



Greenwich Public Schools Curriculum Overview

AP Comparative Government and Politics

Personalized learning is achieved through standards-based, rigorous and relevant curriculum that is aligned to digital tools and resources.

Note: Teachers retain professional discretion in how the learning is presented based on the needs and interests of their students.

Course Description

As outlined by College Board:” AP Comparative Government and Politics introduces students to the rich diversity of political life outside the United States. The course uses a comparative approach to examine the political structures; policies; and political, economic, and social challenges of six selected countries: China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Students compare the effectiveness of approaches to many global issues by examining how different governments solve similar problems. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments.”

Unit Pacing Guide

- Unit I: Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments (approx. 2-3 Weeks)
- Unit II: Political Institutions (approx. 2-3 Weeks)
- Unit III: Political Culture and Participation (approx. 2-3 Weeks)
- Unit IV: Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations (approx. 2-3 Weeks)
- Unit V: Political and Economic Changes and Development (approx. 2-3 Weeks)

Enduring Understandings for the Course

BIG IDEA 1: POWER AND AUTHORITY (PAU)

- Political systems and regimes govern societies and determine who has power and authority. They shape the level of legitimacy and produce different policy outcomes.

BIG IDEA 2: LEGITIMACY AND STABILITY (LEG)

- Political legitimacy is the degree to which a government’s right to rule is accepted by the citizenry. Governments that maintain high levels of legitimacy tend to be more stable and have an easier time enacting, implementing, and enforcing their policies.

BIG IDEA 3: DEMOCRATIZATION (DEM)

- Democratization is a process that involves the adoption of free and fair elections, the extension of civil liberties, and the establishment of the rule of law. Democratization is a long-term and often uneven process that typically results in increased governmental transparency and greater citizen access and influence over policy making.

BIG IDEA 4: INTERNAL/EXTERNAL FORCES (IEF)

- Internal forces, such as political culture, citizen participation, civil society, interest groups, environmental pressures, and internal divisions based on class, religion, ethnicity, and/or territory, can both challenge and reinforce regimes. External forces, especially globalization, include the increasing worldwide flow of goods, investments, ideas, and people in a manner that is largely unconstrained by national borders.

BIG IDEA 5: METHODS OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS (MPA)

- Political scientists collect data and make observations in order to describe patterns and trends and explain the political behavior of individuals, groups, organizations, and governments. They use data and ideas from other disciplines such as economics, sociology, history, and geography when drawing conclusions.

Enduring Understandings By Unit

- **Unit I: Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments**

Students will understand that...

- a. Empirical data is important in identifying and explaining political behavior of individuals and groups
- b. Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.
- c. Distribution of power and authority and the influence of internal and external actors affect regime stability
- d. Political legitimacy reinforces the sovereignty of the state.

- **Unit II: Political Institutions**

Students will understand that...

- a. Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.

- **Unit III: Political Culture and Participation**

Students will understand that...

- a. Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.
- b. The way a regime uses power and authority to support or suppress its citizens establishes a balance between order and individual liberty.
- c. How governments respond to social and political divisions affects interactions between citizens and long-term regime stability

- **Unit IV: Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations**

Students will understand that...

- a. The rules of electoral systems reflect party and legislative control and level of democratization.
- b. The power, influence, and strength of political parties and the degree of competition between parties reflect the values of the regime or type of government.

- c. Strong and varied citizen organizations and movements foster and are reinforced by democratization.
- **Unit V: Political and Economic Changes and Development**
Students will understand that...
 - a. Economic globalization and economic liberalization have positively and negatively affected political policies and behaviors.
 - b. A government bolsters regime stability by adapting its policies to environmental, political, economic, and cultural conditions.
 - c. Demographic changes have political causes and consequences, and they can present challenges to a government's legitimacy.
 - d. Natural resource endowments can have positive and negative effects on political stability and economic development.

Standards

Connecticut Core Standards

Adopted in 2010 | English Language Arts Standards, History/Social Studies, Grade 11-12 at <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/11-12/>

Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks

Adopted in February 2015 | Pages 101 through 110 at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Social-Studies/ssframeworks.pdf>

DIMENSION 1: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRY

- INQ 9–12.1 Explain how a question reflects an enduring issue in the field.
- INQ 9–12.2 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.
- INQ 9–12.3 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.
- INQ 9–12.4 Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge.
- INQ 9–12.5 Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources.

DIMENSION 2: APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

(See below, beginning with “Civic and Political Institutions”)

DIMENSION 3: EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

- INQ 9–12.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

- INQ 9–12.7 Evaluate the credibility of a source by examining how experts value the sources.
- INQ 9–12.8 Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantially from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.
- INQ 9–12.9 Refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.

DIMENSION 4: COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

- INQ 9–12.10 Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.
- INQ 9–12.11 Construct explanations using sound reasoning, correct sequence (linear or non-linear), examples, and details with significant and pertinent information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanation given its purpose (e.g., cause and effect, chronological, procedural, technical)
- INQ 9–12.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- INQ 9–12.13 Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.
- INQ 9–12.14 Critique the use of the reasoning, sequencing, and supporting details of explanations.
- INQ 9–12.15 Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.
- INQ 9–12.16 Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning.
- INQ 9–12.17 Apply a range of deliberative and democratic strategies and procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms, schools, and out-of-school civic contexts.

