

**Wallingford Public Schools - HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OUTLINE**

<b>Course Title:</b> Advanced Placement American Government	<b>Course Number:</b> 3142
<b>Department:</b> Social Studies	<b>Grade(s):</b> 10-12
<b>Level(s):</b> Advanced Placement	<b>Credit:</b> 1/2
<b>Course Description</b> Advanced Placement American Government will provide students with an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. This course includes both the study of general concepts used to interpret U.S. politics and the analysis of specific examples. It also requires familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that constitute United States politics. <b>This course may be taken to satisfy the Civics credit required for graduation.</b>	
<b>Required Instructional Materials</b> <i>Government By the People</i> , Burns and Peltason, Prentice Hall, 2002	<b>Completion/Revision Date</b> Approved by the Board of Education on February 27, 2007

**Mission Statement of the Curriculum Management Team**

The mission of the Social Studies Curriculum Management Team is to provide students with the opportunity to gain fundamental understanding of history, civics, economics, cultures, geography, and the social sciences so that they develop into responsible citizens who use analytical reasoning and historical thinking to make informed decisions about the issues that face our nation and world today.

**Enduring Understandings for the Course**

*The student will understand that:*

**Content**

- The United States Constitution was a product of the social, economic, political, intellectual, and economic forces of the period.
- The United States Constitution reflects the thought of the Enlightenment, in particular the principles of federalism and separation of powers.
- Individuals engage in multiple forms of political participation, including voting, protest, and mass movements.
- Political beliefs and behaviors are influenced by family, school, media, race, gender, education, and geography.
- Citizens organize and communicate their interests in a variety of ways including political parties, elections, political action committees (PACs), interest groups, and the mass media.
- Power balances and relationships between the institutions of government (both formal and informal) may evolve gradually or change dramatically as a result of crises.
- Public policy is the result of interactions and dynamics among actors, interests,

institutions, and processes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual rights and liberties are a cornerstone of the American political system.</li> <li>• Supreme Court decisions act as tools of social change.</li> </ul>
<b>Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzing data is critical for problem solving.</li> <li>• Determining linkages/cause and effect relationships is essential.</li> <li>• Formulating hypotheses based on a variety of data and source material enhances problem solving.</li> <li>• Communicating clearly and effectively with both the written and spoken word is essential.</li> <li>• Mastering test taking skills is essential to success in the Advanced Placement program.</li> <li>• Using technology is an effective tool for collecting, organizing, and presenting information.</li> </ul>

**LEARNING STRAND**

1.0 Critical Thinking and Communication Skills

NOTE: This learning strand should be taught through the integration of the other learning strands included in this course. It is not meant to be taught in isolation as a separate unit.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- Analyzing data is critical for problem solving.
- Determining linkages/cause and effect relationships is essential to understanding.
- Formulating hypotheses based on a variety of data and source material enhances problem solving.
- Communicating clearly and effectively with both the written and spoken word is critical.
- Mastering test taking skills is essential to success in the Advanced Placement program.
- Using technology is an effective tool for collecting, organizing, and presenting information.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- How does data contribute to problem solving?
- What is the significance of cause and effect relationships?
- Why is it important to form and test hypotheses?
- Why is communicating clearly and effectively important?
- How is it determined that information/data is valid?
- What skills are needed to be successful test-takers?
- What is the impact of technology on the learning process?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 1.1 Generate questions to be investigated.
- 1.2 Select information from a variety of sources.
- 1.3 Evaluate the validity of information, testing its credibility and identifying bias.
- 1.4 Analyze conflicts using historical date, belief systems, customs, and societal values.
- 1.5 Debate divergent points of view.
- 1.6 Write to defend or refute a topic.
- 1.7 Develop proposals regarding solutions to significant international, political, economic, demographic or environmental issues.
- 1.8 Justify personal beliefs, feelings and convictions.
- 1.9 Recognize the personal responsibilities of citizens for responsible social change.
- 1.10 Assess the need for social and political reform.
- 1.11 Synthesize data and concepts clearly

**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- See other learning strands

**SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Primary source document analysis
- Writing analytical and evaluative essays
- Reading historical interpretations
- Debates
- Counterfactual assignments discussing alternative outcomes for historical events
- Role-plays and simulations
- Newspapers (student-generated)
- Web-based research
- Mock trials

**SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Exams
- Written essays
- Debate/Critiques
- Student presentations
- Projects

and effectively on application exercises and examinations.

