

AP United States Government & Politics

Syllabus

AP United States Government and Politics is a challenging course intended for students who wish to complete studies in high school equivalent to college introductory courses in U.S. Government. This semester long course focuses on the political theories that contributed to the creation of America's government, its' formal and informal structures, and the everyday practices that that shape our public policies. Through much reading and discussion the students will be able to recognize and criticize the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system and determine their role in that system.

Teaching Strategies

The course is divided between lecture, outside reading, and Socratic seminar. Students taking the course will be required to read extensively from the text, outside readings, newspapers/news magazines, as well as watch the daily news on television. Some part of each class is spent discussing current events and applying them to objectives in the text. In addition, there are reading quizzes, weekly tests, outside readings and summaries, vocabulary assignments, and various small projects.

AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam

The 2010 Advanced Placement Examination in US Government and Politics takes place on 3 May 2010 (Monday) in the morning. The examination has two parts. The objective question section consists of 60 questions, is 45 minutes long, and has a weight of one-half. The free-response section consists of four questions, is 100-minutes long, and has a weight of one-half. Based upon the recommendations of College Board, it is suggested that you spend approximately one-fourth of your time (25 min) on each question. In your response, use appropriate examples.

Grading

Your grade in this class will be determined by daily work / class participation, homework, tests, quizzes, the semester exam, and assigned projects.

Daily Work: Students begin each 9 weeks with a grade of 100. At least five points will be deducted for each assignment not attempted or completed, as well as those deemed unsatisfactory. (15%)

Homework: Students begin each 9 weeks with a grade of 100. At least five points will be deducted for each assignment not attempted or completed, as well as those deemed unsatisfactory. Current events assignments will also fall under this category during the semester. (15%)

Assessments: Tests and quizzes will consist of identification, multiple choice, short answer and/or essay questions. Tests will be announced, but quizzes may be unannounced. There may be periodic reading quizzes and projects to be assigned throughout the semester. **NOTE: There will be a test consisting of multiple-choice and at least one free response question at the conclusion of each unit.** (35%)

Semester Exam: During finals week, students will take a simulated AP US Government exam. (20%)

Tutoring / Preparation: Please do not hesitate to seek help if you are having trouble with the material covered. Come see me to schedule a time for tutoring. Also, be prepared for review sessions in the spring to help prepare for the AP exam.

Tardies & Absences: Please refer to your student handbook on school policies. It is the student's responsibility for work missed due to absences. A tardy, by general definition, is a person late upon arrival to the room after the bell has rang.

Readings:

The following is a list of reading requirements for this unit. The list is not absolute. Some readings may be omitted and others added during the semester.

Texts:

Required Text: Wilson, James Q., et al. American Government Institutions and Policies. 10th. Ed. Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006

***Other readings and materials will be used periodically during the semester from these and other sources such as the *New York Times*, *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and BBC News:

Supplemental Reader: Serow, Ann, ed. The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity. 4th. Ed. Baltimore: Lanahan Publishers, 2007.

Supplemental Reader: Woll, Peter, ed. American Government Readings and Cases. 17th. Ed. New York: Pearson & Longman, 2008

Additional readings and articles will be distributed throughout the academic year:

*** The following is a very basic outline of the topics and timetable in which they will be covered in class. Being as an outline, we will try to follow it as best as can be done. I also know that events happen within scheduling on a given day of high school and variations may occur in the pacing of the covered material which may impact the timely manner of the outline below. As a result, you should be prepared to get the specific reading assignments for each class. In addition to the textbook chapters listed here, you will be given handouts that will complement the material in the text.

Outline of Topics

Note: There will be a test consisting of multiple choice and at least one free-response question at the end of each unit.

