AP U.S. Government & Politics

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Texts & Sources:

Foundational Essential Documents (Instructor provided) {CR10}
National Constitution Center https://constitutioncenter.org/

Download the following apps:
1. Interactive Constitution
2. SCOTUSblog
3. Two news apps of your choosing— liberal & conservative.
4. Twitter

Required Supplies:
+ Blue, black, and red ballpoint pens  + Number 2 pencils  + College-ruled paper
+ 3x5 white, lined note cards (one pack)  + Spiral notebook or Composition notebook

Course Overview:

We the people …are going Constitutional. This college-level course provides a non-partisan introduction to key political concepts, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the systemic and political culture of the United States. Through studying founding documents and Supreme Court decisions students will understand our unique political institutions and behaviors. Students will interpret data, make comparisons, and develop evidence-based arguments. The content covered in this course will help prepare students for the AP exam. It all fits in 5 Big Ideas:

Big Idea #1: Constitutionalism (CON)
Big Idea #2: Liberty and Order (LOR)
Big Idea #3: Civic Participation in Representative Democracy (PRD)
Big Idea #4: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI)
Big Idea #5: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA)

Curriculum Requirements, per CollegeBoard:
CR1 The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
CR2 The course includes the Interactions among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

CR3 The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

CR4 The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

CR5 The course includes the Political Participation Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

CR6 The course integrates public policy within each unit.

CR7 The course addresses the big ideas by connecting enduring understandings across one or more units.

CR8 The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts.

CR9 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret quantitative data to explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors.

CR10 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary & secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.

CR11 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret visual information to explain how the elements of the visual illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors.

CR12 The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios.

CR13 The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework.

CR14 Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework that culminates in a presentation of findings.

CR15 Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework and connect them to other non-required landmark cases.

CR16 Students and teachers have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook.

**Major Assignments & Activities:**

In this course, expect that you will read a lot, write a lot, study terms & SCOTUS cases, and participation in discussions... a lot. The class success and your personal success hinges on it. Individual and group projects can amount to the same as a test score. Some class time will be allotted to making these creative, thought-provoking, and successful connection to our studies {CR 11.12. 15}.

**Writing:** In addition to feverish note-taking, KBATs, and annotations, you’ll become disciplined writers in:

1) **Free Response & Argument Essays.** Since it comprises 50% of the AP Government exam, some unit tests include free-response questions. We will practice this in class throughout the year, and graded according to the AP scoring guide. {CR7 & 11 & 13}

2) Analytical papers. These 3-4 page research papers, organized around a thesis statement, help students develop analytical writing skills. {CR7 & 12}

+ Being diligent students in your English class will be an asset in this class.
**Tests & Quizzes.** You will have chapter quizzes, unit tests, Supreme Court quizzes, all using vocabulary terms. It isn't designed to torture you, but learn in segments along the way. Study well as we go along so you won't be freaking out before the semester Final and AP Exam.

**Current Events:**
Students will post current event articles to Twitter using the class hashtag. Stories need to be from credible sources and address one or more of the Big Ideas. In class we will analyze current, relevant visual sources (photo, political cartoon, infographic)—all that connect to the course articulation, big ideas, and/or unit of study. Don’t waste your time on baseless comedy skits and memes {CR7 & 11}

**Debates:**
Students, in teams of three, will compete in a debate about a current public policy or issue in American government and politics. Each team will get a five-minute opening statement, a five-minute cross examination period, and a five-minute closing statement. Students must also have a visual that helps support their main arguments. This visual can be a chart, graph, table, political cartoon, or infographic. Students will analyze the visuals presented by other teams as part of the debate. Finally, each team is responsible for providing an annotated works cited page of the resources used to develop their arguments and questions. [CR11]

**Controversial Topics:**
All government systems are laden with the righteous & the sleazballs; the mundane & the tantalizing; persecutions & liberties; politics & religion. The content of this class deals with current real world, controversial issues.

It is vital that everyone is respectful of each other’s opinions, backgrounds, beliefs, and world views. There will be a lot of agreement and disagreement on topics. Listening is essential to communicating. Everyone is to be valued and respected. If you cannot maintain the civil discourse, you will be given alternate assignments or separated from the class as needed.

**Grading Scale, Attendance & Make-up Work:**
Consistent attendance is vital for success in APGov. Your semester grade consists of class assignments, projects, homework, quizzes, and tests. Per the Social Studies Dept policy grades are quantified and scaled:

\[
\text{Semester grade} = 40\% \text{ (Quarter 1)} + 40\% \text{ (Quarter 2)} + 20\% \text{ (Final Exam)}
\]

100%-90%=A  89%-80%= B  79%-70%= C  69%-60%= D  Below 60% =F

Grades are rounded up only if they meet the 9.5 or higher threshold. Do NOT ask to have your grade rounded up for anything less than this. Do NOT come to me on bended knee on or near Finals week to ask for extra credit. The answer will be no and you will have created an awkward situation.

