**Advanced Placement US Government and Politics**       Instructor: Dr. Reti

2019-20 Phone: 661-718-3100 x585

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*Introduction*   
  
Advanced Placement (AP) US Government and Politics is intended for students who wish to complete a college-level introductory course in American politics.  The class is organized to prepare students for the AP exam in American government next May.  The class will be more rigorous, challenging, and intensive than the standard senior civics class.  Additionally, students will also study economics, often linking this subject to politics, as part of their honors senior curriculum.  Note that students only take the US Government and Politics AP exam.   
  
American government students analyze the purposes of government, how American government works, and evaluate how to make our government better.  First, we study foundations of American democracy, studying the U.S. Constitution, examining the motives of its Framers, the structure of American government, and several critical perspectives on the Constitution's value. Next, we examine the interpretation and practice of our civil liberties and civil rights. Third, we study how Americans develop and express their political ideologies and beliefs. We focus on understanding American political culture through a thorough analysis of public opinion. Fourth, we study how we are linked to the government through our political participation. Voting, political parties, interest groups, campaigns, elections, and mass media link us to the three branches of government. For example, what does it mean to be a Democratic or a Republican? How can we make our needs known? How can we achieve goals together as a family of 330 million Americans? What role does money play in politics? Fifth, we study the institutions of government: the Congress, the Presidency (and bureaucracy) and the Supreme Court. We apply our understanding of American democracy and deliberate about how to improve our country through a series of deliberative debates over the course of the year which together constitutes the AP Government Civics project. Overall, expect a productive and engaging year.   
  
*Expectations and Requirements*   
  
We need to both intensively examine material and cover an extensive course curriculum. To do this well, we need to work closely together.  I will present all the necessary materials to prepare you for the AP exam.  You will need to make your best effort to learn.  Keep up with the readings.  Participate actively in class.  Complete all the assignments and share your work when asked with the class.  It is expected that the highest standards of ethics will be exercised throughout the year.

Course Requirements and Point Values

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| Requirement | Value | Description |
| 1. Reflective notebook | 50 | Purchase an inexpensive single subject spiral notebook (standard page size) for daily class notes, current events, critical reflections, and other short writing assignments. Collected and graded at the end of each unit. Attach grade log at the end of this syllabus to the inside cover of the notebook. |
| 2. Cornell Notes | 50 | Chapter readings |
| 3. Quizzes  Small assignments. | 50 | Regularly scheduled comprehension checks |
| 4. Unit tests | 200 | Exams that include practice AP exam questions |
| 5. Analytical papers and  Civics project papers | 100 | Papers that ask you to analyze/evaluate issues—some may require research, |
| 6. Notebook |  | Please keep a three-ring notebook with handouts distributed over the course of the year and graded work. This can be a section in a larger notebook. Stay organized to prepare for the AP exams. (not collected) |
| 7. Honor Code grade: Citizenship, Preparation, Participation | 50 | Graded At the end of each Unit  Follow school and class rules, be on time, be prepared for each class, be courteous and civil towards everyone.  If unexcused work is turned in late, one grade lower for each day turned in late (not accepted after three days) |

*Readings*   
  
Texts include:

1. Edwards, Wattenberg and Lineberry, Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy New York: Pearson.
2. Readings and handouts distributed in class
3. Assignments and Additional readings are posted on Moodle.

**Assignments and Citizenship Requirements**

**Assignments**:

1. Reflective Notebook (100 pts each unit includes citizenship/participation)
   1. Critical Reflections: Table of Contents on first page, number the next twenty pages front and back, for critical reflections.
   2. Cornell Notes for each Unit—Take notes in class, Cornell Note style, with headings, questions, and brief summaries.
2. Cornell Notes for Readings (50 points)
   1. Handwrite using Cornell note format. Collected separately
3. Essays (100 pts):
   1. Use MLA format with in-text citations and a works cited page. Essays should be typed, however, if computer or printer problems occur, handwrite so that not late.
4. Quizzes (twenty pts)
5. Tests (200 pts)

**Good Citizenship**

1. Class time is valuable. Come to school. Email me if ill for more than a day so I can tell you what we are doing. See Moodle class pages for homework assignments.
2. Come to class on time. Please be ready to start the lesson when the bell rings (at your seat, with necessary materials)
3. Please be fully engaged with our work.
   1. No use of electronics without permission—cell phones tablets, laptops, ear phones put away.
   2. If student does not put away electronics when asked, the next school day, I will ask student to lock up phone in my file cabinet before class and retrieve it after class. I will notify parents if this is necessary.
4. Turn in work on time. Unexcused late work will receive one grade lower for each day late and will not be accepted after three days.
5. Follow school dress code.
6. Participate actively in what we do, raise your hand, share your perspectives and analyses.
7. Your work should be your own: Plagiarized work or cheating will result in F and referral to administration.
8. Respect the school as a place for learning. Respect your teacher’s right to teach and your classmates’ right to learn. Be respectful of differences in gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, or any other personal consideration.
9. Unless for a special occasion, or by permission, no eating in class. Drinks are fine.

Procedures, Rules and Expectations

**Assignments**:

1. Handwrite notes and assignments from class in reflective notebook. Place date at top of page. Reflective notebooks will be collected at the end of each unit for grading.
2. Reading notes: Handwrite using Cornell note format. Collected separately.
3. Take home Essays: Use MLA format with in-text citations and a works cited page. Essays should be typed, however, if computer or printer problems occur, handwrite so that your work is not late.
4. Quizzes and Tests: Write legibly, double-space if necessary.

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Good citizenship earns 50 pts credit for each unit. Violation of class rules result in ten points loss per incident, discussion to resolve issue with you, if repeats, parent contact, third offense, student discipline contract—administrative referral.

**Notes about Particular Challenges**

In general, I find our students to be wonderfully devoted to their studies! Some specific challenges have developed in recent years regarding electronics, dress code, and remaining dedicated to studies throughout the year. Please keep in mind that within a general rubric of school rules, teachers will have their own particular requirements based on their particular class needs. Please adapt to these differences.

1. Smart phones, tablets and laptops are sometimes very useful and we will often use them in class for group reviews and research. However, unless I specifically ask you to use an electronic device, all electronic devices and head phones should be put away, such as in your backpacks (not on desk).