Introduction

- Rules and expectations
- Explanation of AP Exam and Free Response Questions

Unit I: The Dilemmas of Modern Democracy (1 ½ weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based upon the following:

- The historical roles of government from divine right of kings through the Enlightenment period; including impact of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes
- Dilemmas of democracy: what should democracy value most?
- The differences of input and output democracy including advantages and disadvantages / Alexis deTocqueville analysis
- What does it mean to be conservative or liberal?
- What is a political ideology?
- Which model of democratic government best achieves the goals of the American people, majoritarian or pluralist democracy? Which does our country resemble the most?
- What attributes make American government exceptional?

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Chapter 1
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Dahl, Robert, "Who Governs? A Preface to Democratic Theory"
 - o De Tocqueville, Alexis, excerpt from Democracy in America
 - o Putnam, Robert, "Bowling Alone"
 - o Kammen, Michael, "People of Paradox"
- League of Women Voters: "Charting the Health of American Democracy"
- Locke, John: "Two Treatises on Government" (Handout)
- Reading summaries / Padeia Discussion(s)
- Quiz on Ch. 1
- Test over Ch. 1

Unit II: Constitutional Underpinnings of the United States Government (2 weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based upon the following:

- What features of the US Constitution have enabled it to endure for two centuries?
- What are its strengths and weaknesses?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?
- Explanation of the historical events surrounding the creation of the US Constitution.

- Why did Madison fear factions?
- How did the Federalist Papers influence the passage of the US Constitution?
- Explanation of the three main branches of government and their major powers.
- How does each branch of government check and balance each other?
- Advantages and Disadvantages of Separation of Powers.
- Differences between formal and informal powers.
- Process of proposing and passing an amendment.
- Major views of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists.
- The creation of the Bill of Rights.
- Provisions found within the 27 amendments.
- The evolution of Federalism over US political history.

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 2 and Ch. 3
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Hofstadter, Richard, "The American Political Tradition"
 - o Madison, James, "The Federalist #10", "The Federalist #51", "The Federalist #39", "The Federalist #46"
 - o United States v. Lopez
- Various outside reading assignments applicable to topic
- Jigsaw group assignment on Constitutional Convention
- Free Response essay writing on Constitution & Federalism issues
- Padeia discussions on Federalist Papers
- Short Quizzes over Ch. 2 and 3
- Test over Ch. 3 and 4

Videos / Video Clips

- *Federalism*: Teachers Video Company
- *Federalism*: 60 Minutes

Unit III: Political Beliefs, Behaviors and the Impact of Media on Politics (2 weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based on the following:

- What is the role of public opinion in a democracy?
- How do Americans develop their political beliefs?
- What are the differences between political ideologies and attitudes?
- Differences between conservatives, liberals, libertarians, socialists, and communists
- Impact of Party Identification on public opinion
- Agents of political socialization
- How do Americans participate in politics? Conventional & Un-Conventional
- Voter Turnout and trends
- How is political culture established and maintained?
- What is the role of media in the political process?
- What is the impact of media on public opinion, voter perceptions, campaigns, electoral process, agenda development, and image of candidates?
- The development of “the media” since early America
- Media bias and current issues of media and politics
- Hard news, soft news, and “infotainment”

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 4, 7, 8, 12
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Lippmann, Walter, from “The Phantom Public”
 - o Key, V.O. “Public Opinion and American Democracy”
 - o Piven, Frances Fox, from “Why Americans Still Don’t Vote”
 - o Sabato, “Feeding Frenzy”
- Padeia discussions on role of Public Opinion after readings from “Phantom Public” and “Public Opinion and American Democracy”
- Various outside reading assignments applicable to topic(s)
- Short Writing: Political memories
- Jigsaw Group Activity on Political Participation including implementation of the following Supreme Court Cases: Tinker v. Des Moines Independent County School

District, United States v. Eichman, Gregory v. Chicago, Madison v. Women's Health Services, Inc.