- Participation
- One Page Analysis of readings
- Supreme Court case briefs

**LEARNING STRAND**

2.0 Constitutional Underpinnings of the US Government

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- The United States Constitution was a product of the social, economic, political, intellectual, and economic forces of the period.
- The United States Constitution reflects the thought of the Enlightenment, in particular the principles of federalism and separation of powers.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- How is power gained, used, and justified?
- How are governments created, structured maintained, and changed?
- What are the significant factors that led to the creation of the Constitution?
- Why did the principles of federalism and separation of powers come to be such an integral part of the Constitution?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 2.1 Analyze the historical context at the time the Constitution was written.
- 2.2 Examine the ideological and philosophical traditions from which the framers of the Constitution drew.
- 2.3 Analyze the theoretical and practical features of federalism and the separation of powers.
- 2.4 Compare and contrast the concepts of democratic theory, theories of republican government, pluralism and elitism.
- 2.5 Assess the role the Supreme Court plays in interpreting the U.S. Constitution.
- 2.6 Examine the importance of the development of the Bill of Rights as part of the Constitutional framework and ratification.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- [www.apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://www.apcentral.collegeboard.com)
- *The AP Vertical Teams Guide for Social Studies*, The College Board, 2001
- *Advanced Placement US Government and Politics*, The Center for Learning
- AP Government and Politics - Multiple Choice and Free Response Questions ([www.apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://www.apcentral.collegeboard.com))
- *The Constitution: The Compromise that Made a Nation*, Learning Corporation of America, VHS/DVD
- *TIP: Duke University Resources in AP Government and Politics*, Duke University Talent Evaluation Program, 2002
- Magazines (Atlantic Monthly, New Republic)
- Political ads ([www.livingroomcandidate.com](http://www.livingroomcandidate.com))
- Primary Source Readers:
  - Annual Editions 06/07
  - The Enduring Debate (Canon)
  - American Politics (Sigler)
  - American Politics (Woolery)
  - The Power Elite (excerpt), C.Wright Mills
  - The American Political Tradition (excerpt), Richard Hofstadter
  - An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution (excerpt), Charles A. Beard

**SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Utilize unit essential questions to encourage critical thinking and discussion
- Class discussion and written critique related to Charles Beard's thesis, deTocqueville and the tyranny of the majority, and Reagan's New Federalism and Federalist #10

- Review proposed amendments to determine if the Constitution is a “living document”, and conduct a class discussion on how this relates to the goals of the founders (i.e. separation of powers, checks and balances)
- Analyze and critique in writing primary source documents such as the Federalist Papers
- Mock Constitutional Convention

**SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Unit objective tests
- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis of assigned readings
- Debates
- Participation in discussions
- Written assessments
- Simulations

## **LEARNING STRAND**

### 3.0 Political Beliefs and Behaviors

#### **ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- Individuals engage in multiple forms of political participation, including voting, protest, and mass movements.
- Political beliefs and behaviors are influenced by family, school, media, race, gender, education, and geography.

#### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- How do family, social class, education, race, gender, and geography influence political beliefs and behavior?
- How do citizens interact with major media outlets to become informed of divergent political viewpoints?
- How does the media influence political campaigns?
- What are the motivations to run for office?
- What factors influence the electoral process in America?
- What are the roles and responsibilities of citizens and government in a democratic society?

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 3.1 Understand the demographics that affect political beliefs and behaviors (i.e. education, race, gender, class, religion).
- 3.2 Compare and contrast the political beliefs, attitudes, and values of the “Bible Belt” to the east and west coasts.
- 3.3 Examine the changes in the rate of political participation throughout post World War II.
- 3.4 Analyze the concept of “social capitalism” and explain its change over time.
- 3.5 Examine the factors that influence politicians to run for office.
- 3.6 Evaluate the factors that are important in developing political culture.
- 3.7 Analyze factors that influence political participation.