Reasons: Recent research shows that notes taken by hand promote higher levels of comprehension. Second, we will need to be fully engaged—and not distracted by a myriad of academic and nonacademic “apps.” Third, there is an issue of equity, I prefer to provide time in class where everyone has equal access to internet resources. Fourth, a discussion involves eye contact with one another; better facilitated with pen and paper than hunched behind a laptop which has become an isolating device. Increasingly, college classes are banning laptops altogether. It has only been in the last few years, that Wi-Fi access at school has been reliable and most students own smartphones. I think we are still learning to adapt. For a discussion and links to some of this research, see <http://www.newyorker.com/tech/elements/the-case-for-banning-laptops-in-the-classroom>. I am not anti-tech, but I am for the appropriate use of tech!

Consequences: Unauthorized use of electronics—10 pt. loss per incident. Second time, communication home to resolve problem such as confiscation and parent pickup of phone. Third time, administrative referral to resolve issue.

1. Dress code. In general, dress code issues have not been a problem. Wear school- appropriate clothes that shows respect for yourself, other people, and the school as a public place.
2. Be authentic! Do your own work and avoid temptation to plagiarize or cheat. This includes copying work from online sources or from one another, and cheating exams. Consequence: first time, zero on assignment, parent contact, referral to administration. Additional times: resolve through administrative action.
3. No eating in class, drinks are okay. With exceptions for when I bake for the class or we have other events that I have approved.

Reason for rule: Helps focus on schoolwork, cleanliness (insect problems!), reduces distractions, and fundamentally it’s rude to eat in front of other people without sharing (if you want to share with the whole class, then see me a day in advance for approval)

**Course Calendar**

Introduction: This course calendar is organized into major units as defined by the AP US Government and Politics curriculum set out by the College Board as well as by the Economics Honors curriculum set out by our school district. This is a year-long course.

For each course unit, the following are described:

* 1. Big Ideas: overarching constitutional and democratic principle underlying the entire curriculum
     1. Constitutionalism
     2. Political Values: Liberty and Order
     3. Civic Participation
     4. Competing Policy Making Interests
     5. Political Science Methods of Political Analysis
  2. Enduring Understanding: Important ideas and core processes for each unit that are linked to the Big Ideas. These learning objectives will be identified for each unit in the course calendar. Learning objectives are further defined in terms of sets of essential knowledge for each unit.
  3. Disciplinary Practices: These are skills that we will develop over the course of the year (from AP College Board)

Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios

Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions

Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data

Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other political science articles, journals, and relevant current events.

Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Reasoning Processes: Organized according to Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking Skills Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation

* 1. Learning Objectives: Specific goals for what students need to do with content knowledge in order to master the enduring understanding
  2. Essential Knowledge: The fact, concepts, and theories that students should know to demonstrate mastery of learning objectives. Essential Questions prompt students to address analysis and evaluative issues pertinent to each unit.

Overview of Units: The units that we will study corresponds to the AP US Government Politics Course Description from the College Board. The order of the units has been altered to be consistent with political systems theory which is a guide for our textbook.

Unit 1: Foundation of American Democracy

Unit 2: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Unit 3: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

Unit 4: Political Participation

Unit 5: Interactions Among Branches of Government

**Syllabus Acknowledgement**

Students, please sign below signifying that you promise to do your best in this class by following all of the above expectations. Bring it home and ask your parent or guardian to read it and sign it, signifying that they have read it. If parents have any questions or comments, please email me or call me.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Reflective Notebook and Honor Code Grade Log**

I will seek to:

Complete high quality work that is authentically my own

Positively Participate

Express My Ideas to the best of my abilities

Respect Others

Be fully Present

Use electronic devices only when asked to do so.

**Student Name:**

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| **Date** | **Notebook Grade** | **Honor Code Grade** | **Messages from Dr. Reti** |
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Unit 3: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

Unit 4: Political Participation

Unit 5: Interactions Among Branches of Government

1. Civics Project 1: Deliberative Debates

Civics Project: Developing Positions through Deliberative Debates For each major topic that we are studying, students will develop a position about a contemporary issue regarding that topic. They are explicitly connecting the theories and concepts of each unit with contemporary issues and events. All students will write persuasive essays about each topic drawing on research about the topic from contemporary political science journals and periodicals (approximately seven papers over the course of the year) Students will include discussion of public opinion in their issue and include an evaluation of sources they used for accuracy and bias.

Each student will participate in one group debate before the class that orally presents a single debate about one of the topics below. He or she will be part of an affirmative or negative team that will present an hour long debate to the class about the topic. Each team will present its finding regarding the issue to the class. This presentation of finding will be presented in the high-interest format of a debate where students will practice their public speaking abilities; learning how to have effective openings, to manipulate logic and evidence to support their points of view, and to persuasively show the validity of their ideas to an audience.

The purpose of the oral debate will be to present the issues and educate the class about the topic. Central to the debate format are the many questions that audience members pose to each side. Below is the format and a list of topics. Topics will vary as current issues become salient over the course of the year.

Each debate is organized around a single question. One or two articles will be distributed for students to use as a basis for their persuasive essays. Other research should be done as directed for each topic. The standard format for a debate is

1. Affirmative Opening: One minute hook and introduction
2. Negative Opening: One minute hook and introduction
3. Affirmative Speech: Well-prepared, five to ten minute speech (3 x 5 cards recommended)
4. Negative Speech: Well-prepared, five to ten minute speech
5. Affirmative Rebuttal: two to three minute response to opposing side
6. Negative Rebuttal: two to three minute response to opposing side
7. Questions from audience: the audience will have read the articles and everyone will be held responsible for the arguments
8. Closing Speech from Affirmative Side: Summarize argument and have interesting closing remarks
9. Closing Speech from Negative Side: Summarize argument and have a strong interesting close.

Two to four people on each side.

1. **American Political Culture: How Divided Are We?**

**Resolved, the United States has a deeply fragmented political culture.**

David Brooks, “One Nation, Slightly Divisible” *Atlantic Monthly*: December

2001.

Affirmative\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. **The Media**

**Resolved, we should not trust the media:**

*Congressional Quarterly,* “Trust in Media,” June 9, 2017

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Federalism and Welfare Policy:**

Resolved, there should be a national right to food, shelter, clothing and basic needs.

Resources: Facts on File, Issues and Controversies, Poverty and Social Service

June 2009

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. **Voting:**

**Resolved,** voting is so important, it should be compulsory.

Suggested Reading: William Galston, “Telling Americans to Vote or Else.”

