MODEL CONGRESS
Simulation Directions
AP Gov/Ms. Strong

OVERVIEW
Model Congress is the longest and most intensive simulation in AP Government, informed by the idea that students learn best by doing. During the Model Congress simulation, students will write and present bills to replicate the legislative process. Students will join party caucuses, contribute to standing committee mark-up sessions and participate in floor debate. Beyond the nuts and bolts of how a bill becomes law, this experience enables students to understand first hand the role of politics and consensus building in the legislative process.

ASSESSMENT
Each student will receive a grade in two areas: 1) written bill; 2) participation during simulation (grade each day). The bill and participation grades will be averaged together and count as a major grade in the 3rd Quarter.

COMMITTEES FOR MODEL CONGRESS - Note: Some of the committees have been combined for our purposes

MODEL CONGRESS STANDING COMMITTEES	
House Committees	*Senate Committees*
1-Agriculture/Environment & Energy/Transportation	1-Agriculture/Environment & Energy/Transportation
2-Health & Human Services/Education	2-Armed Services/Foreign Relations/Technology
3-International Relations/National Security/Technology	3-Finance/Banking/Commerce
4-Judiciary/Government Reform	4-Health/Education/Labor
5-Ways & Means/Commerce/Economic Opportunity	5-Judiciary/Governmental Affairs
Appropriations	Appropriations

PARTY LEADERSHIP

Majority Party	Majority Leader	*Minority Party*
Speaker (House)	Majority Whip	Minority Leader
President Pro Tem (Senate)	Committee Chairs	Minority Whip

MODEL CONGRESS SCHEDULE/TASKS

Party Caucuses

1) Students declare their party affiliation, their state and district (if House), and their bill topics.
2) Democrats and Republicans then caucus to elect party leaders and committee chairs.
3) All party members will serve on one committee excluding the Appropriations Committee.
4) Party leaders assign members to a standing committee.
5) Independents may form their own third party or may be asked to join a major party caucus.
6) Each caucus will devise a legislative strategy for the Model Congress.
NOTE: Ms. Strong will play the President of the United States in a divided government, and will side with the minority party.

Standing Committee Mark Up Sessions (Day 1 and Day 2)

1) Committee chairs find a place in the classroom to meet and put up the committee's sign for all to see.
2) Committee members should use their laptops to access their committee's bills via the Model Congress webpage:
   http://jstrongapgov.weebly.com/model-congress.html
   ➢ To locate bills for specific committees, go to the Model Congress Page > Click on your class's bills
   ➢ Committee chairs should check and make sure all members bills are included in the committee Google Folder
3) Committee chairs and members will then assign numbers to each bill; members will type this number on their bills
   Examples:
   • House Bill (HB) AND Class Per # + Committee # + Bill # >>> **HB 351**
   • Senate Bill (SB) AND Class Per # + Committee # + Bill # >>> **SB 432**

4) Committees will begin mark up sessions and decide which bills will be sent on to the Rules Committee.
5) Chairperson decides which bills to discuss first.
6) The bill's sponsor outlines the provisions of the bill.
7) Chairperson recognizes speakers on the bills.
8) Mark-ups (revisions) approved by the committee are typed by the bill's sponsor or the committee chair.
   ➢ **All bills should be mark-upped (revised) in red font.**
   ➢ **NOTE: If time is limited, bills may be limited to three revisions/changes.**
9) If there are similar bills in the committee, members may vote to combine the bills and they would be co-sponsored. In that case, the committee would combine one bill from the two originals.
10) If the bill passes and requires funding, the standing committee should decide the level of funding to recommend to Appropriations; research funding on https://www.nationalpriorities.org
11) The Chair calls for a vote to push a bill out of committee.
    ➢ If the bill requires funding, the chair should let the Speaker/Majority leader and Ms. Strong so it can be added to the Appropriations Committee Google Doc folder.
    ➢ If the bill does not require funding, it should be moved to the "Passed Bills for Floor Debate" folder.
    ➢ The chair records the committee's vote on each bill on the "Bill Status" form.

Appropriations Process (Day 2 and Day 3)

1) The Appropriations committee meets to set funding for bills passed out of committee during the second half of Day 2.
2) The Appropriations chair asked the sponsor of the bill to briefly speak on what the bill is about and for what purpose(s) the funding would be used.
3) Committee members should use their laptops to view the bill and to research funding levels on websites like https://www.nationalpriorities.org
4) The committee chair or designee does appropriation revisions in red font.
5) NOTE: If time is tight, the chair will limit discussion on each bill to two minutes.
6) The Chair calls for a vote to push a bill out of committee on to floor debate.
   ➢ The chair informs the Speaker/Majority Leader and Ms. Strong to move to the bill to "Passed Bills for Floor Debate" folder.

Floor Debate (Day 3 and Day 4)

1) Prior to floor debate, party leaders meet to determine the order of bills introduced during floor debate.
   ➢ House – the Speaker, Majority Leader, Majority Whip, Minority Leader, Minority Whip serve as the Rules Committee.
   ➢ Senate – the Majority Leader, Minority Leader and Pro Tem meet to schedule bills.
   ➢ NOTE: All bills debated on the floor are subject to closed rule i.e. no amendments can be added from the floor.
2) Time limits for debate will imposed in most classes (ex: 5 minutes in large classes)
3) During floor debate, the majority party will sit on one side of the room, and the minority party on the other.
4) The Speaker of the House/President Pro Tempore serves as the chair and calls the House/Senate to order.
5) The Speaker/Pro Tem announces the Sponsor and the Title of the bill [Ex: The Speaker calls Congressman Mickey Mouse and The Tourism Development Act].
6) The sponsor(s) present the argument for passing the bill (the more passionate and persuasive the better!).
7) NOTE: Laptops will not be used during floor debate except for presentation purposes or with Ms. Strong's permission.
8) Speaker/PPT will recognize debaters. To gain recognition from the Chair, rise and say "Mr./Madam Speaker/President"
9) The Speaker/PPT will then address you by formal legislative name (ex: "The chair recognizes Congressman Hurt). You may not speak unless you receive the Speaker's permission. The debater remains standing will addressing the sponsor.
10) A debater recognized by the Chair may comment on behalf or against the bill or may ask the sponsor a question. The debater may not continue to challenge/debate after the sponsor responds.
11) The Speaker/Pro Tem will alternate debaters from each party (the majority party goes first, then minority party member). The Chair will prioritize members first who have not had a previous chance to participate.
12) Majority and minority whips will attempt to convince party members to vote for bills.
13) When the time of debate is up, a member will call for a vote. And it must be seconded. By show of hands the speaker will ask members to vote "yay," "nay" or abstain" and records the vote on the "Bill Status: Floor Debate" form.
14) On Day 4 of Model Congress, some classes may consider cross-over bills from their "sister class."