

Government/Economics Summer Assignment

Class of 2010,

As many of you are certainly aware, politics and economics are irreversibly linked. To be sure, it is a moot point about which science—political or economic—is more important. With this in mind, much of our time together, although semantically separate in the eyes of the state, will seek to understand the connections between government and the “dismal science.” I hope that you enjoy this brief summer excursion into your senior social studies classes!

Peace,
Magadance

Step 1: What is your compass point?

I would like you to visit a website called The Political Compass at www.politicalcompass.org. After reading some of this site’s background, I would like you to complete the anonymous ideology test. It takes about 20 minutes so get comfortable and enjoy some of these very interesting questions.

Step 2: Self-assessment

Upon completion of “the test,” please enjoy reading a bit about the analysis of your responses as you compare your compass point to those of historical and contemporary world icons—the link on the 2008 U.S. Presidential Election is interesting. I recommend that you print a copy of your personal analysis for reference later on during this assignment. Remember your self-assessment may or may not be accurate depending on how you responded to the test items. Likert style surveys provide specific outcomes despite the fluidity of the object measured. If you end up in the same quadrant as Hitler or Stalin it is probably no big deal ☺!

Step 3: The fun begins

After your pleasant walk down “ideology lane,” please locate the link for “Reading List.” It is located in two different places on the political compass website, either on the left-hand side menu or within the analysis page. Upon clicking this link, you will notice four reading categories from which to choose under the title, “Thinkers from the four quadrants.” It would be logical to assume that I would like you to choose an author from the quadrant to which you were assigned following the test—and you are certainly welcome to do so for pleasure—however, for this assignment, I would like you to choose and enjoy an author that is your polar opposite. For the purpose of clarity, if you ended up in quadrant 1 (Authoritarian Right) after the test, I would like you to read a book written by an author from quadrant 3 (Libertarian Left) and vice versa. Likewise, someone who ends up in quadrant 2 (Authoritarian Left) will read a book from quadrant 4 (Libertarian Right). This is not intended as punishment but as an opportunity for growth.

Step 4: Do I just have to read?

Unfortunately, no, but hopefully you will have gained some insight and/or unflinching resolve about your own ideology and how it shapes you. With this new insight/resolve, I would like you to craft your political and economic autobiography. Within approximately two (2) typed, double-spaced pages I would like you to explore the following:

- An explanation of your social and economic ideology based on your test results, chosen reading, and related independent research,
- Any questions, challenges or insights that you encountered while comparing your test results chosen reading, and related independent research,
- Relevance of this activity to the ISA Graduate Profile (especially “Problem Solving Proficiency”), and
- Your development as a “Global Citizen” (see definition below).

A **Global Citizen** is someone who:

- is aware of a wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen;
- respects and values diversity;
- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally;
- is outraged by social injustice;
- participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from local to global;
- is willing to act to make the world a more sustainable place;
- takes responsibility for their actions.

(Oxfam, 1997)

Step 5: Your obligation

As a grade for the 1st 9 weeks of your senior year, you will be expected to submit your autobiography and to discuss your insights with your classmates in a collaborative setting during the first week of the new school year. You classmates and I will formal and informal evaluative feedback about your autobiography. I will also be available all summer by phone: (210) 857-5246 and email: smagad@neisd.net to answer questions about this assignment. If extenuating circumstances create an insurmountable obstacle for completing this assignment please contact me as soon as possible to discuss available alternatives.