*New York Times,* Nov. 5, 2011

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5. The Power of the Presidency**

**Resolved, the Presidency should be the leading branch of the Federal Government**

Suggested Readings: Three Philosophies of Presidential Power: Lincoln, Taft, and Theodore Roosevelt excerpts of Presidential writings. These articles are then linked to current news about the President and a controversy regarding Presidential Power (e.g. current controversies regarding executive orders such as DACA)

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Supreme Court: activism vs. restraint**

Suggested Reading: Readings on activism vs. restraint and focus on current case before the Supreme Court, applying philosophy

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**7.**  **Public Policy: Abortion.** Debate about current proposals at national as well as state levels **Resolution: Abortion should be more limited than it is now.**

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**8. Public Policy: Capital Punishment:** Debate about current proposals at national as well as at state levels.

**Capital Punishment should be abolished**

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Negative: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Civics Project II: (The year-long civics project consists of the deliberative debates that connect concepts of each unit with current issues and events.) For the civil liberties and civil rights unit, there is a second civics project that connects judicial procedure with contemporary Supreme Court cases that are either about civil rights or civil liberties (connecting essential understanding across two unis). This second Civics Project is a simulation of the Supreme Court with students acting as either attorneys or the actual justices to decide a current case. Recently, we have simulated the *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado* case focusing on the issues of discrimination and religious liberty. See below:

***Supreme Court Simulation***

**Introduction**

For our mock trials, we will select one or more Supreme Court cases and simulate the Supreme Court process for adjudicating the case.

First, we will simulate the oral argument stage and then the conference stage. Attorneys will first present their arguments with questions from the justices. This will be followed by the Conference stage in which the justices will each present their opinions and vote about the case.

1. Prepare a three to five page brief.
2. Present your argument in class.

**Steps:**

1. Selection of cases and roles:

Role Play Attorneys for Petitioner or Respondent, or

role play a specific justice on the U.S. Supreme Court

1. Trial Preparation
2. Attorneys represent their clients and write legal briefs
3. Justices write a draft opinion.

Directions for Legal Brief or Opinion: Three to five pages:

Sections:

a. What are the facts of the case?

b. What are the issues at stake?

c. What are the relevant provisions of the Constitution and relevant Court

precedents?

* 1. What is your argument (for attorneys) Or your opinion (for justices)? What is your rationale?

*General Resources*

1. oyez.org: excellent for research and abstracts of precedents

2. Scotusblog: links to legal briefs, amicus briefs, analyses, etc..

3. Summaries of cases on wikipedia: clear explanations!

4. Biographies of Justices: good for role playing the justices

http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/uscourtsystem/a/supctjustices.htm

Citing legal cases:

1. In text, be sure to *italicize* the name of the case. Case can be called by the first name of the plaintiff in the text, after full name is used.
2. Works Cited page should Court case name, the name of the Court, and the date of the case.

3. Simulation

1.Oral Argument stage: attorneys present arguments to Justices. Justices

ask questions of the attorneys.

2.Conference Stage: Justices present opinions

Roles for the Mock Trial

* 1. Attorneys: two or three people each
     1. Attorneys for Plaintiffs
     2. Attorneys for Defendants
  2. Justices: usually one student per justice

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Justice | Born | Appointed by President | Philosophy |
| John Roberts: | 1955 | Bush (43) | Conservative |
| Stephen Breyer: | 1938 | Clinton | Liberal |
| Ruth Ginsburg: | 1933 | Clinton | Liberal |
| Anthony Kennedy: | 1936 | Reagan | Centrist |
| Samuel Alito, Jr. | 1950 | Bush (43) | Conservative |
| Neil Gorsuch | 1967 | Trump | Conservative |
| Sonia Sotomayor: | 1954 | Obama | Liberal |
| Elena Kagan: | 1960 | Obama | Liberal |
| Clarence Thomas | 1948 | Bush (41) | Conservative |

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Syllabus

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Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Reflective Notebook and Honor Code Grade Log**

**Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **Date** | **Notebook Grade** | **Honor Code Grade** | **Comments** |
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**Course Calendar**

Introduction: This course calendar is organized into major units as defined by the AP US Government and Politics curriculum set out by the College Board as well as by the Economics Honors curriculum set out by our school district. This is a year-long course.

For each course unit, the following are described:

* 1. Big Ideas: overarching constitutional and democratic principle underlying the entire curriculum
     1. Constitutionalism
     2. Political Values: Liberty and Order
     3. Civic Participation
     4. Competing Policy Making Interests
     5. Political Science Methods of Political Analysis
  2. Enduring Understanding: Important ideas and core processes for each unit that are linked to the Big Ideas. These learning objectives will be identified for each unit in the course calendar. Learning objectives are further defined in terms of sets of essential knowledge for each unit.
  3. Disciplinary Practices: These are skills that we will develop over the course of the year (from AP College Board)

Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios

Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions

Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data

Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other political science articles, journals, and relevant current events.

Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Reasoning Processes: Organized according to Bloom’s Taxonomy of Thinking Skills

Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation

* 1. Learning Objectives: Specific goals for what students need to do with content knowledge in order to master the enduring understanding
  2. Essential Knowledge: The fact, concepts, and theories that students should know to demonstrate mastery of learning objectives. Essential Questions prompt students to address analysis and evaluative issues pertinent to each unit.

Overview of Units: The units that we will study corresponds to the AP US Government Politics Course Description from the College Board. The order of the units has been altered to be consistent with political systems theory which is a guide for our textbook.

Unit 1: Foundation of American Democracy

Unit 2: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Unit 3: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

Unit 4: Political Participation

Unit 5: Interactions Among Branches of Government

**Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy**

Big Ideas: Liberty and Order, Constitutionalism, Methods of Political Analysis

Enduring Understandings: Students will be able to describe, analyze, and evaluate the debates surrounding the appropriate nature of government by considering a range of political ideologies. Students will be able to describe, analyze and evaluate the historical debates (including debates about ratification) during the period the 1770s through the early 1790s in the United States considering issues of the appropriate power of government, branches of government and the relationship between the states and the central government.

Key Topics keyed to textbook chapters

1. Introduction to government (chapter one)
2. Constitutional history (chapter two)
3. Federalism (chapter three)

Essential Knowledge: Each unit is divided into specific topics (see below) with essential knowledge specified.

