

Syllabus: AP U.S. Government

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COURSE LENGTH: Entire Year

NUMBER OF UNITS: 6

GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION: AP U.S. Government is a college level introductory course on United States Government and Politics, designed for high school students. While the content of general US government courses varies from college to college, this course will focus on the Constitution; political beliefs and behaviors; political parties, interest groups, and mass media; the Congress, presidency, bureaucracy, and the federal courts; public policy; and civil rights and liberties. Course material will be taught through a variety of means including: lecture and note taking, class discussion, intensive reading, group and individual projects, and current events. AP U.S. Government standards not only meet, but go beyond the required Georgia Performance Standards.

COURSE OUTCOMES: Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

1. Describe and compare important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics
2. Explain typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences (including the components of political behavior, the principles used to explain or justify various government structures and procedures, and the political effects of these structures and procedures)
3. Interpret basic data relevant to U.S. government and politics (including data presented in charts, tables, and other formats)
4. Critically analyze relevant theories and concepts, apply them appropriately, and develop their connections across the curriculum

REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS: Bring pencil or pen, and a 3-ring binder devoted strictly to AP Government to class every day. You will be issued a textbook to take home, and a class set will be available at school. Expect about 6-7 hours of homework every week. In addition to homework, essays, projects, and presentations will be assigned on a regular basis. Participation and attendance are extremely important. Students are responsible for turning in all work on time. Late work will receive a deduction in points unless work is missed due to an excused absence or prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

Please set your binder up with these tabbed divisions:

AP Government Binder

These sections must be TABBED and labeled.

- Section 1: Syllabus and event calendar
- Section 2: Classroom notes (all types)
- Section 3: FRQ practice
- Section 4: Tests, quizzes, graded assignments
- Section 5: Teacher handouts, including primary source readings

TEXTBOOK: 1) Wilson, James Q., and John J. DiIulio Jr. *American Government: Institution and Policies*. Cengage Learning, 2) *Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam*, 2016 Edition (College Test Preparation). Students may purchase this workbook at Books-A-Million, Barnes and Nobles (website \$14.31/store \$18.99), or Amazon (\$14.32). Most websites offer free shipping or discounted shipping. Students will receive textbook 1, they will be required to purchase test preparation workbook.

OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES: Supplemental selected readings including Supreme Court cases, news articles, and primary source documents will be used to enhance each unit. We will also use many different maps, charts, and graphs when analyzing elections, poll data-political socialization, and congressional redistricting.

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Class meets every day

GRADING: Grades are determined by the percentage of total course points earned by the student

90-100%	A
80-89%	B
70-79%	C
Below 70%	F

Daily Grades(homework, classwork):	15%
Quizzes:	25%
Unit Assessments:	40%
Midterm/Final Exam	20%

WHILE YOU WERE OUT:

If you are absent from class **for any reason**, excused or unexcused, it is your responsibility to check with me for missing assignments upon your return. **If you miss a test/quiz, it must be made up promptly.** You need to schedule the make-up test with me in person. Remind 101 will be used to inform students of any changes in assignments or due dates. **Event Calendar will also help in keeping up if you are out.**

Cheating: Plagiarism or dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated! This includes turning in information from the Internet as your own work. Consequences of plagiarism include earning a score of “0” on the assignment, involvement of the principal and your parents, possible suspension and/or failure of the course.

Unauthorized Electronic Devices: Cell phones, Ipads, or other tablet device are to be only be used for academic purposes during class time. Students not using it for academic purposes during class time will have the device taken up. A repeated violation of this expectation will result in a written referral and the device will be turned in to the front office for the parent to pick up.

AP US Government Exam Date: May 4th, 2017

AP U.S. Government Units/Elements/Timetable

I. Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government

3 Weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 5 to 15

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam: state, government, political ideology, majority rule, the plurality system, a republic, a democracy, freedom of expression, a federal system (federalism), a confederation, the rule of law, political culture, constitutionalism, legitimacy, Federalists v. Anti-Federalists, Failures of the Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention Compromises, How is separation of powers revealed in the Constitution?, Types of powers within US Government, Checks and Balances, Judicial Review, Popular Sovereignty, Federalism (types)

II. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

4 Weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 5 to 15

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam: Differences between civil liberties and civil rights, Protections guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, Due Process Clause (5th & 14th), Equal Protection Clause, Selective Incorporation, rights of the accused, 1st amendment protections, Establishment and Free Exercise Clause, Prior Restraint, De Jure v. De Facto segregation, affirmative action, and many Supreme Court decisions that involve the Bill of Rights and the 14th amendment.

III. Political Beliefs and Behaviors

4 weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 10 to 20

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam: Influences of Public Opinion, Consensus v. Divisive Opinion, Political Socialization--Factors that influence, Generational (Cohort) effect, Lifestyle effect, Gender Gap, Liberal v. Conservative ideology, Moderates-Independents, types of political participation, political efficacy, straight ticket v. split ticket voting, expansion of suffrage, realignment, dealignment, Polling—Features/Criticisms, Exit Polling, Random Sampling, public opinion impact on government

IV. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media

5 weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 10 to 20

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam: Linkage institution, Political Parties—functions, Two Party System—Why?, single-member districts. Plurality, winner-take-all system, Democratic party v. Republican party, Minor Parties—types/impact, Party Structure—decentralized, National Convention, National Committee, National Chairperson, Caucus, Open/Closed Primaries, Frontloading, Iowa Caucus, New Hampshire Primary, Super Tuesday, general election, coattail effect, incumbent, incumbency effect, critical election, Presidential election process, Electoral College, Campaign Reform Act of 1974, *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), soft money v. hard money, Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010), Political Action Committees, 527 Groups, Super PACs, Interest groups-types/functions, elitism v. hyperpluralism, lobbying, *amicus curiae* briefs, class action lawsuits, electioneering, free-rider problem, Types of media outlets, yellow journalism, sound bites, agenda setting, fairness doctrine, Freedom of Information Act, Media impact on politics/government

V. Institutions of National Government

8 weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 35 to 45

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam: Structure of Congress, Qualifications to be a member of Congress, Powers of Congress, Differences between the House and Senate, Bill process, Filibuster, Types of Committees Checks and Balances on Judicial/Executive Branch, Oversight, CBO, Roles of the President, Presidential Powers, Qualifications of U.S. President, 12th Amendment, 22nd Amendment, 25th Amendment, Executive Agreements, Executive Orders, Appointment power, Pardons, Reprieves, Amnesty, OMB, Executive Office of the President, Roles of the Federal Bureaucracy Cabinet Departments, Independent Regulatory Agencies, Independent Executive Agencies, Government Corporations, Patronage v. Merit System, Iron Triangle, Issue Network Qualifications of Judicial Branch, Judicial Review, *Marbury v. Madison*, Process of a case to get to

Supreme Court, Rule of Four, Types of Federal Courts, Original Jurisdiction, Appellate Jurisdiction, Concurrent Jurisdiction, Judicial Activism v. Restraint.

VI. Public Policy

4 weeks % of AP US Government Exam: 5 to 15

These are some of the following terms and concepts that will be taught for AP Exam:

New Deal, Great Society/War on Poverty, Revenue Sharing, devolution, grants-in-aid program
block grants, project grants, categorical grants, TANF, mandates (unfunded), Clean Air Act
diplomacy, trade agreements, NAFTA, Foreign Policy development, NATO, Deterrents,
War on Terrorism, Roles of Congress/President/Bureaucracy in Foreign/Domestic Policy

- Course timeline is subject to change based upon unforeseen circumstances.
- 2-3 Weeks before the exam will be set aside to review content from earlier grading periods.