**Excused absences.** You will have the same amount of days as your absence to complete assignments. It is 1000% your responsibility to check Planbook and/or ask classmates what you missed.
Late policy. Assignments submitted 1-day late, can earn 50%. After that, it zeros out in the gradebook. If you are absent from a quiz or test, you are responsible for arranging a make-up within one week of the assessment. If not, it will stay zeroed out in the gradebook.

Field trips and sports. Plan around them. I know your coaches, and I know you know your game schedules. Field trips are also planned weeks in advance. Assignments are due beforehand.

Life gets difficult. Seriously. Please tell me in advance when you cannot get computer access at home, are struggling in classes, incur health problems, or become overly stressed out. We will find solutions before things get unmanageable. There's a difference between excuses and legitimate difficulties. I’m on your side.

The College Board Exam Format:

The AP Government & Politics 8 am, May 6, 2019

The AP Government Exam is 1 hour and 20 minutes and includes both a multiple-choice section and a free-response section. Each accounts for half of the exam score. Both sections will test student knowledge and ability to interpret the nine required foundational documents and 15 required Supreme Court cases.

Section 1: Multiple-Choice Questions

We will practice the kinds of multiple-choice questions that appear on the AP Government Exam. Additional sample questions can be found at AP Central (apcentral.collegeboard.org). Multiple-choice scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly only. So answer all multiple-choice questions. Eliminate as many choices as possible, then select the best answer among the remaining choices.

The multiple-choice section is:

+ 55 questions
+ 1 hour, 20 minutes
+ 50% of exam score

On the multiple-choice section expect to:

+ analyze and compare political concepts.
+ interpret and analyze qualitative and quantitative, text-based, and visual sources.
+ apply course concepts, foundational documents and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of real-world contexts.

Section 2: Free-Response Questions

In the free-response section, students have 100 minutes to answer 4 constructed-response questions. The score on each response accounts for one-fourth of the student’s total FRQ score. It requires student to connect big idea topics across curriculum and make connections. Expect to identify an opposing or alternative perspective in an understanding way and refute (or concede) it. Students are expected to use their analytical and organizational skills to formulate responses succinctly and informatively. Bulleted lists are not acceptable responses.
The FRQ section is:
+ 1 hour, 40 minutes  + 4 questions  + 50% of exam score

FRQ section format and suggest times:
+ **Apply political concepts** in real-world scenarios (20 min)
+ **Analyze quantitative data** (20 min)
+ **SCOTUS comparisons** - non-required cases with any of the 15 required (20 min)
+ **Argument essay** develop an argument using foundational documents as evidence (40 min)

Exam prep and study sessions:
In April we will start study sessions after school. Attend them. You are strongly encouraged to purchase any of the following 2018 test prep guides:

+ **Barron's AP U.S. Government & Politics** (Barron Education Series)
+ **AP U.S. Government & Politics Crash Course by Larry S. Krieger**

Scoring 3-5 on College Board and earning an A-B in class:
It is realistic for you to pass the AP Exam and earn the weighted A or B in APGov. How? Plan to spend, on average, 30-45 minutes outside of class every day on APGov. Attend the study sessions. Buy an exam prep book. Enjoy every class like we are in a political arena. Have fun learning. Your world view is about to expand.

Copyright, Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:

Students expected to cite material where appropriate. Your homework and/or projects must be COMPLETELY original. Plagiarism will result in a “0” on the assignment, parent contact, and administrative discipline. A second offense will result in being dropped from the class with an F. Academic dishonesty can be described as, but not limited to:

- Copying another’s work with or without permission.
- Giving your work to someone else to pass as her/her own.
- Working in a group unless explicitly told to do so.
- Using “crib notes” on tests, quizzes or other assessments.
- Securing answers for tests from others who have already taken a test. This includes passing information along to a future test-takers.
- Using notes or a book when they have not been permitted.
- Passing off another’s work as your own to any capacity.

Course Schedule:

**Unit #1: Foundations of American Democracy** (18 days)

**Essential Questions:**

- How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty while also promoting public order and safety?
• How have theory, debate and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system?
• How does development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact U.S. Citizens?