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes: Students will apply ideological concepts to evaluate contemporary issues as they develop and articulate their own political ideologies in short essays. They will analyze and evaluate current events articles to help illustrate their points of view. Students will read, interpret, and evaluate issues drawing on the following foundational documents and Supreme Court Cases in Unit One:

1. Excerpts of John Locke’s *Second Treatise of Civil Government*
2. Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers included Federalist No. 10, 51, 70, 78 and Brutus No. 1
3. The Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, the US Constitution, and *Marbury v. Madison*
4. Key Court Cases regarding federalism including *McCulloch v. Maryland and United States v. Lopez*

**Unit 1: Topic 1: The Nature of Politics (two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge: Students will consider the fundamental dilemmas of government as conflicts in values including liberty, equality, and order. Students will distinguish among different kinds of ideologies including liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and libertarianism. Students will better understand their own ideologies by taking an online questionnaire (ideolog.org or political compass) and then writing a three to five page political autobiography that includes discussion of their viewpoints, illustrations of how they view various current events drawn from current news sites. Students will engage in critical considerations of validity of sources and consideration of the origins of their viewpoints including such agents of socialization as their families, friends, and the community.

Students will learn the tools of systems theory to organize their study of politics.

Students will categorize kinds of government according the question of who should rule based upon Aristotle’s typology. Students will distinguish different kinds of democracy, distinguishing between representative and direct democracy with examples drawn from both California and national politics.

Essential Knowledge**:**

Terms

1. Politics (Aristotle’s and Lasswell’s definitions)
2. Government
3. Aristotle’s typology of governments
4. Negative liberty/positive liberty
5. Equality of opportunity/outcome
6. Anarchy (state of nature)
7. Politics
8. Political ideologies: liberal, conservative, libertarian, communist (communitarian)
9. Locke’s social contract theory/Jefferson’s Declaration of Independence
10. Indirect Democracy (representative democracy)
11. Direct Democracy
12. Initiative
13. Referendum
14. Recall
15. Classic democratic theory (majoritarianism)
16. Pluralist theory
17. Elite (and class) Theory
18. Hyperpluralism
19. Policymaking system
20. Linkage institutions
21. Policy agenda
22. Policymaking institutions
23. Public policy
24. Policy gridlock
25. Political culture/political socialization

Essential Questions

1. Briefly summarize Locke’s social contract theory as set out in his *Second Treatise of Civil Government*. What is the significance of this theory to understand American politics?
2. Who really rules America? Compare the traditional democratic (majoritarian), elitist, and pluralist perspectives. What is your opinion?
3. Describe the significant differences between liberals and conservatives in the United States. Select a few issues to illustrate these differences. In what ways, are liberals and conservatives similar?

**Unit 1: Topic 2 Foundations of U.S. Government (two to three weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge: We will describe, analyze and evaluate how the American Revolution the Article of Confederation, and the US Constitution were shaped by political philosophies, competing ideas regarding the nature and scope of government, and historical events. Students will analyze and evaluate Federalist and Anti-Federalist arguments and consider their relevance for current debates about political polarization, factions, and checks and balances.

Students begin Civics Project: Deliberative Debates. They work with the first deliberative debate regarding polarization.

Essential Knowledge

1. 1776
2. Confederal, federal, and unitary governments
3. Articles of Confederation
4. Shays’ Rebellion
5. Philadelphia Convention--1787
6. Ratification by all states by 1790
7. Virginia Plan, New Jersey Plan, Connecticut Compromise
8. Unicameral legislature and bicameral legislature (Congress)
9. Federalists/Anti-Federalists
10. Reasons why Bill of Rights was added to Constitution by 1791
11. The Federalist Papers
12. separation of powers
13. checks and balances
14. Madisonian system
15. Process by which an amendment is added to the Constitution
16. Federalism
17. Expressed (enumerated) Powers
18. Implied Powers
19. Elastic (necessary and Proper) Clause
20. *Marbury v. Madison* and principle of judicial review
21. Foundationalist vs. Anti-foundationalist views of the Constitution and law in general
22. Lengths of term of office for House, Senate, and President
23. Seventeenth Amendment
24. *E Pluribus Unum*

Essential Questions

1. Why did the U.S. Constitution replace the Articles of Confederation? Make references to specific elements of both documents as well as the historical context.
2. As discussed in the Federalist 10 and 51, what recommendations did Madison make regarding how to achieve good government? What are some specific constitutional mechanisms that reflect his philosophy? Do you agree with these recommendations? Discuss.
3. Should the electoral college be abolished? To answer this question, discuss how the electoral college works, its strengths and weaknesses, and then justify your opinion.
4. What objections did the Anti-Federalists have to the new Constitution? Do you share their concerns? Support your arguments with contemporary or historical examples.

**Unit 1: Topic 3 American Federalism (two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge: Students will identify and analyze key elements of the Constitution that shape the relationship between the states and the national government such as expressed powers, the elastic clause, and the Tenth Amendment. They will apply these constitutional issues to contemporary issues and examine how the Supreme Court has used these Constitutional provisions to decide cases. Second, students will examine the history of American federalism, describing and explaining how dual, cooperative, and new federalism shaped the relationship between states and national government. Third, students will develop their own opinions about federalism by examining what level(s) of government should decide contemporary issues such as social policy including health care, welfare policy, abortion, capital punishment, and the legalization of marijuana. How much liberty should be allowed to each level of government is an issue that connects the Big Ideas of Constitutionalism and the Political Values of liberty and order. This is a question for students to individually evaluate.

Essential Knowledge

1. Unitary, Confederal, and Federal systems
2. Expressed (enumerated) Powers
3. Implied Powers and the Elastic (Necessary and Proper Clause)
4. Full Faith and Credit Clause
5. Privileges and Immunities Clause
6. Supremacy Clause
7. Ninth and Tenth Amendments
8. Federal Power, Reserved Powers, Concurrent Powers
9. Fiscal Federalism
   1. Categorical grant
      1. formula grant and project grant
   2. Block grant
10. Preemption
11. mandate (funded, unfunded, partially funded)
12. Dual Federalism (layer-cake federalism)
13. Cooperative Federalism (marble-cake federalism)
14. New Federalism (from notes)
15. *McCulloch v. Maryland*
16. *Gibbons v. Ogden*
17. *United States v. Lopez*
18. Aid to Families with Dependent Children to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families. From cooperative federalism to new federalism
19. Voting Rights Act of 1965: federal efforts to protect voting rights (cooperative federalism)
20. Hurricane Katrina and the failure of federalism
21. Idiographic vs. Nomothetic approaches to history
22. extradition

Essential Questions

1. What clauses of the Constitution are relevant for understanding American federalism? How do these clauses create an “invitation to struggle” between the states and the federal government?
2. Historically, how has the relationship between the states and the national government changed? Describe three models of federalism that show shifts in intergovernmental relations. What motivated these changes?
3. Consider your own philosophy about federalism. To what extent do you want state and local government to control politics, and to what extent do you want the federal government to be in charge? Discuss the criteria that are important to you (unity, diversity, democracy, knowledge, others). Use policy examples such as reducing drunk driving, gay marriage, the minimum wage, etc.) to illustrate your argument.

