

PIB United States Government Summer Assignment 2011

Due on the first day of class in the fall.

Dr. Craig

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1. Begin reading the newspaper on a regular basis. Pay close attention to news stories concerning national political matters. Any reputable newspaper is fine, including the *Virginian Pilot*. There are also many newspapers available online.
2. Start watching actual news coverage on TV. (Sorry but *The Daily Show*, and *The Colbert Report* do not qualify! ☹) Again pay attention to political news stories. There are several good political shows on Sunday mornings that provide a good wrap up of the week's political news.
3. Required Summer Reading
Review the assignment prior to reading the book. Take notes so you can refer to specific details. Provide page number(s) for specific examples.

Hardball: How Politics is Played Told By One Who Knows the Game by Chris Matthews

You can purchase the book online – there are used copies available online for under \$5.00. You can also ask a local bookstore to order it for you, or look for it in a local library. (It is also available for e-readers!) This book is plentiful online, but is not always found in standard bookstores, so I would urge you to purchase early in the summer. It is also a popular summer reading book for AP Government students, so demand can sometimes be high!

In the 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."

When school starts there will be more discussion and another assignment on the book. Current events will be discussed and referenced all year.

Write a thoughtful, thorough response to each of the following questions. Include specific examples whenever possible and cite the relevant page numbers. Answers must be typed, double-spaced, using 12 point font.

- What did you learn about contemporary politics in the U.S.?
- What did you find encouraging about U.S. politics from the book?
- What did you find disappointing or disillusioning about U.S. politics from the book?

- What do you think was Chris Matthew's purpose in writing the book?
- Take 3 chapters and find a contemporary example that illustrates each of those 3 themes. Explain each theme and then explain how your example relates.
- What is your opinion of the book?
 - ◆ Did you enjoy the book? Be honest – no points deducted for not liking it.
- Would you recommend this book to a fellow student?
 - ◆ If you did not like the book, do you believe there is anyone who would?
 - ◆ What type of person would like this book?