(applicable DIMENSION 2 main concepts are listed below)

Civics and Government: Civics

Civic and Political Institutions

- CIV 9–12.3 Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.
- CIV 9–12.5 Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

- CIV 9–12.6 Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets.

Participation and Deliberation: Applying Civic Virtues and Democratic Principles

- CIV 9–12.7 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.
- CIV 9–12.8 Evaluate social and political systems in different contexts, times, and places that promote civic virtues and enact democratic principles.
- CIV 9–12.9 Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.
- CIV 9–12.10 Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

Processes, Rules, and Laws

- CIV 9–12.12 Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.
- CIV 9–12.13 Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.
- CIV 9–12.14 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

Perspectives

- HIST 9–12.1 Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.

Modern World History: History

Change, Continuity, and Context

- HIST 9–12.1 Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- HIST 9–12.2 Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
- HIST 9–12.3 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

Perspectives

- HIST 9–12.4 Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- HIST 9–12.5 Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.

Causation and Argumentation

- HIST 9–12.14 Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.
- HIST 9–12.15 Distinguish between long-term causes and triggering events in developing a historical argument.
- HIST 9–12.16 Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

- HIST 9–12.17 Critique the central arguments in secondary works of history on related topics in multiple media in terms of their historical accuracy.

Global Interconnections: Changing Spatial Patterns

- GEO 9–12.6 Evaluate the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics of specific places and regions.
- GEO 9–12.8 Evaluate the consequences of human-made and natural catastrophes on global trade, politics, and human migration.

Economics

Economic Decision-Making

- ECO 9–12.1 Analyze how incentives influence choices that may result in policies with a range of costs and benefits for different groups.

Exchange and Markets

- ECO 9–12.2 Generate possible explanations for a government role in markets when market inefficiencies exist.
- ECO 9–12.3 Describe the roles of institutions such as clearly defined property rights and the rule of law in a market economy.

Geography

Human Population: Spatial Patterns and Movements

- GEO 9–12.1 Evaluate the impact of economic activities and political decisions on spatial patterns within and among urban, suburban, and rural regions.

Greenwich Public Schools Vision of the Graduate

- Pose and pursue substantive questions
 - Students will develop and explore their own research question during a variety of research assignments
- Critically interpret, evaluate, and synthesize information
 - Students will critically interpret, evaluate and synthesize information by analyzing a variety of primary and secondary sources and by conducting research. This source evaluation and research will allow students to gain a variety of perspectives.
- Explore, define, and solve complex problems
 - Students will apply historical knowledge to critically analyze current problems and issues.
- Communicate effectively for a given purpose
 - Students will be evaluated on their ability to communicate effectively through a variety of methods. Through persuasive writing assignments, class discussions and presentations, students will continue to develop and improve their communication skills.
- Advocate for ideas, causes and actions
 - Students will evaluate past advocacy successes and failures and determine when others have chosen to fight for causes and taken action.
- Generate innovative, creative ideas and products
 - Students will demonstrate their mastery of curriculum objectives with innovative projects. Students will explore answers to essential questions through creative and varied assignments with research structured by the use of GPS research process.
- Collaborate with others to produce a unified work and/or heightened understanding
 - Students will learn to collaborate with one another while working in structured groups in a variety of cooperative learning activities in order to create a final product.
- Contribute to community through dialogue, service, and/or leadership
 - Through the study of community outreach, students gain the skills they need to become active citizens. The community service project will give students the opportunity to contribute to the community.
- Conduct themselves in an ethical and responsible manner
 - Current and historical situations will be analyzed so students gain perspective and information in order to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.
- Recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view
 - Through teaching about others' political ideologies, students will recognize and respect other cultural contexts and points of view. By developing an understanding of and empathy for others, students will appreciate differences and similarities between themselves and others.
- Pursue their unique interests, passions and curiosities
 - Students will have choice in many assignments and will be able to pursue their interests, specifically through the Capstone Community Service Project.

- Respond to failures and successes with reflection and resilience
 - Students will reflect on their writing and group work, in order to analyze what they did well and where they can improve. Frequent and constructive feedback by teachers will be used to ensure continuous reflection and refinement.
- Be responsible for their own mental and physical health
 - Social studies classes will help students develop study skills, and reduce stress through organization and planning.

Required Textbook: Kesselman, *Introduction to Comparative Politics-AP Edition*

Recommended Resources:

- [“What Democracy is and is not”](#)
- Fukuyama and Huntington
- Freedom House
- Failed States Index
- Transparency International
- The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index
- The Economist/Washington Post/NYT/Wall Street Journal/BBC News
- Current Events and Public Opinion: Pew Research Center, Gallup, Washington Post, New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, Fox News, CNN News, Associated Press, National Public Radio (NPR), USA Today, Reuters, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), etc.
- Greenwich Community Information: Greenwich Time, Greenwich Sentinel, Greenwich Free Press, Greenwich Public Schools website