

AP Comparative Government Overview Curriculum Document

Course Description

The course framework within this course and exam description is a model of political and ideological balance. It will not only help students understand the U.S. Constitution and the political system but will also help them become informed citizens who are willing to preserve, protect, and defend the rights and liberties at the core of our nation’s charter. That is why we are delighted to partner with College Board on a series of classroom lessons and materials that support instruction in AP U.S. Government and Politics and help bring balanced constitutional content to students across America.

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.

Credits

1.0

Prerequisites

None

Board Approved

June 2006

Revised

October 2013, June 2023

Required Assessments

District-wide, standards-based common summative assessments, instructor created topic based assessments

Textbooks/Resources

American Government: Power and Purpose by Theodore J. Lowi, Ginsberg, Shepsle, Ansolabehere (13th Edition)
Essential of Comparative Politics with Cases by Patrick H. O’Neil (6th Edition)

Course Essential Understandings

- As a result of successfully completing this course, students will...
- Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors
 - Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.
 - Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a nonrequired Supreme Court case.
 - Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors
 - Explain how the implications of the author’s argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behavior.
 - Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.
 - Support the argument using relevant evidence.
 - Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis
 - Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Course Essential Questions

- How does the U.S. Constitution and the political system create a society of informed citizens who are willing to preserve, protect, and defend the rights and liberties at the core of our nation’s charter?
- How do different political regimes approach global issues to solve similar problems?

Unit Overviews

Unit Name	Unit Description	Unit Essential Question	Instructional Standards	Assessed Standards
Unit #1 (AP US Government CED 1-3)	Foundations of American Democracy, Branches of Government & Civil Rights 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 between majority rule and minority rights. Governmental laws and policies balancing order and liberty are based on the U.S. Constitution and have been interpreted differently over time. Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate.	Why are there debates about the balance of power between the federal and state governments? Is the Bill of Rights necessary? Why or why not? Are there really checks and balances when one political party controls all three branches of government? Why or why not? In what ways has the evolution of government powers affected Americans and their daily lives? How can individuals and groups help protect civil liberties and civil rights? Why have Supreme Court decisions about civil liberties and civil rights changed over time?	AP US Government Topics 1.1 - 3.13 Stating a Claim (SS.Inq3.a.h.) Argumentation (SS.Inq3.c.h) Evaluating sources (SS.Inq2.b.h) Data Analysis (SS.Inq2.a.h) Supreme Court Analysis Political Concept Application (WI State Standards SS.PS1& SS.PS2)	AP Comparative Rubrics
Unit #2 (AP US Government CED 4-5)	American Political Ideologies & Political Participation Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies. Using various types of analyses,	How do our core beliefs about the role of the government affect our behavior? Why are some opinion polls better than others?	AP US Government Topics 4.1 - 5.13 Stating a Claim	AP Comparative Rubrics

	<p>political scientists measure how U.S. political behavior, attitudes, ideologies, and institutions are shaped by a number of factors over time.</p>	<p>How can policy-makers use information from political science to make decisions? Why do some people choose to participate in government while others do not?</p> <p>How does your social network affect your political beliefs?</p> <p>Why might you join a political party? Why might you choose not to?</p> <p>How does who you are affect whether you participate or not?</p>	<p>(SS.Inq3.a.h.)</p> <p>Argumentation (SS.Inq3.c.h)</p> <p>Evaluating sources (SS.Inq2.b.h)</p> <p>Data Analysis (SS.Inq2.a.h)</p> <p>Supreme Court Analysis</p> <p>Political Concept Application (WI State Standards SS.PS3 & SS.PS4)</p>	
<p>Unit #3 (AP Comparative Gov CED 1-2)</p>	<p>Political Systems, Regimes & Political Institutions</p> <p>Political systems and regimes govern societies and determine who has power and authority. They shape the level of legitimacy and produce different policy outcomes. 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.</p>	<p>How do people both inside and outside the government impact the relationship between the government and its citizens?</p> <p>How does the perceived legitimacy of a government by its citizenry impact how other countries see it?</p> <p>How do comparative political scientists generate meaningful conclusions that can be applied to other countries?</p> <p>What are the implications of cooperation and conflict within a country's political system in response to a controversial cleavage?</p> <p>Why might a country discourage participation? Encourage?</p> <p>How does regime type impact the function of civil society in a country?</p>	<p>AP Comparative Government Topics 1.1 - 2.9</p> <p>Stating a Claim (SS.Inq3.a.h.)</p> <p>Argumentation (SS.Inq3.c.h)</p> <p>Evaluating sources (SS.Inq2.b.h)</p> <p>Data Analysis (SS.Inq2.a.h)</p> <p>Country Comparison</p> <p>Political Concept Application (WI State Standards SS.PS3 & SS.PS4)</p>	<p>AP Comparative Rubrics</p>
<p>Unit #4 (AP Comparative Gov CED 3-5)</p>	<p>Political Culture & Participation</p> <p>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. 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. 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.</p>	<p>How do different electoral systems encourage or discourage citizen influence?</p> <p>Why are election rules different for different regimes?</p> <p>Why would an authoritarian regime open up political access to interest groups and citizen organizations?</p> <p>Why would a democratic regime restrict political access to interest groups and citizen organizations?</p> <p>Why do governments change policies in the face of public pressure?</p> <p>How does this impact the balance of power between the citizens and the government?</p>	<p>AP Comparative Government Topics 3.1 - 5.9</p> <p>Stating a Claim (SS.Inq3.a.h.)</p> <p>Argumentation (SS.Inq3.c.h)</p> <p>Evaluating sources (SS.Inq2.b.h)</p> <p>Data Analysis (SS.Inq2.a.h)</p> <p>Country Comparison</p> <p>Political Concept Application (WI State Standards SS.PS3 & SS.PS4)</p>	<p>AP Comparative Rubrics</p>