**Key Terms:**

- Natural rights
- Popular sovereignty
- Republicanism
- Social contract
- Declaration of Independence
- Philadelphia Convention
- Participatory democracy
- Pluralist democracy
- Elite democracy
- Shays’s Rebellion
- Great (Connecticut) Compromise
- Electoral College
- Three-Fifths Compromise
- Importation (slavery) compromise
- Separation of powers
- Checks and balances
- Federalism
- Exclusive powers
- Implied powers
- Concurrent powers
- Categorical grants
- Block grants
- Mandates (unfunded)
- Commerce clause

**Readings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters 1-3 in Edwards textbook</th>
<th>The Declaration of Independence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federalist No. 10</td>
<td>Brutus No. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federalist No. 51</td>
<td>The Articles of Confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Constitution of the United States</td>
<td>McCulloch v. Maryland *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States v. Lopez *</td>
<td>“The Good of American Federalism,” Alexis de Tocqueville (1831)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Unit #2: Interactions among Branches of Government (Institutions) (25 days)**

**Essential Questions:**

• How do the 3 branches of federal government compete & cooperate in order to govern?
• To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21st Century?

**Key Terms:**

- Enumerated powers
- Implied powers
- Necessary and proper clause
- Checks and balances
- Bicameralism
- Speaker of the House
- President of the Senate
- Senate Majority Leader
- Filibuster
- Cloture
- Holds
- Rules Committee
- Committee of the Whole
- Discharge petitions
- Discretionary spending
- Mandatory spending
- Pork barrel legislation
Logrolling
Partisanship
Gridlock
Gerrymandering
Divided government
Trustee
Delegate
Politico
Veto (including pocket veto)
Commander in Chief
Executive order

Signing statements
Nomination and confirmation
Treaty negotiation and ratification
22nd Amendment
Bully pulpit
Judicial review
Precedent/stare decisis
Judicial activism
Judicial restraint
Patronage

Readings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters 11-15 in Edwards textbook</th>
<th>The Constitution of the United States (Articles I-III)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shaw v. Reno *</td>
<td>Baker v. Carr *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Federalist No. 70</td>
<td>Federalist No. 78</td>
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Unit #3: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights (12 days)

Essential Questions:
- To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination?
- How have Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

Key Terms:
- Civil liberties
- Civil rights
- Bill of Rights
- Judicial review
- Selective incorporation
- Establishment clause
- Free exercise clause
- Symbolic speech
- “Clear and present danger”
- Due process clause
- Patriot Act
- Exclusionary rule
- Equal protection clause
- National Organization for Women
- Civil Rights Act 1964
- Voting Rights Act 1965
- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972
- “Separate but equal”
- Miranda Rights
**Readings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters 4 &amp; 5 in Edwards textbook</th>
<th>The Bill of Rights</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engel v. Vitale *</td>
<td>Schenck v. United States*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin v. Yoder*</td>
<td>Tinker v. Des Moines*</td>
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<td>McDonald v. Chicago*</td>
<td>Gideon v. Wainwright*</td>
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<td>Roe v. Wade*</td>
<td>Brown v. Board of Education*</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Letter from Birmingham Jail,” Martin Luther King, Jr.</td>
<td>14th Amendment; due process and equal protection clauses</td>
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</tbody>
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**Unit #4: American Political Ideologies & Beliefs (12 days)**

**Essential Questions:**
- How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
- How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?

**Key Terms:**
- Political ideology
- Demographics
- Political culture
- Political socialization
- Scientific polling
- Party platform
- Liberal ideology
- Conservative ideology

**Readings:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 6 in Edwards textbook</th>
<th>New York Times Co v. United States*</th>
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**Unit #5: Political Participation (18 days)**

**Essential Questions:**
- How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
- Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary?
- How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policies?
**Key Terms:**

- Rational choice theory
- Retrospective voting
- Prospective voting
- Party-line voting
- Political efficacy
- Midterm election
- Demographics
- Linkage institution
- Political party
- Interest group
- Critical election
- Political realignment
- Proportional electoral system
- Winner-take-all electoral system
- Iron triangles
- Free rider problem
- Single issue groups
- Participatory democracy
- Pluralist democracy
- Elite democracy
- Primaries (open v. closed)
- Caucuses
- Party convention
- General election
- Electoral College
- Incumbency advantage
- Federal Election Commission
- Federal Elections Campaign Act
- McCain-Feingold
- Citizens United v. FEC (2010)
- PACs
- SuperPACs
- Independent expenditures
- Media & Social media
- Watchdog
- Gatekeeper
- Horse race journalism
- “Fake news”

**Readings:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters 7-10 in Edwards textbook</th>
<th>Federalist No. 10</th>
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