**Unit 2: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (three to four weeks)**

Big Ideas: Liberty and Order, Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policy-Making Interests, Methods of Political Analysis

Enduring Understanding: Students will be able to describe and analyze how civil liberties and civil rights have evolved over the course of American history as Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and American federalism have changed. Students will explain how the interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment has changed over time with the Bill of Rights becoming selectively incorporated into state law at the behest of the US Supreme Court. Students will describe, explain, and evaluate the positions and efforts of civil rights groups and social movements in their efforts to promote civil liberties and civil rights. In the Civics Project, students will develop their own evaluations of whether basic needs should become a nationally defined right and refine their opinions of different social welfare policies. This unit is explicitly connected to Unit 1 federalism by examining to what extent civil liberties and civil rights ought to be a state or a national responsibility.

Key Topics keyed to textbook chapters:

* 1. Civil Liberties (chapter 4)
  2. Civil Rights (chapter 5)

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes: Relevant practices for this unit including Practice 2 to 5: applying Supreme Court decisions using data to understand American society and how changes in law affected social conditions interpreting and evaluating documents and writing arguments in essay format.

Connection to Civics Project: Deliberative Debates: Students will write persuasive essays on civil liberties and civil rights issues. Two debates will be led by two student groups on these topics in which students will deliberate about the issues and refine their opinions.

Key Supreme Court cases and Foundational Documents read and interpreted in this unit:

1. Letter from a Birmingham Jail
2. *Engel v. Vitale*
3. *Wisconsin v. Yoder*
4. *Tinker v. Des Moines*
5. *New York Times Co. v. United States*
6. *Schenck v. United States*
7. *Gideon v. Wainwright*
8. *Roe v. Wade*
9. *McDonald v. Chicago*
10. *Brown v. Board of Education*

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge:

Students will recall the role of the US Supreme Court in the Constitutional system and be able to describe civil procedure for how a case may reach the US Supreme Court. This will reinforce the relationship between the Big Ideas of Constitutionalism, Branches of Government, and Civil Liberties and Civil Rights.

*Civil Liberties:* Students will analyze and evaluate the history of First Amendment jurisprudence and consider contemporary cases. Students will describe and analyze the rights of the accused and debate current issues regarding the impact of technology on privacy considerations. Students will evaluate the right of privacy with regards to relationships including birth control, abortion, and marriage rights.

*Civil Rights*: Students will analyze and evaluate jurisprudence impacting civil rights including race, gender, and sexual orientation. They will examine how the US Supreme Court has used the due process clause and the equal protection clause to extend rights over time. Students will study the pressure of interest groups and social movements to pass key civil rights laws.

From both civil liberties and civil rights, students will practice the application of precedents to a variety of historical and contemporary cases. For example, the Lemon Test from *Lemon v. Kurtzman*  provides a way to analyze *Zobrest* in which the provision of an interpreter to a deaf child to go to a religious school is deemed permissible because it passes the Lemon Test.

Essential Knowledge

Overview of Judicial Procedure

1. Standing to sue
2. *Amicus curiae* briefs
3. District courts, courts of appeals, Supreme Court
4. Solicitor general
5. Majority opinion, dissenting opinion, concurring opinion
6. Judicial restraint vs. judicial activism

Civil liberties

1. Five freedoms of First Amendment
2. *Barron v. Baltimore* and how *Gitlow v. New York* superseded it
3. Fourteenth Amendment and incorporation doctrine
4. Establishment clause and free exercise clause
5. *Lemon v. Kurtzman, Engel v. Vitale, Wisconsin v. Yoder*
6. Prior restraint
7. *Schenk v. United States* (clear and present danger test)
8. *Miller v. California*
9. Libel vs. slander
10. *New York Times v. Sullivan*
11. *Texas v. Johnson* and symbolic speech
12. *McDonald v. Chicago*
13. Due Process Rights (defendants’ rights), Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments
14. Exclusionary rule
15. Probable cause
16. *Mapp v. Ohio*
17. *Miranda v. Arizona*
18. *Gideon v. Wainwright*
19. *Gregg v. Georgia*
20. Privacy Question: *Griswold v. Connecticut, Roe v. Wade, Planned Parenthood v. Casey*
21. *United States v. Windsor, Obergefell v. Ohio*

Civil Rights

1. civil rights in comparison to civil liberties
2. Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth Amendment
3. poll taxes, White Primary, Grandfather Clause
4. Nineteenth Amendment
5. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
6. Voting Rights Act of 1965
7. affirmative action
8. Civil Rights Act of 1964
9. The *Dred Scott* decision
10. *Plessy v. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education,*
11. *Reed v. Reed, Craig v. Boren*
12. *UC Regent of California v. Bakke, Adarand Construction v. Pena.*

**Essential Questions**

1. How is a person appointed to the Supreme Court?
2. What is the process by which a case is heard by the Supreme Court?
3. What role does the Court have in our system of checks and balances?
4. Why is the Fourteenth Amendment important? Discuss how its interpretation has changed over the years using specific Court cases.
5. What are three levels of judicial scrutiny used to evaluate the constitutionality of affirmative action programs? Use examples (Court cases) to illustrate each one.
6. How has the changing nature of federalism influenced civil rights?
7. The Supreme Court is responsible for interpreting the law to protect the civil liberties of Americans in such Supreme Court cases as *Miranda v. Arizona*, *School District of Abington Township*, *Pennsylvania v. Schempp*, *Mapp v. Ohio,* and *Texas v. Johnson.*

Select two of the above cases and do the following:

* 1. Identify the major civil liberties issue raised by each case.
  2. Explain how the case changed definitions of civil liberties held by citizens.

1. In recent cases, the Supreme Court had ruled that the Bill of Rights includes a “right to privacy.” Yet the word “privacy” is nowhere found in the Bill of Rights. In your essay, do the following:
   1. Identify and describe a Supreme Court case that deals with the issue of privacy.
   2. Discuss the Court’s reasoning in saying that there was a right to privacy.
   3. Explain how the decision could be seen as an “activist” decision.
2. Civil rights has been as issue that has affected the United States since the founding. All branches of government have been involved in the civil rights

arena.

