

AP Government Syllabus

Course Description

AP® U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level course that not only seeks to prepare students for success on the AP Exam in May, but also provides students with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that are currently shaping American politics and society. It is important to note that this course is not a history course; it is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system as well as the behaviors and attitudes that shape this system and are the byproduct of this system. AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices by using a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, students will be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well-reasoned, thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

Textbook

- Advanced Placement United States Government & Politics, 3rd Edition (*Wolfford*)

The AP Exam Date : Tuesday, May 5th, 2026

The AP Exam Format

Section	# of Questions	Timing	Percent of Total Exam Score
I. Multiple Choice	55	1 hour, 20 minutes	50%
II. Free Response	4 mandatory	1 hour, 40 minutes	50%
Concept Application		20 minutes	12.5%
Quantitative Analysis		20 minutes	12.5%
SCOTUS Comparison		20 minutes	12.5%
Argument Essay		40 minutes	12.5%

The AP Exam Content Breakdown

Unit	Unit Title	% of Exam	# of Questions
1	Foundations	15–22%	8–12
2	Branches	25–36%	14–22
3	Civil	13–18%	7–10
4	Beliefs	10–15%	5–8
5	Participation	20–27%	11–15
Total		100%	55

Required Foundational Documents

1. [The Declaration of Independence](#)
2. [The Articles of Confederation](#)
3. [The Constitution of the United States](#) (Bill of Rights & Amendments)
4. [Federalist No. 10](#)
5. [Federalist 51](#)
6. [Federalism No. 70](#)
7. [Federalist No. 78](#)
8. [Brutus No. 1](#)
9. [Letter from Birmingham Jail](#)

Required Supreme Court Cases

1. [Marbury v. Madison, 1803*](#)
2. [McCulloch v. Maryland, 1819*](#)
3. [Brown v. Board of Education, 1954*](#)
4. [Gideon v. Wainwright, 1963*](#)
5. [Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 1969*](#)
6. [United States v. Lopez, 1995*](#)
7. [Baker v. Carr, 1961*](#)
8. [Engel v. Vitale, 1962*](#)
9. [New York Times Company v. U.S., 1971*](#)
10. [Schenck v. United States, 1919*](#)
11. [McDonald v. Chicago, 2010*](#)
12. [Shaw v. Reno, 1993*](#)
13. [Wisconsin v. Yoder, 1972*](#)
14. [Citizens United v Federal Election Commission \(FEC\), 2010*](#)

Examples of paired cases for comparison include but are not limited to:

- Gonzales v. Raich (2005) to go along with the analysis of McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
- Heart of Atlanta Motels v. United States (1964) to go along with the analysis of United States v. Lopez (1995)
- Zelman v. Simmons-Harris (2002) to go along with the analysis of Engel v. Vitale (1962)
- Morse v. Frederick (2007) to go along with the analysis of Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)

PUHSD Government ELO's

#1: Principles of Democracy and the Constitution

#2: Protection of Rights of Liberties

#3: Participation in the Political Process

#4: Branches of Government

Materials Needed:

- Index Cards (5-7 packs)
- College ruled paper
- 1 inch binder
- Dividers (1 pack)
- Pens & Pencils
- 1 color ink pen (NOT blue or black)
- Highlighters

Assessment Components:

- Students' daily grades will be based on homework; in-class assignments; participation; preparedness; quizzes and group work. Class grades will include test grades, projects, and essays.
- Your Unit Test will not be graded until your vocabulary note cards have been turned in*. Vocabulary notecards are due on the test day of each unit.
- No grade will count more than 15% of the total nine-week grade; grades will be as follows: Summative (80%) and Formative (20%)

AI Statement:

- Students should not submit AI-generated work as their original work. If AI is allowable for an assignment, you must properly cite or acknowledge its use.

Google Classroom/AP Classroom:

STRIVE | **INVITE** | **SERVE** | **RESPECT** | **CELEBRATE**

- Google Classroom is used for 90% of all assignments and AP Classroom is used for tests throughout this course. If the student misses class on test day, they are not allowed to take them at home.* A history teacher or designee must proctor all tests at school.* Google Classroom is used for projects, assignments, and notifications. Students are expected to complete all assigned work in its designated format.

Policies & Procedures

Conduct Code and Expectations

- Each of you are now Seniors and I expect you to behave as such. This class will be run on a system of mutual respect from both the teacher and the student. Disrespect will not be tolerated in this class. Rude comments or outbursts directed at others will not be tolerated.

Classroom Rules

1. Be prepared for class every period; have writing utensils, paper, binder, Chromebook, and other necessary materials.
2. No talking while the teacher is talking.
3. Respect the opinions and viewpoints of others by refraining from talking, jeering, or otherwise commenting while said person presents their views.
4. Complete all work as it is assigned.
5. All work is to be turned in on the day it is due. Otherwise, the assignment(s) will be subjected to points deducted.
6. The student only, will complete ALL work. Cheating will **NOT** be tolerated.
7. NO cellphone usage in class unless directed by the teacher. [Cell phone policy](#)
8. NO airpods, wireless headphones, or any other listening devices allowed unless directed by the teacher.
9. NO food or drinks other than water allowed in class.
10. See other rules from the [Student Handbook](#).

Class Work

- All work must be completed for a grade in the class. As stated in rule number 5, all work must be turned in on time. Work not turned in due to absence is the responsibility of the student and can lose credit if not turned in within the required make-up period. Group projects will happen throughout the school year. Some will require the student(s) to be at school certain days or an alternative assignment will be given.

Discipline

- First Offense - Discussion with the teacher about the inappropriate behavior.
- Second Offense - Teacher directed discipline.
- Third Offense - Parental/Guardian contact.
- Fourth Offense - Referral to the grade level administrator.

*See [Student Handbook](#) for reference to Tardy, Attendance, Dress and other School policies.

***Families and Students, after reading the Syllabus together, please go online and fill out this form:**
[Syllabus Acknowledgement Form](#)

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