it relates to citizenship. We will be using EasyBib for this, so if you already do then you are ready! In the portfolio you will be summarizing your understanding of the article, the purpose and effectiveness as it relates to your role as active citizens.

--Unit Essays

...At the end of each unit there will be a short essay that you are asked to write related to the content of the unit. This will be a directed question and will ask you to deeply cover the content of the unit. For the portfolio you will select 1 of these essays for inclusion and reflection. (See essays from unit packets for this section.)

-- "Show me you learned..."

...This section of the portfolio will give you an opportunity to be creative and prove to the reader that you learned, and know how to apply, concepts from the list below. You are asked to select two of the following concepts and "create" something new. Your product could be a website, a short tutorial video, online presentation, performance art piece, poem, written reflection, newscast, magazine, collage and artist statement, or anything you can think of to create. This is your chance to use your skills, knowledge, and expertise to prove to me that you have learned 2 of the following concepts.

- Democracy
- Republic
- Limited government
- Civic virtue
- Common good
- Consent of the governed
- Natural rights
- Social contract
- Popular sovereignty
- Checks and balances
- Legislative supremacy
- Federal system of government
- Electoral College
- Separation of powers
- Supremacy clause
- Factions
- Judicial review
- Due process
- Incorporation
- Disenfranchisement
- Delegate / trustee theory of representation
- Gerrymandering
- Filibuster
- Veto
- executive order
-
- patronage
- writ of certiorari
- Bill of Rights
- Establishment clause
- Free exercise clause
- Separation of church and state
- Compelling state interest
- Freedom of expression
- Right to associate
- Right to assemble
- Exclusionary rule
- Probable cause / warrant
- Search and seizure
- Cruel and unusual punishment
- Double jeopardy
- Right to counsel
- *E pluribus Unum*
- Citizen
- Civil disobedience
- Civil rights
- *De facto / de jure* segregation
- Eminent domain
- Immigration
- Something else you might consider should be cleared with Mr. Barikmo first!

--Conclusions

...This is a final reflection essay that focuses on the ideas of citizenship experienced, learned, and internalized. It is a way for you to communicate what life lessons and practices you have learned that will propel you forward as you move toward a more active role in our democracy.

- Where were you at the beginning of the learning process?
- What did you accomplish during the learning process?
- What role did feedback (both internal and external) play in your learning?
- Where are you now?

Portfolio Checklist (Here's the nitty gritty of what you need!)

- ☐ "Letter to the Reader" (1 Page)
- ☐ Concept from an Effective Citizen
- ☐ Concept from an Effective Citizen
- ☐ Citizenship Bibliography (8 sources explained and reflection essay)
- ☐ Unit Essay and Reflection
- ☐ "Show me you learned..." concept
- ☐ "Show me you learned..." concept
- ☐ Reflection / Conclusion essay

AP US Government and Politics Portfolio Rubric

You will be assessed on the 6 major sections of this portfolio outlined in the initial assignment. Each of the sections is assessed independently and also carries a different weight. **Your entire portfolio is out of 136 points. You need to get 102 points to pass. Resubmissions will be allowed.**

	Excellent / Exceeds Expectations 4	Satisfactory / Meets Expectations 3	Unsatisfactory / Does not meet minimum expectations 2	Included but is out of context 1	Not included / not present 0	Rating	Weight	Score
Letter to the Reader	...outlines the work of the portfolio, but more so is a map of the thinking and growth of the understanding of citizenship through this process.	...clearly outlines the work to be explored in the portfolio; provides reader with insight into the development of citizenship	...contains a simple outline of the portfolio, but does not clearly address the "growth of the citizen"	...a bare minimum introduction to the portfolio.			2	
Effective Citizenship in Action #1	...illustrates and analyzes the "skills" learned for effective citizens; extends the evidence and analysis to a deeper understanding of citizenship	...illustrates the "skills" practiced for effective citizens and provides sufficient evidence showing the benchmark has been achieved	...shows a basic understanding of the concept but does not provide adequate evidence to show that the benchmark has been achieved	...An example may be provided but contains no evidence or analysis of the benchmark			5	
Effective Citizenship in Action #2	...illustrates and analyzes the "skills" learned for effective citizens; extends the evidence and analysis to a deeper understanding of citizenship	...illustrates the "skills" practiced for effective citizens and provides sufficient evidence showing the benchmark has been achieved	...shows a basic understanding of the concept but does not provide adequate evidence to show that the benchmark has been achieved	...An example may be provided but contains no evidence or analysis of the benchmark			5	
Citizenship Bibliography	...contains more than the minimum number (8); the summary and analysis represents a deep reflection of the content and role of the citizen	...contains the minimum number (8); the summary and analysis relates to your role as an active citizen	...does not contain the minimum number of references; the summaries are merely restatements of the articles' content	...some sources exist, but there is little content summarized and/or there is no analysis present.			4	
Unit Essay and Reflection	...a unit essay is included and the reflection describes how this clearly represents the learning of the semester while also critically analyzing areas for more growth and exploration	...a unit essay is included and the reflection adequately explains the claim that this essay is a good example of the learning this semester.	...a unit essay is included but there is little or no reflection present. The reflection is incomplete and contains not analysis.	...the essay submitted does not meet the standards for the portfolio and does not contain an adequate reflection on the learning.			3	
"Show me you learned" #1	...the product clearly covers the content and goes deeper than that covered in class/resources; Creativity and care are evident and represent a "top notch" product. The reflection clearly shows deep reflection on the learning of the semester.	...the product sufficiently covers the content explored and shows evidence of creativity and care in production. The reflection clearly explains why this product is emblematic of true learning.	...the product mentions concept(s) covered in class but shows a basic level of creativity and care. The reflection is merely a "reteaching" of the material and does not describe how this represents what the student learned.	...a product is present but there is no summary, description, or reflection.			5	
"Show me you learned" #2	...the product clearly covers the content and goes deeper than that covered in class/resources; Creativity and care are evident and represent a "top notch" product. The reflection clearly shows deep reflection on the learning of the semester.	...the product sufficiently covers the content explored and shows evidence of creativity and care in production. The reflection clearly explains why this product is emblematic of true learning.	...the product mentions concept(s) covered in class but shows a basic level of creativity and care. The reflection is merely a "reteaching" of the material and does not describe how this represents what the student learned.	...a product is present but there is no summary, description, or reflection.			5	
Reflection Statement / Conclusion	...communicates lessons and practices gained from this process; indicates how this will propel them forward as an active participant in a democracy ...answers the four questions fully with analysis and ample detail	...clearly communicates the lessons and practices gained from this process / this class ...answers the four questions completely	...communicates some lessons and practices gained but the impact is unclear or minimal reflection is present ...does not answer the four questions completely	...shows little evidence of analysis and growth relating to the learning process. Reflection is largely absent and does not answer the four questions at all			5	