

AP U.S. Government and Politics Syllabus

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Welcome to AP Government and Politics! This class is designed to prepare you for the College Board's AP Government and Politics exam given in May. Students who pass the exam with a score of 3, 4, or 5, **may** receive college credit depending on the university you attend. Many schools will give you 3 college credits for passing the exam.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam – Monday, May 6, 2024

COURSE GRADING

30% quizzes and tests, 30% projects, 20% classwork, 10% homework, 10% midterm

REQUIREMENTS

READING: In order for you to be successful in a college level course, it is absolutely essential that you remain current on all assigned readings. The required reading, along with lectures class discussion, will figure prominently on tests and quizzes. Many of our class discussions will be done within small groups. It is expected that you will have read the appropriate material and that you are prepared to contribute to that discussion on the due dates. The required foundational documents (see list below) are required by the College Board and will feature prominently on the AP exam.

MATERIALS: It is expected that you will maintain a notebook in which you will keep course handouts and notes on material presented in class. Be aware that material presented only in lectures will sometimes appear on exams in addition to information provided in the readings. You will need your laptop in class every day.

You should come to class prepared to take notes every day in a paper notebook.

ABSENCES AND MAKE-UP WORK: Because of the rapid pace of the class and the complexity of the material covered, it is expected that you will maintain regular class attendance. In the case of unavoidable absence for any reason, YOU are responsible for your own make-up work. This includes copying notes from missed lectures or presentations, obtaining class handouts on Google Classroom, and making arrangements to take any missed quizzes or tests **outside of class time**.

If you are absent on the day we take a test, you should make arrangements the day you return to make up the exam.

GOOGLE CLASSROOM: All class assignments, Alaska state standards and weekly objectives are organized in Google Classroom

MIDTERM: Your midterm will be a full 3 hour practice exam in April on a non-Saturday school Saturday to be determined the first week of class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: It is expected that you will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. This includes all assignments completed in this course. Academic dishonesty of any kind, including but not limited to using AI to generate assignments, giving away test questions or answers, copying another's answers to any assignment, or taking pictures of any quiz, test, or FRQ question or answer will result in loss of credit for the assignment, referral to the assistant principal, and notification to honors societies for appropriate consequences.

HINTS FOR SUCCESS

Organize study groups among yourselves – they work!!!

Attend the Star Center's AP GOPO study sessions

Come in for extra help when you need it

Try to be aware of current issues in government and politics – read appropriate articles in newspapers and magazines listen to the news from unbiased sources. This will help you understand what we are learning in class. That said, this is not a current events class. While current events will help us understand how our political process functions, we will not spend our time debating current issues. The issues change. The process really does not.

Be open-minded. This course studies the process of government and politics in the U.S. This process is essentially the same regardless of the characters currently involved. You will disagree from time to time with these characters' actions but your job is to understand how it works and why it works. If you are not open to understanding this process, the course will be more difficult

Required foundational documents	Required Supreme Ct cases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federalist #10 • Brutus #1 • Declaration of Independence • Articles of Confederation • Constitution + Amendments • Federalist #51 • Letter from a Birmingham Jail • Federalist #70 • Federalist #78 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • McCulloch v. Maryland • U.S. v. Lopez • Engel v. Vitale • Wisconsin v. Yoder • Tinker v. Des Moines • New York Times v. U.S. • Schenck v. U.S. • Gideon v. Wainwright • McDonald v. Chicago • Brown v. Board of Education • Citizens United v. FEC • Baker v. Carr • Shaw v. Reno • Marbury v. Madison

Unit 1 – Foundations of American Democracy (15-22%) (10 days) Chapters

- Ideals of Democracy – Declaration of Independence
- Types of Democracy – Fed 10; Brutus 1
- Government Power & Individual Rights – Fed 10; Brutus 1
- Challenges of Articles of Confederation – Articles of Confederation
- Ratification of the U.S. Constitution – Constitution
- Principles of American Government – Fed 51; Constitution
- Relationships Between the States and the Federal Government
- Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism – McCulloch v. Maryland; U.S. v. Lopez

Unit 2 – Interactions Among Branches of Government (25 – 36% with Unit 3) (20 days)

- Congress: Senate and the House of Representatives -- Constitution
- Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress
- Congressional Behavior
- Roles and Powers of the President -- Constitution
- Checks on the Presidency
- Expansion of Presidential Power – Fed 70
- Presidential Communication
- The Judicial Branch – Fed 78; Marbury v. Madison
- Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch
- The Court in Action
- Checks on the Judicial Branch
- The Bureaucracy
- Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority
- Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable
- Policy and the Branches of Government

Unit 3 – Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (13 – 18%) (13 days)

- Bill of Rights
- First Amendment: Freedom of Religion – Engel v. Vitale; Wisconsin v. Yoder
- First Amendment: Freedom of Speech – Tinker v. Des Moines; Schenck v. U.S.
- First Amendment: Freedom of the Press – New York Times v. U.S.
- Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms
- Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Security
- Selective Incorporation
- Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused – Gideon v. Wainwright
- Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy
- Social Movements and Equal Protection – “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
- Government Responses to Social Movements – Brown v. Board of Education
- Balancing Minority and Majority Rights
- Affirmative Action

Unit 4 – American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (10 – 15%) (10 days)

- American Attitudes about Government and Politics
- Political Socialization
- Changes in Ideology
- Influence of Political Events on Ideology
- Measuring Public Opinion
- Evaluating Public Opinion Data
- Ideologies of Political Parties
- Ideology and Policy Making
- Ideology and Economic Policy
- Ideology and Social Policy

Unit 5 – Political Participation (20 – 27%) (15 days)

Models of Voting Behavior

- Voter Turnout
- Political Parties
- How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt
- Third Party Politics
- Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making
- Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes
- Electing a President
- Congressional Elections
- Modern Campaigns
- Campaign Finance
- The Media
- Changing Media

College Board Final Project Guidelines:

Curricular Requirement 14: 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 course framework that culminates in a presentation of findings. (See AP U.S. Government and Politics Course Audit Curricular Requirements on AP Central.) This is your final culminating project for the course.