- Free Response Essay Writing on Impact of the Media on Politics
- Web Assignments: First Amendment Center, Vanderbilt University / Freedom House research on press freedom throughout the world
- Short Quizzes over Ch. 4, Ch. 7, Ch. 8, & Ch. 12
- Test over Ch. 4, 7, 8, & 12

Video / Video Clips

- *The Living Room Candidate: Presidential Campaign Commercials, 1952-2004*
- Clip from "All the President's Men" / examples of "feeding frenzy"
- Clips from "Oprah", "Montel Williams", "Inside Edition", & "CNN"

Unit IV: Political Parties, the Election Process and Interest Groups (2 weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based on the following:

- What role do political parties play in U.S. politics?
- How are the major parties internally structured?
- How did the party system evolve over U.S. history?
- The role of the third party in American politics
- The development of the primary system in U.S. elections
- What is Duverger's Law?
- How does the Electoral College work?
- How do different electoral systems affect outcomes and the number of parties represented?
- The impact of campaigns on elections, candidates, and the electorate
- Charting the course of a Presidential / Congressional campaign
- The components of campaign finance reform
- What role does interest groups play in American politics?
- Representation of interest groups
- The impact of lobbying on policy
- The impact of PAC's on the political process

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 9 - 10
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Broder, David, "The Party's Over"
 - o Black, Earl, "The Rise of Southern Republicans"
 - o Lowi, Theodore, "The End of Liberalism"
 - o Balz, Dan, "Storming the Gates"
 - o De Toqueville, from "Democracy in America"
- Various outside reading assignments related to topic(s)
- Jigsaw group assignment on Two Party System
- Free Response Writing on Political Parties and voter efficacy
- Paidea Discussion on Primary Elections
- Political Campaign Project: Students choose one of the political contests from 1932-2008 and host their own political campaign. Students will have to plan, research, and bring in materials to enhance their campaign experience as well as actively engage in the campaigning process.
- Interest Group Jigsaw Discussion: Students will research an interest group of choice and present policy ideas and information and represent the interest of their group in class discussion
- Short Quizzes over Ch. 9 & Ch. 10
- Test over Ch. 9 - 10

Video / Video Clips

- *Journeys With George* (excerpts)
- *The Democrats / The Republicans* : overview of party history since 1960
- Presidential Youtube Debate footage

Unit V: Congress (2 weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based on the following:

- How has Congress evolved over centuries?
- What is gerrymandering and how has it been used?
- What are the demographic backgrounds of members in Congress?
- What are the formal and informal powers of Congress? Of each house?
- How does Congress "check" the other branches?

- What are the advantages of incumbency?
- How do bills become laws?
- The role of committees in the lawmaking process and their functions
- What is the leadership structure of each house?
- The roles of Congressional members within each house
- What is the function and role of the Congressional Budget Office?

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 13
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Gertzog, Irwin, "Congressional Women"
 - o Ellwood, John, "In Praise of Pork"
- Various outside reading assignments related to topic(s)
- Map activities with gerrymandering issues
- Short Writing: Letters to Congress
- Padeia Discussion on "pork-barrel politics"
- Short Quiz over Ch. 13
- Test over Ch. 13

Video / Video Clips

- Burns, Ken. *The Congress*. PBS, 1989
- Clips from "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington"

Unit VI: The Presidency (2 weeks)

Lectures, discussion, and assignments based on the following:

- The advantages and disadvantages of a presidential system
- How does a presidential system compare with a parliamentary system?
- What are the formal and informal powers of the Executive Branch? Of the President?
- What powers are vested in the Presidency and which ones are shared with Congress?
- What are the different roles of the President?
- How is the executive office structured and what are its major departments?
- The roles of the White House Staff

- How does the Executive Branch “check” the other branches?
- Trends of Presidential power over history
- Presidential vetoes: How they are used and reforms
- Leadership styles of Presidents
- The implications of the War Powers Resolution (1973)