#### **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam (Book)
- *Bowling Together*, Robert Putnam (Article)
- PoliSim2, CD-ROM
- [www.prenticehall.com](http://www.prenticehall.com)
- *Finding All the Voters*, Micah L. Sifry
- *Democratic Practice and Democratic Theory*, Berelson, Laxarsfeld and Mc Phee
- Primary Source Readers:
  - Annual Editions 06/07

#### **SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Lecture/discussions
- Debate the impact of race/gender/socioeconomic status on political philosophy
- Create voter profiles
- Simulate opinion/push polls
- Chart data research using Pew Research Center online resources (i.e. polling results, demographic breakdowns of party affiliation)
- Political cartoon analysis

#### **SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Unit objective tests
- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis of primary sources
- Debates

- Charts/Polls
- Simulations



**LEARNING STRAND**

4.0 Political Parties, Interest Groups and Mass Media

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- Citizens organize and communicate their interests in a variety of ways including political parties, elections, political action committees (PACs), interest groups, and the mass media.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- What are the fundamental differences between the major political parties?
- How do interest groups organize, raise money, and influence government?
- How has the rise in cable news and the internet influenced the political process and elections?
- What is the relationship between the media and public opinion?
- How do competing interests influence how power is distributed and exercised?
- How have political parties evolved over time as a result of historical developments?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 4.1 Examine the mechanisms that allow citizens to organize and communicate their interests and concerns (i.e. parties, elections, PACs, interest groups and mass media).
- 4.2 Identify the different party platforms and the general stance on major issues of the current period.
- 4.3 Explain the different types of elections and electoral systems.
- 4.4 Analyze the crucial role the media plays in the political system.
- 4.5 Examine public opinion polls and the methods of data collection.
- 4.6 Assess how political parties, media, public opinion, and the electoral process are sometimes in conflict.
- 4.7 Analyze the effectiveness of various interest groups in achieving their policy objectives.
- 4.8 Compare and contrast hard and soft money.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- *The Party's Over: The Failure of Politics in America*, David S. Broder
- Wall Street Journal
- [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)
- [www.washtimes.com](http://www.washtimes.com)
- <http://www.democrats.org/>
- <http://rnc.org/>
- <http://drudgereport.com/>
- *Why We Still Need Political Parties*, Kay Lawson
- *Of Parties Great and Strong*, Everett C. Ladd
- *Bad News, Bad Governance*, Thomas E. Patterson
- *Federalist 10*, James Madison
- *Associations without Members*, Theda Skocpol
- Primary Source Readers:
  - Annual Editions 06/07

**SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Lecture/discussions
- Debate the question "Does money equal influence in the political process?"
- Role-plays of party conventions
- Create a clippings file comparing media coverage of specific political issues and events
- Research political contributions to individual candidates for office

- Chart ideological differences of different parties
- Evaluate newspaper editorials for ideological bias
- Political cartoon analysis

**SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Unit objective tests
- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis of primary sources
- Debates
- Charts
- Participation
- Role-plays
- Files of news clippings

**LEARNING STRAND**

5.0 Institutions of National Government

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- Power balances and relationships between the institutions of government (both formal and informal) may evolve gradually or change dramatically as a result of crises.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- How are the formal and informal powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches manifested in policy making?
- How does the organization of the three branches of government affect legislation and policy interpretation?
- How has the balance of power between the branches of government changed over time?
- How can the bureaucracy alter the original intent of legislation?
- What is the importance of judicial review in the evolution of constitutional interpretation?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 5.1 Analyze the functions of the three branches of government.
- 5.2 Compare and contrast the formal and informal powers of the three branches of government.
- 5.3 Trace how each branch has historically gained and/or lost power.
- 5.4 Examine the relationship between political parties, interest groups, media, and state and local government.
- 5.5 Analyze the role the bureaucracy plays in implementing foreign and domestic policy.

**INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- *Presidential Power*, Richard Neustadt
- *Imperial Presidency*, Arthur Schlesinger
- *TIP: Duke University Resources in AP Government and Politics*, Duke University Talent Evaluation Program, 2002
- [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov)
- [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)
- [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)
- [www.supremecourtus.gov](http://www.supremecourtus.gov)
- *10 Things I Wish Political Scientists Would Teach About Congress*, Lee H. Hamilton
- *Constraints of Public Managers*, James Q. Wilson
- *Federalist 78*, Alexander Hamilton
- Primary Source Readers:
  - Annual Editions 06/07

**SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Lecture/class discussions
- Debate judicial restraint versus judicial activism
- Discuss the concept of imperial presidency
- Mock Congress
- Student presentations on bureaucratic institutions
- Research specific bureaucratic institutions
- Chart the legislative process
- Political cartoon analysis

**SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Unit objective tests
- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis of primary sources
- Debates
- Student presentations
- Charts