* 1. Identify and describe one Supreme Court case in the twentieth century that affected civil rights.
  2. Identify and describe one law passed by Congress in the twentieth century that affected civil rights.
  3. Identify and describe one presidential action in the twentieth century that affected civil rights.

(Note that questions 7-9 are based on old AP free response questions)

Civics Project II: (The year-long civics project consists of the deliberative debates that connect concepts of each unit with current issues and events.) For the civil liberties and civil rights unit, there is a second civics project that connects judicial procedure with contemporary Supreme Court cases that are either about civil rights or civil liberties. This second Civics Project is a simulation of the Supreme Court with students acting as either attorneys or the actual justices to decide a current case. See below:

***Supreme Court Simulation***

**Introduction**

For our mock trials, we will select one or more Supreme Court cases and simulate the Supreme Court process for adjudicating the case.

First, we will simulate the oral argument stage and then the conference stage. Attorneys will first present their arguments with questions from the justices. This will be followed by the Conference stage in which the justices will each present their opinions and vote about the case.

1. Prepare a three to five page brief.
2. Present your argument in class.

**Steps:**

1. Selection of cases and roles:

Role Play Attorneys for Petitioner or Respondent, or

role play a specific justice on the U.S. Supreme Court

1. Trial Preparation
2. Attorneys represent their clients and write legal briefs
3. Justices write a draft opinion.

Directions for Legal Brief or Opinion: Three to five pages:

Sections:

a. What are the facts of the case?

b. What are the issues at stake?

c. What are the relevant provisions of the Constitution and relevant Court

precedents?

* 1. What is your argument (for attorneys) Or your opinion (for justices)? What is your rationale?

*General Resources*

1. oyez.org: excellent for research and abstracts of precedents

2. Scotusblog: links to legal briefs, amicus briefs, analyses, etc..

3. Summaries of cases on wikipedia: clear explanations!

4. Biographies of Justices: good for role playing the justices

http://usgovinfo.about.com/od/uscourtsystem/a/supctjustices.htm

Citing legal cases:

1. In text, be sure to *italicize* the name of the case. Case can be called by the first name of the plaintiff in the text, after full name is used.
2. Works Cited page should Court case name, the name of the Court, and the date of the case.

3. Simulation

1.Oral Argument stage: attorneys present arguments to Justices. Justices

ask questions of the attorneys.

2.Conference Stage: Justices present opinions

Roles for the Mock Trial

* 1. Attorneys: two or three people each
     1. Attorneys for Plaintiffs
     2. Attorneys for Defendants
  2. Justices: usually one student per justice

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Justice | Born | Appointed by President | Philosophy |
| John Roberts: | 1955 | Bush (43) | Conservative |
| Stephen Breyer: | 1938 | Clinton | Liberal |
| Ruth Ginsburg: | 1933 | Clinton | Liberal |
| Anthony Kennedy: | 1936 | Reagan | Centrist |
| Samuel Alito, Jr. | 1950 | Bush (43) | Conservative |
| Neil Gorsuch | 1967 | Trump | Conservative |
| Sonia Sotomayor: | 1954 | Obama | Liberal |
| Elena Kagan: | 1960 | Obama | Liberal |
| Clarence Thomas | 1948 | Bush (41) | Conservative |

**Unit 3: American Political Ideologies, Beliefs, and the Media (two to three weeks)**

Big Ideas: Competing Policy-Making Interests, Methods of Political Analysis, Connections to Constitutionalism and Liberty and Order

Enduring Understanding: Students will be able to identify core political values and describe alternative interpretations of these values, and share some of their own points of view. Students will analyze the origins of beliefs as rooted in deliberation, culture, and socialization. Students will interpret quantitative and qualitative sources to understand the contours of public opinion. Students will evaluate what role public opinion should have in a democracy. Students will evaluate different theories regarding the impact of the media on public opinion and on political participation.

Key Topics keyed to textbook chapters

* 1. Chapter 6

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes: Practices 3-5: Analyzing and interpreting data and other readings and visual sources and developing an argument. Reasoning Processes: comprehension, application analysis, synthesis, evaluation

* 1. Students will analyze and interpret quantitative data about public opinion to address questions regarding the relative polarization of the country between parties. They will use data from the Pew Reseach Center, Gallup polls, and interpret articles and essays about this important issue
  2. Students will interpret how the visual display of data regarding public opinion and voting can alter our conclusions about the degree of polarization.

Civics Project Connection: Debate on whether the media can be trusted. Students will write a persuasive essay on this topic, considering the latest research and examples regarding this issue. One group will lead a debate in the class about the topic.

Essential Knowledge

* 1. Demography
  2. Political culture
  3. Political socialization
  4. Agents of political socialization
  5. Ascriptive (from birth) vs. achieved (by learning) demographic characteristics
  6. Age as an agent of socialization: Life cycle effects
  7. Age as an agent of socialization: generational effects
  8. Statistical terms: population/sample/random sample, sampling error
  9. Exit poll
  10. Gender gap
  11. Theories of media influence on public opinion: mass society model, minimal effects theory, agenda-setting theory
  12. Framing effects ( by media)
  13. Priming (selection bias) (by media)
  14. Voter turnout
  15. Suffrage: the franchise (n), to enfranchise (v), to disenfranchise (v)
  16. Electoral laws: voter registration regulations, Voter Id laws
  17. Political efficacy, internal and external

Essential Questions

1. In your opinion, what role should public opinion have in the governance of our country?  Use examples from current events or history to illustrate your point of view.

2. The dominant explanation regarding the origins of public opinion is the political socialization model.  Describe this model. Be able to interpret data to identify correlations between agents of socialization and opinions.

3. An alternative explanation regarding the origins of public opinion is the political deliberation model. Describe this model. Be able to discuss how people with different values will interpret an issue.

