

AP US Government and Politics Summer Assignment

Salem High School
Mr. Mruk
2019-20 School Year

Purpose: The study of government and politics requires a different perspective and approach than most of you will be accustomed to. Throughout high school, your primary mode of study in the social sciences has been from a historical perspective. This course, and the study of Political Science in general, requires you to *think politically*, rather than historically. This assignment will help you begin to think politically. We will make use of your work during the first week in class and throughout the year.

Essential Understandings:

- American politics is influenced by individuals who know how to wield influence and maintain power.
- American voters are often affected and persuaded by politicians who understand the importance of psychology and making a personal connection with voters.
- Public policy is created and implemented best when government officials are willing to compromise and reach consensus.

In his book *Hardball*, Chris Matthews defines the title term:

Hardball is clean, aggressive Machiavellian politics. It is the discipline of gaining and holding power, useful to any profession or undertaking, but practiced most openly and unashamedly in the world of public affairs.

1. Buy or borrow from the library **Hardball: How Politics Is Played, Told By One Who Knows The Game** by Chris Matthews.
2. Read the book.
3. Matthews supports his observations and conclusions about American politics with a number of political maxims (rules) and evidence from his own experience as a Washington insider.

Your task is to **choose FIVE of the political maxims that he discusses (listed on the other side of this paper) and answer Part A and Part B for each of the ones you have selected.** BE SURE TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC DETAILS AND EXAMPLES! Your work should be typed and printed out for the first day of class.

Turn Over

Political Maxims (rules):

1. It's not who you know; It's who you get to know
2. All politics is local
3. Its better to receive than to give
4. Dance with the one that brung ya
5. Keep your enemies in front of you
6. Don't get mad; don't get even; get ahead
7. Leave no shot unanswered
8. Only talk when it improves the silence
9. Always concede on principle
10. Hang a lantern on your problem
11. Spin
12. The press is the enemy
13. The reputation of power
14. Positioning

Part A: Explain what the maxim means as it relates to American government and politics.

Part B: Describe at least one specific example used in *Hardball* and explain how it demonstrates the maxim.