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 14
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Neustadt, Richard, “Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents”
 - o Schlesinger, Arthur, “The Imperial Presidency”
 - o Cronin, Thomas, “The Paradoxes of the American Presidency”
 - o Patterson, Bradley, “The White House Staff”
- Various outside readings related to the assigned topic(s)
- Padeia Discussion on Framers intent and design of the Presidency
- Jigsaw Group Assignment on the expansion of Presidential power
- Free Response Writing on War Powers Resolution
- Short Quiz over Ch. 14
- Test over Ch. 14

Video / Video Clips

- The American President
- Clips from “The West Wing”, NBC
- Clips from “Inside American Power”, series from National Geographic

Unit VII: The Courts (1 ½ weeks)

Lectures, Discussion, and Assignments based on the following:

- Structure of the Federal Judicial System and selection process of Justices
- The politics of nomination and confirmation of Supreme Court Justices
- The historical impact of the Supreme Court on American politics and society
- Why does the Supreme Court select certain cases over others?
- What are the different types of cases heard by the Supreme Court?

- Differences between appellate and original jurisdiction
- Major details and results of landmark Supreme Court cases (**see p.16**)
- What are the main viewpoints of the strict constructionists (original intent) and their opponents?
- What is judicial review? How has this power contributed to democratic reform?

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 16
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Hamilton, Alexander, "The Federalist 78"
 - o Irons, Peter, "Brennan vs. Rehnquist"
- Various outside readings related to the assigned topic(s)
- Padeia discussion on Federalist 78 concerning the debate between Federalists and anti-Federalists over judicial review
- Jigsaw Group Assignment: Students will choose a current controversial issue facing the courts in past years (flag burning, prayer in school, desegregation, gun control, etc...). Students will study cases involved, background, decision, and rationale. Group presentation to the class to close and leadership of discussion / emphasis on conflict between freedom, order, and equality.
- Research assignment on Supreme Court Justices "Liberal or Conservative?" / students will choose 1 Justice, find background information, recent decisions made, determine from case research if liberal or conservative and preferences to freedom over order, or equality over freedom. 5 paragraph essay with short presentation to the class.
- Test over Ch. 16

Video / Video Clips

- 60 Minutes, "Antonin Scalia Interview"
- Clips from "Just the Facts Series", Supreme Court

Unit VIII: The Bureaucracy (1 week)

Readings, Discussion, and Assignments based on the following:

- How are bureaucracies organized?
- What is the "iron triangle"?
- The major powers/functions of the Congressional Budget Office and Office of Management and Budget
- Why are civil service jobs based on merit rather than patronage?

- The Impact of the Pendleton Act of 1883
- How are executive orders used to control the bureaucracy?
- What are powers and limitations to bureaucracy?
- Are bureaucracies a necessity in American politics?

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 15
- Various outside readings related to assigned topic(s)
- Short Writing / Free Response over the growth of government at all levels over the 20th Century
- Student Survey and discussion on “bureau bashing”: Students will survey 5 people in their neighborhood on opinions about the U.S. bureaucracy. Students will compare findings with criticisms and data from the text
- Padeia Discussion: Federal Bureaucracy involvement in Katrina emergency
- Test over Ch. 15

Unit IX: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (1 ½ weeks)

Readings, Discussion, and Assignments based on the following:

- What is the difference between civil liberties and civil rights?
- The major provisions in Bill of Rights Amendments
- How is free speech curtailed or prevented?
- What is the difference in the 1st Amendment protections of the free exercise clause and establishment clause?
- Major provisions of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments
- What are the major details, results, and rulings of major Supreme Court cases dealing with civil liberties and civil rights (**see p.16**)
- What is the difference between slander and libel? Why are they not protected forms of speech?
- What groups are supposed to be under the protection of civil rights policy?
- What were the different methods used to restrict voting rights to African-Americans and women?
- How have discrimination issues affected gerrymandering?
- What is affirmative action?