4. Be able to evaluate the validity of a public opinion poll, considering sampling technique and question wording.

**Unit 4: Political Participation**

Big Ideas: Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policy-Making Interests, and Methods of Political Analysis

Enduring Understanding: Students will be able to identify and analyze factors that promote and discourage political participation. Students will be able to identify different ways that people can participate in politics including voting, participating in parties and campaigns, and joining interest groups and social movements. Students will be able to identify and evaluate campaign finance and electoral practices. Students will recall how the media shapes public opinion and participation (recalling previous unit)

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

Practices 1, and 3-5. Students will examine how processes apply to different scenarios, analyze myriad data and other sources and develop arguments in essay format. Reasoning Processes: comprehension, application analysis, synthesis, evaluation

Key Topics keyed to textbooks chapters

1. Political Participation: portions of chapter 6, 10
2. Political Parties: chapter 8 and 9
3. Interest Groups: chapter 11

Supreme Court Cases studied in this Unit

1. *Citizens United v. FEC*
2. *Baker v. Carr*
3. *Shaw v. Reno*

**Unit 4: Topic 1: Voter Participation (one to two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will be able to describe and analyze different factors that have historically and currently influence the probability of voting: electoral laws (including the electoral college), sociological factors such as efficacy, and mobilization by others including interest groups and parties and mass media. As part of the Civics Projects, students will write an essay regarding if voting should be mandatory. One group will lead a class debate about this topic.

1. voter turnout

2. suffrage (n): franchise (synonym) (n) enfranchise (v), disenfranchise (v)

3. Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Third, Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Sixth Amendments

4. Voting Rights act of 1965

5. Political efficacy (internal and external)

6. Political mobilization

7. Theories of media influence on public opinion: mass society model, minimal

effects theory, agenda-setting theory

8. Framing effects (by media)

9. Priming (selection bias) by media

Essential Question

1. Why don’t more Americans vote? Consider at least two explanations and discuss the evidence to support these explanations.

**Unit 4: Topic 2: Political Parties, Campaigns and Election (two to three weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will review political systems theory, focusing on linkage institutions, such as parties and interest groups. Students will be able to identify how parties organize the electorate, campaigns and political institutions. Students will be able to describe how parties have waxed and waned in popularity using critical election theory. Students will hypothesize about the future of parties in America.

Essential Knowledge

1. Political Party—partisan, bipartisan, nonpartisan (adjectives)
2. Idealistic (such as theory of responsible party government) vs. pragmatic (such as Anthony Downs’s Economic Theory of democracy) definitions of party
3. Three dimensions of party: party-in-the-electorate, party organizations, and party-in-government
4. theory of critical elections—stable coalitions, critical elections, realignment
5. ticket-splitting and divided government
6. party machines, patronage
7. closed primaries, open primaries, blanket primaries, national conventions, general election
8. New Deal coalition
9. winner-take-all elections vs proportional representation
10. dealignment
11. third parties and their impact
12. party platform

Essential Questions

1. Why do we have only two major political parties in the U.S.? Discuss at least two theories.
2. Explain, why, at the national level, sometimes the Republicans dominate, and, at other times, the Democrats dominate. Be sure to use a theory to explain history.
3. What are three ways that parties organize American politics? In your opinion, are parties good for America?

**Unit 4: Topic 3: Interest Groups (one to two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will describe how interest groups and social movements form using purposive, material and solidary incentives. Students will analyze how interest groups use both direct and indirect lobbying. Students will evaluate if interest groups (and pluralism) are good for the US, considering perspectives of Madison and Alexis de Tocqueville. Students will research the actions of interest groups, showing how specific groups use the techniques that we are studying.

Essential Knowledge

1. Pluralism and hyperpluralism
2. iron triangle
3. issue network (subgovernments)
4. pork and pork barreling
5. public goods
6. the Free rider problem and Olson’s law of large groups (note difference between
   1. Potential and actual groups)
7. Purposive, material (book calls them selective benefits), and solidary incentives
8. lobbying (direct and indirect)
9. Political Action Committees (PACs)
10. *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010)
11. Hard money and soft money
12. *Amicus Curiae briefs*

Essential Questions

1. How do interest groups attract new members?
2. Are pluralists right when they say that interest groups are good for America? Discuss the perspective of Tocqueville and Madison
3. How do interest groups seek to influence policymakers?

**Unit 5: Interactions among Branches of Government**

Big Ideas: Constitutionalism, Competing Policy-Making Interests, Methods of Political Analysis

Enduring Understanding: Structure and Functions of three branches of government reflect the Madisonian nature of our Constitution. The roles of the different branches have changed over time with bureaucracies playing a key role in implementing policy.

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

Practices one, three to five. Reasoning Processes: comprehension, application analysis, synthesis, evaluation

Key topic keyed to textbook chapters

* 1. Congress – chapter 12
  2. Presidency and Bureaucracy: chapter 13 and 15
  3. Courts: chapter 16
  4. Economic policymaking: chapter 14

**Unit 5: Topic 1: Congress (two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will consider the core concept of representation describing different kinds of representation (descriptive, partisan, delegate, trustee, etc.) and evaluating how well Congress represents America. Students will examine leading theories explaining congressional behavior. Students will be able to describe the core functions of Congress and how Congress is organized. They will evaluate proposals to reform Congress to improve its performance. Students will examine welfare policy as a case study to understand Congressional behavior.

Essential Knowledge

1. Length of term of office for each chamber
2. Number of voting members in each chamber
3. Minimum age requirements for Representatives and Senators
4. Incumbent
5. Constituent
6. Casework
7. bill
8. Pork (or pork-barrel politics)
9. Geographic Representation in the House: Census, Reapportionment, Redistricting
10. Redistricting
    1. Gerrymandering, partisan and racial
    2. *Shaw v. Reno*
11. Bicameral vs. unicameral legislature
12. House Rules Committee
13. Filibuster and cloture vote
14. Speaker of the House
15. Majority Leader of the Senate
16. whips
17. Names of current majority and minority leaders in Congress
18. President of the Senate
19. Kinds of committees: standing, conference, joint, select
20. Legislative oversight
21. Committee chairs
22. Seniority system
23. Congressional caucuses
24. Descriptive Representation
25. Representative Roles: Delegates, Trustee, Politico
26. Constitutional Representation
27. Partisan Representation
28. Seventeenth Amendment
29. Our representatives in Washington (look up by your zip code) and Senators Diane Feinstein and Kamala Harris
30. Procedures to remove President : simple majority to impeach (indictment stage) in House, 2/3rd conviction (trial stage) in Senate
31. Exclusive roles of the Senate: treaty ratification (two-thirds), confirmation of presidential appointments (judges and heads of bureaucracies)
32. Divided Government vs. Unified Government
33. Gridlock
34. Logrolling
35. Franking privilege
36. Explaining Motivations of Representatives: Rational Actor Model vs. Deliberative Model
37. Contributory social programs—Examples: Social Security, Medicare
38. Noncontributory social programs---Examples: Food Stamps, Medicaid (MediCal in CA),
39. Affordable Care Act

Essential Questions

1. Does Congress have to look like America to represent America well? Consider the multi-dimensional nature of representation as you make your argument.
2. Why are there so few women in Congress? What can be done about this?
3. What explains the high incumbency reelection rate? What, if anything, should be done about it?
4. What are the responsibilities of Congressmembers? What may explain the motivations of Congressmembers as they fulfill these responsibilities?
5. Considering Federalist 10 and 51, how does the organization of Congress reflect Madisonian philosophy? To answer this question, (a) review Federalist 10 and 51 and then (b) explain how the organization of Congress reflects Madison’s thinking.
6. What aspects of campaign finance do you like? What aspects do you dislike? Explain.
7. How do existing social programs regarding how to help people with basic needs and debates about current social issues reflect broader political and philosophical divisions in our society?