<b><u>LEARNING STRAND</u></b>	
6.0 Public Policy	
<b><u>ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)</u></b> <i>The student will understand that:</i>	<b><u>ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public policy is the result of interactions and dynamics among actors, interests, institutions, and processes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What factors effect the formulation of public policy agendas?</li> <li>What role do government institutions play in the enactment of pubic policy?</li> <li>What role do the courts and the bureaucracy play in policy implementation and interpretation?</li> </ul> <p>How are political parties, interest groups, public opinion, federalism, elections, and policy networks related to the making of public policy?</p>
<b><u>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</u></b> <i>The student will:</i>	<b><u>INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS</u></b>
<p>6.1 Explain policy making in the federal system.</p> <p>6.2 Examine the role each branch of government plays in developing public policy.</p> <p>6.3 Analyze the relationship between agenda setting and policy making.</p> <p>6.4 Evaluate the role institutions play in the enactment of public policy.</p> <p>6.5 Explain the role of the bureaucracy and courts in policy implementation and interpretation.</p> <p>6.6 Analyze the links between political parties, interest groups, public opinion, elections, policy networks, and federalism when it comes to making policy.</p> <p>6.7 Analyze how political and historical trends impact the development and change of specific public policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Bureaucratic Pathology</i>, The Center for Learning</li> <li>US Government: (Facts on File)</li> <li><a href="http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/fedbud.html">www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/fedbud.html</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/">www.annenbergpublicpolicycenter.org/</a></li> <li><i>Sign it Then Mind It</i>, Christopher Georges</li> <li><i>Blaming Rain on Umbrellas</i>, Stephen Moore</li> <li><i>Can Small Investors Survive Social Security Privatization?</i>, Brooke Harrington</li> <li><i>No Tax Cut Period</i>, Robert Reich</li> <li>Primary Source Readers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual Editions 06/07</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b><u>SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lecture/discussions</li> <li>Debate privatization of Social Security</li> <li>Role-play policy decisions</li> <li>Presentations on specific policy initiatives</li> <li>Library research</li> <li>Chart progress of specific policy proposals</li> <li>Political cartoon analysis</li> <li>Research judicial case study of how Supreme Court decisions effect public policy</li> <li>Group presentations on how federal law is passed and then administered by one of the following departments: justice, defense, treasury or education</li> <li>Opinion journals on how the Congress, public opinion, and the media set policy agendas for foreign affairs</li> <li>Case study and debate: The No Child Left</li> </ul>

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**SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis of primary sources
- Multiple choice unit tests
- Debates
- Participation
- Student presentations on policy initiatives
- Charts
- Role plays

## **LEARNING STRAND**

### 7.0 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

#### **ENDURING UNDERSTANDING(S)**

*The student will understand that:*

- Individual rights and liberties are a cornerstone of the American political system.
- Supreme Court decisions act as tools of social change.

#### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S)**

- How has judicial interpretation influenced civil liberties and civil rights?
- How has the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment impacted civil rights and liberties?
- How are civil rights and liberties limited by Supreme Court decisions?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Supreme Court decisions as tools of social change?

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES** *The student will:*

- 7.1 Critique the rights and liberties outlined in the Bill of Rights.
- 7.2 Analyze the impact of Supreme Court cases on civil rights and liberties.
- 7.3 Trace the evolution of civil rights and liberties subsequent to the Bill of Rights.
- 7.4 Assess the importance of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment in terms of civil rights and liberties.
- 7.5 Analyze the Supreme Court's decision-making process.
- 7.6 Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Supreme Court decisions.
- 7.7 Analyze how selective incorporation has impacted states.

#### **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT MATERIALS**

- [Oyez.org](http://Oyez.org)
- [Landmarkcases.org](http://Landmarkcases.org)
  - Brown vs. Board of Ed.
  - Marbury v. Madison
  - Miranda v. Arizona
  - Gideon v. Wainright
  - Gitlow v. New York
  - Near v. Minnesota
- *Security versus Civil Liberties*, Richard Posner
- *Affirmative Action at Work*, Bron Taylor
- *Rights Talk*, Mary Ann Glendon
- *Why Privacy Matters*, Jeffrey Rosen
- Primary Source Readers:
  - Annual Editions 06/07

#### **SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES**

- Lecture/discussions
- Debate the need for affirmative action programs
- Critical analysis of primary source materials
- Student presentations on civil rights cases
- Library research
- Chart the incorporation of specific rights
- Political cartoon analysis
- Create briefs of relevant court cases

#### **SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT METHODS**

- Free response questions
- One Page Analysis
- Presentations
- Charts
- Written assessments