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diulio, Ch. 5 - 6
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Lewis, Anthony, "Gideon's Trumpet"
 - o "Miranda v. Arizona"
 - o Kluger, Richard, "Simple Justice"
- Various outside readings related to assigned topic(s)
- Jigsaw Group Assignment: Groups research first, fourth, and fifth amendments with discussion on meaning, historical reference and setting, major cases involving the civil liberty,
- Short Writing / Free Response: Freedom of Speech
- Padeia Discussion: Freedom, order, equality... Which is America more aligned with today? Which do you align with the most?
- Short Quiz over Ch. 5
- Short Quiz over Ch. 6
- Test over Ch. 5 - 6

Video / Video Clips

- "Gideon's Trumpet"
- Clips from "Eyes on the Prize" PBS series

Unit X: Policy Making (2 weeks)

Readings, Discussion, and Assignments based on the following:

- The effect of policy
- Models of policymaking
- Who are the participants of policymaking?
- What are issue networks?
- What popular economic policies and theories have shaped American politics?
- Tax policy
- Spending policy
- How are the concepts of democracy and equality impacted by taxing and spending policies?
- The growth of the American welfare state

- Entitlement programs and social insurance
- America's growing role in a global community
- Constitutional bases for foreign policy roles among leaders

Readings, Assignments, and Projects:

- Wilson / Diluio, Ch. 17 - 21
- Lanahan Readings:
 - o Friedman, Milton, "Free to Choose"
 - o Harrington, Michael, "The Other America"
 - o Thompson, Tommy, "Power to the People"
- Various outside readings related to assigned topic(s)
- Creating a visual outlining the four categories of policy options adopted by governments
- Creating "Iron Triangles": Students will select issue of interest. Students will identify the powers at play concerning the issue and how the links form
- Jigsaw Group Discussion / Assignment: Four groups each assigned to different aspect of policymaking / Group 1- Does government promote pluralist or majoritarian democracy? Group 2- Which is more effective, issue networks or iron triangles? Group 3: How does fragmented government affect public policy? Group 4: What are "non-profits" and why are they important in policy making
- Jigsaw Group Assignment: Students will be allotted a \$1.7 trillion dollar budget. The students in each group will prioritize federal government needs for the next fiscal year. Students will assign rank and percentage to each item. Students will illustrate completed budget in pie chart / graph format.
- Padeia Discussion: Tax Reform and the Fair Tax
- Writing Assignment on Socialized Healthcare
- Global Assignment: In pairs, students will study the major global issues facing the world today, incorporating the following topics: trade, poverty, environment, and human rights.
- Short quizzes over Ch. 17, Ch. 18, Ch. 19, Ch. 20, Ch. 21
- Test over Ch. 17 - 21

Video / Video Clips

- Clips from "John Q"
- Clips from ABC News Series "Stossel in the Classroom"

AP Review

- Students will take practice exams, including AP and AP-style multiple and free-response questions

ONGOING PROJECT ASSIGNMENT (15%):

You must accumulate at least 50 points each 9 weeks...

Activity	Points Possible	Notes/Comments
Write a one-page (minimum) paraphrase/ critique of a scholarly journal or magazine	20 points/ One required per quarter	Examples of journals include: <i>Perspectives on American Politics</i> ; <i>21 Debated: Issues in American Politics</i> ; <i>Readings in American Government</i> ; <i>Classic Readings in American Politics</i> , <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> , <i>American Prospect</i> , <i>National Review</i> , <i>Harpers</i>
Get involved in an election campaign for at least 6 hours	25 points	Hand in signed completion form
Write a four page (minimum) analytical review of a political book	30points	See me first. Your report should highlight the main points of the book and explain why you agree or disagree with the author's opinions.
View a movie on a relevant political topic and write a political review	15 points	Your report should: 1. Discuss what political issues the film raises and what statement it makes about these issues 2. Discuss, what your reaction is to the film's statement. You could explore the accuracy of the film's facts or interpretations, and whether you agree with the message.
Attend lecture, public forum, city council meeting, school board, water board, party meeting.	20 points	Write a one-page report: 1. What was discussed 2. What did you notice about the proceedings and the processes of the meeting? The audience? The public officials present? 3. Was this democracy in action? Explain your answer
Interview a public official about his or her vision of public service and politics	40 points	See me first. You must: 1. Research the official's public stances