**Unit 5: Topic 2: Presidency and Bureaucracy (two weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will describe the changing role of the Presidency in the political system historically. They will analyze how the President wields power in the system, evaluating different theories explaining presidential success. They will evaluate what makes an effective President. Students will describe what bureaucracies do. They will describe how other branches seek to hold bureaucracies accountable.

Essential Knowledge

1. Twenty-Second Amendment
2. Constitutional requirements to be President
3. Constitutional defined powers and inherent powers (developed by precedent)
4. Line of succession if the President dies
5. Impeachment /Conviction of Presidency (details)
6. Watergate
7. Twenty-Fifth Amendment
8. The President’s Cabinet and Executive Departments
9. What a President can do when he receives a bill: sign, veto, pocket veto, let the bill become law after ten days
10. Presidential coattails
11. War Powers Resolution
12. Executive orders
13. Constitutional Requirements to become President
14. Election of the President: how the electoral college system works (270/538)
15. Bureaucracy
16. Implementation
17. Departments, and agencies
18. Oversight
19. Power of the purse
20. Review issue networks and iron triangles
21. Essential Questions
22. Identify five roles of the president and illustrate each one with examples from current or historical presidencies.
23. Compare the prerogative, stewardship, and literalist theories of presidential power. In your opinion, which one (or more than one) is the best philosophy for the president to have?
24. What kind of power should the President exercise to lead the nation? Summarize Neustadt’s theory and how he justifies the theory. Use examples from recent or historical presidencies.
25. What do bureaucracies do? What are the strengths and weaknesses of bureaucracies for government? How can elected branches of government hold bureaucracies accountable?

**Unit 5: Topic 3: The Courts (one week)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will review judicial procedure. They will describe the process by which a justice joins the Court. They will be able to describe some of the key characteristics of different historical Courts (Warren, Burger, Rehnquist, Roberts). They will review judicial philosophies, considering the appropriate kind of judicial review that the Court should exercise. They will examine how Congress and the President can exercise influence over the Court.

Connections to Civics Project: Debate on Judicial activism v. Restraint

Essential Knowledge

1. Standing to sue
2. *Amicus curiae* briefs
3. Original and appellate jurisdiction
4. District courts, appeals court, Supreme Court
5. Senatorial courtesy
6. *Stare decisis*
7. Precedent
8. Judicial restraint/activism

Essential Questions

1. How does a case get to the Supreme Court?
2. What factors explain how Supreme Court justices makes decisions?
3. Do you believe that the Supreme Court is an effective institution?

**Unit 5: Topic 4: Economic Policymaking: Fiscal and Monetary Policymaking (three to four weeks)**

Learning Objectives and Essential Knowledge

Students will be able to describe how the President and Congress make fiscal policy with the budget process. They will be able to describe, analyze and evaluate competing economic theories of *laissez-faire,* Keynesian, and supply-side economics. Students will be able to examine historical examples of these different policies in action. Students will also describe how the Federal Reserve System uses monetary policy to manage the economy. Students will participate in a stock market game to see how current events affects stock prices.

Essential Knowledge

1. Four economic systems: Traditional, Market, Command, and mixed
2. Business Cycle
3. Four Parts of Business Cycle: expansion, peak, contraction, trough
4. Inflation (Consumer Price Index)
5. Unemployment: different kinds- frictional, seasonal, structural, cyclical
6. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—know formula
7. Three economic philosophies, classical (*laissez-faire* economics, Keynesian, supply-side)
8. Keynesian policy
9. countercyclical policies—expansionary policy or contractionary policy
10. automatic and discretionary stabilizers
11. Supply Side Economics argument for tax cut—The Laffer Curve
12. Adam Smith/*The Wealth of Nations (1776)*“The Invisible Hand”
13. Federal Budget
14. a. revenues: kinds of taxes: progressive, regressive, proportional (flat)
    1. expenditures: mandatory vs. discretionary spending
    2. (annual) deficit
    3. Surplus (rarer than panda bears in Palmdale)
    4. federal debt (total amount owed to lenders, distinguish from deficit)
    5. budgetmaking process—Office of Management and Budget, House Ways and Means
15. Committee, Senate Finance Committee
16. Monetary Policy
17. Federal Reserve System organization
18. Monetary Policy tools—discount rate, open market operations, reserve requirement
19. Stock: common stock and preferred stock, shareholders
20. Bonds
21. Initial Public Offering (IPO)
22. Dividends
23. Stock Exchanges (NYSE, NASDAQ)
24. Market capitalization
25. Earnings per share
26. Price/earnings ratio
27. Stock Brokers (brokerages)
28. Bull and Bear Markets
29. Mutual Funds: different types of funds
30. NAV: Net Asset Value per share (like the price of a stock)

Essential Questions

1. Draw four parts of business cycle and describe what happens to three variables (GDP, inflation, unemployment) as the cycle progresses.
2. How is the economic output of a nation measured? (Formula for GDP and understand its parts)
3. Compare classical, Keynesian, and supply-side economic philosophies. Identify one economic policy position advocated by the current President or by a current presidential candidate as an illustration for one or more of these economic philosophies.
4. What are the three tools of monetary policy? Explain how each one can be used to expand or contract the economy. What bureaucracy manages monetary policy?
5. Identify the two tools of fiscal policy and what government should do (according to Keynes) with each one during a recession. Alternatively, what should be done when the economy is facing too rapid an expansion? What political problem emerges when following Keynes’s prescriptions? What two branches of government manage fiscal policy?
6. What factors influence the price of a publicly-traded stock of a company?