

Name of Course: Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics

Course Overview:

This college-level course will introduce students to key political concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the constitutional system and political culture of the United States. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behavior. They also will engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments. In addition they will complete a political science research or applied civics project.

Unit of Study	Essential Question(s)	Content/Skill/Concept	Instructional Strategies
American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	- How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time? - How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?	<u>Methods of Political Analysis:</u> Using various types of analyses, political scientists measure how U.S. political behavior, attitudes, ideologies, and institutions are shaped by a number of factors over time. - Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change (MPA 1) - Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions (MPA 2)	- Think, pair, share - Group process and presentation - Class document for notes--stated by students, transcribed by teacher - Class analysis of theories, analyses, and opinions - Group investigation of terms and concepts from textbook, enhanced by Internet research when necessary - Class definition of key terms and explication through examples - Class analysis of data tables and graphs - Group (usually class divided into three or four groups) discussion of theories, analyses, or opinion pieces led by student with report

		<u>Competing Policy-Making Interests:</u> Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies (PMI 4)	back to whole class - Student group creation of charts to highlight policy beliefs of different ideologies. - Class creation of timeline highlighting social welfare programs and economic approaches
Political Participation	- How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior? - Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary - How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policy?	<u>Methods of Political Analysis:</u> Using various types of analyses, political scientists measure how U.S. political behavior, attitudes, ideologies, and institutions are shaped by a number of factors over time. - Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation (MPA 3) <u>Competing Policy-Making Interests:</u> Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies - Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate	- Think, pair, share - Group process and presentation - Class document for notes--stated by students, transcribed by teacher - Pair creation of comparison/contrast charts showing characteristics of those most and least likely to participate in politics - Group creation of charts outlining functions of political parties - Class definition of key terms and explication through examples and examinations of diagrams and graphs. - Group (usually class divided into three or four groups) discussion of theories, analyses, or opinion pieces led by student with report back to whole class

		to government and policy-makers (PMI 5) <u>Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy</u>: Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate • The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum (PRD 2) • The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically (PRD 3)	• Group outlining of key campaign finance rules and their sources • Group identification of the key coalitions a hypothetical presidential candidate will need to attract and explanation of other key decisions this candidate will need to make.
Foundations of American Democracy	• How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety?	<u>Liberty and Order</u>: Governmental laws and policies balancing order and liberty are based on the U.S. Constitution and have been interpreted differently over time.	• Think, pair, share • Group process and presentation • Class document for notes--stated by students, transcribed by teacher • Group (usually class divided into three or four groups) discussion

	• How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system? • How does the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.?	• A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development (LOR 1) <u>Constitutionalism</u>: The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances among branches of government and allocates power between federal and state governments. This system is based on the rule of law and the balance majority rule and minority rights. • The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government. (CON 1) • Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments (CON 2) <u>Competing Policy-Making Interests</u>: Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies • The Constitution created a competitive policy-making	of theories, analyses, or opinion pieces led by student with report back to whole class • Working in groups, students will identify the key elements of the amendment process, electoral college, and proposed revisions to the Constitution and will explain how these reflect the three models of democracy and unresolved issues connected to the compromises that created the Constitution. ➤ Working in groups, students will identify key elements of the PATRIOT Act and the USA Freedom Act, arguments for and against their main provisions, and how those arguments reflect larger constitutional issues. They will then participate in a carousel, specifying and elaborating on their findings. ➤ Each of three groups will prepare a brief presentation on <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i>, <i>Gibbons</i>
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		process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved (PMI 1)	v. Ogden, and U.S. v. Lopez, highlighting background events, arguments of each side, Supreme Court decision, parts of the Constitution (including amendments) used to make decision, lasting effect on power of national government and federal-state relations Teacher will model presentation of a brief on a Supreme Court decision (an assignment that each student will complete at some point during the course) and will ask questions of the students
Interactions Among Branches of Government	- How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern? - To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national	<u>Constitutionalism</u>: The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances among branches of government and allocates power between federal and state governments. This system is based on the rule of law and the balance majority rule and minority rights. The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure	- Think, pair, share - Group process and presentation - Class document for notes--stated by students, transcribed by teacher - Group (usually class divided into three or four groups) discussion of theories, analyses, or opinion pieces led by student with report back to whole class

	government is in the 21st century?	and operation of the legislative branch (CON 3). • The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers (CON 4). • The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice (CON 5). <u>Competing Policy-Making Interests:</u> Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies • The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability (PMI 2).	• Student-led "fishbowl" discussions of the two anthology excerpts, focusing on what members do to stay elected and how they view their representational duties. • Group charting of how legislation in a particular subject area or part of the budget will work through the process of becoming law given certain conditions (divided government, closely-divided Senate, etc.) and presentation of those charts. • Pair identification of the key constitutional principles and arguments in <i>Baker v. Carr</i> and <i>Shaw v. Reno</i> • Group identification of key factors that shape a president's policy agenda. Each group will research a major policy initiative pursued by a recent president and identify the factors that affected the development and adoption of this policy and will present to the class. • Pair identification of pathologies
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			in the bureaucracy, their causes, and proposals to reduce their negative impact
Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	• To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination? • How have U.S. Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?	<u>Liberty and Order</u>: Governmental laws and policies balancing order and liberty are based on the U.S. Constitution and have been interpreted differently over time. • Provisions of the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals (LOR-2). • Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties (LOR-3). <u>Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy</u>: Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and	• Think, pair, share • Class document for notes--stated by students, transcribed by teacher • Socratic seminar discussion on "Should More Gun Control Laws Be Enacted?" • Socratic seminar highlighting the key elements of the decision <i>New York v. Quarles</i> and debating the decision in that case and the other subsequent cases mentioned in the article by Carl Benoit, JD, "The Public Safety Exception to Miranda," located in the Legal Digest on the FBI website (2011) • Socratic seminar on "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

		policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate. • The Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality (PRD-1). <u>Competing Policy-Making Interests:</u> Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies • Public policy promoting civil rights is influenced by citizen–state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time (PMI-3). <u>Constitutionalism:</u> The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances among branches of government and allocates power between federal and state governments. This system is based on the rule of law and the balance majority rule and minority rights. • The Supreme Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the	
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		composition of the Court and citizen–state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them (CON-6)	
Political Research or Applied Civics Project	How can students engage in a sustained, real-world activity that will deepen their understanding of course content ?	<u>Competing Policy-Making Interests:</u> Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies - Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies (PMI 4) - Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers (PMI 5) <u>Methods of Political Analysis:</u> Using various types of analyses, political scientists measure how U.S. political behavior, attitudes, ideologies, and institutions are shaped by a number of factors over time.	Working individually, in pairs, or in groups of three, students will conduct research and create a product that will be exhibited in a Civic Connection Fair, attended by students enrolled in the course for next year, as well as by other school and community members.

		• Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change (MPA 1) <u>Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy:</u> Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate • The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum (PRD 2) • The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically (PRD 3) <u>Constitutionalism:</u> The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances among branches of government and allocates power between federal and	
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