		<p>and career and produce a summary of it.</p> <p>2. Prepare a set of written questions you wish to ask the official, based on your research</p> <p>3. Prepare a two-page report on your findings</p>
View at least one hour of a Congressional hearing or debate on C-SPAN	15 points	<p>Get your parents to sign off on this.</p> <p>Write a 1 page report on what you saw and what you thought of it. Demonstrate your understanding of the relevance of the course materials to what you saw</p>

SUPREME COURT CASES

Case	Issue	Constitution Section
Baker v. Carr (1962)	Reapportionment; one-person, one-vote, equal protection	14 th
Benton v. Maryland (1969)	Right Against Double Jeopardy	5 th
Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969)	Freedom of Speech; overturned Schenck v. US	1 st
Brown v. Board of Education (1954)	Equal Protection; not separate but equal	14 th
Bush v. Gore (2000)	Fair counting of ballots; states' rights	10 th ; 14 th
Chaplinsky v. New Hampshire (1942)	Freedom of speech ("fighting words")	1 st
Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy R.R. v. Chicago (1897)	Eminent Domain	5 th
Dartmouth College v. Woodward (1819)	Obligation of Contracts	Contract Clause
Engel v. Vitale (1962)	Freedom of Religion (establishment clause)	1 st
Escobedo v. Illinois (1964)	Right to be Informed of Rights, an Attorney, Remain Silent	5 th
Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)	Interstate Commerce	Commerce Clause
Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)	Right to Counsel in Any Criminal Case	6 th
Gitlow v. New York (1925)	Freedom of Speech	1 st
Hauge v. CIO (1939)	Freedom of the Press	1 st
Korematsu v. United States (1944)	Japanese-American internment ("emergency and peril"), Due Process	5 th
Lawrence v. Texas (2003)	Homosexuality; Right to Privacy	4 th ; 14 th
Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)	Freedom of Religion (Establishment Clause)	1 st
Malloy v. Hogan (1964)	Right Against Self-Incrimination and Forced Confessions	5 th
Mapp v. Ohio (1961)	Illegal Search and Seizure	4 th ; 14 th
Marbury v. Madison	Judicial Review	Articles 3, 6
McCulloch v. Maryland	National Bank	Supremacy Clause
Miranda v. Arizona (1966)	Right to Counsel and Remain Silent	6 th
Near v. Minnesota (1925)	Freedom of Speech	1 st
New Jersey v. T.L.O. (1985)	Lawful search on seizure on school grounds; loco parentis	4 th ; 14 th
Muller v. Oregon (1908)	Liberty to Contract; Brandies Brief (including non-legal issues)	14 th
New York Times Co. v. Sullivan (1964)	Freedom of the Press and Libel	1 st
New York Times v. United States (1971)	Freedom of the Press; Prior restraint; national security	1 st
Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)	Separate but Equal; Equal Protection	14 th
Palko v. Connecticut 1937)	Double Jeopardy and Due Process	3 rd and 5 th
Roe v. Wade; Doe v. Bolton (1973)	Right of Privacy	4 th ; -5 th
Schenck v. United States (1919)	Clear and Present Danger and Speech	1 st
Scott v. Sanford (1857)	Justified slavery; overturned Missouri Compromise	5 th
Shaw v. Reno (1993)	Gerrymandering; majority minority districts	14 th ; Voting Rights Act
Sweatt v. Painter (1950)	Equal Protection; not Separate but Equal	14 th
Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)	Freedom of Speech	1 st
University of California Regents v. Bakke (1978)	Affirmative Action and Equal Protection	14 th

