

FOLSOM CORDOVA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

AP US Government and Politics

Date: December 2016
Proposed Grade Level(s): 12th
Grading: A-F
CTE Sector / Pathway: N/A

Course Length: One Semester
Subject Area: Social Science
Credits: 5 per Semester
Articulation Units: N/A

Prerequisite(s): Recommended “B” or higher in previous Social Science course.

Intent to Pursue ‘A-G’ College Prep Status: Yes

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

AP US Government and Politics will give students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. It is designed to prepare students for participatory citizenship as well as to successfully complete the Advanced Placement Examination in US Government and Politics. Students will study important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to US government and politics, interpret relevant data, analyze political processes and behaviors, and apply theories and concepts appropriately.

GENERAL GOALS/ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

AP US Government and Politics aims to allow students to gain an in-depth understanding of the workings of our nation’s government, its foundational theories and concepts, and the role of people and differing perspectives in the political process.

According to The College Board, students in this course will be able to:

- Show knowledge of facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to US government and politics.
- Explain typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences.
- Interpret basic data relevant to US government and politics.
- critically analyze relevant theories and concepts, apply them appropriately, and develop their connections across the curriculum

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARD READING COMPONENT:

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.
6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.
9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

10. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARD WRITING COMPONENT:

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
9. Draw evidence from literary and/or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

10. Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARD SPEAKING AND LISTENING COMPONENTS:

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

DETAILED UNITS OF INSTRUCTION:

I. Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government

This unit accounts for 5-15% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students study the foundational principles of the US governmental system. Through the lens of historical context, students gain an awareness of the ideological and philosophical traditions that influenced the structure of the US government. Students gain a deep understanding of federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances and explore issues of concern to the founding fathers.

II. Political Beliefs and Behaviors

This unit accounts for 10-20% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students explore the various factors that help to influence why people hold the political views they do, and how those views differ between individuals and groups. Students analyze the role different societal institutions, such as schools, media, and families, play in developing and perpetuating political identity. Students also gain an understanding of the varying ways in which people participate in the political process including voting, protest, and mass movements.

III. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media

This unit accounts for 10-20% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students undertake a study of the history and influence of political parties as well as their current role in the election process. Students examine the structure and operations of political parties as well as their ideologies. Students consider the role played by political action committees, interest groups, and lobbyists in the US government and analyze the methods these organizations use to exert pressure on the political system. Students understand the role the media plays in the political process and its impact on a range of aspects of our political system including public opinion, campaign strategies, and electoral outcomes.

IV. Institutions of National Government

This unit accounts for 35-45% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students study the three branches of government and the formal and informal powers of each branch. Students also study the powers and responsibilities of the federal bureaucracy. Students analyze the relationship and balance of power between these institutions with an understanding that these relationships evolve with time and events, sometimes gradually, other times more dramatically.

V. Public Policy

This unit accounts for 5-15% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students become familiar with the formation and implementation of public policy. Students understand the role of the presidency and Congress in formulating public policy and the role of the courts and bureaucracy in interpreting and implementing policy. Students study existing public policies and the role of federalism, interest groups, parties, and elections in its formation.

VI. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

This unit accounts for 5-15% of the multiple choice portion of the AP exam. Students investigate the role of the US Supreme Court in the development of individual rights and liberties. This includes major Supreme Court decisions and interpretations of civil rights and liberties such as freedom of speech, assembly, and expression; the rights of the accused; and the rights of minority groups and women.

TEXTBOOKS AND RESOURCE MATERIALS:

American Government, 11th Ed. By James Q. Wilson and John J DiIulio, Jr. Houghton Mifflin (2008).

SUBJECT AREA CONTENT STANDARDS TO BE ADDRESSED:

12.1 Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.

1. Analyze the influence of ancient Greek, Roman, English, and leading European political thinkers such as John Locke, Charles-Louis Montesquieu, Niccolò Machiavelli, and William Blackstone on the development of American government.
2. Discuss the character of American democracy and its promise and perils as articulated by Alexis de Tocqueville.
3. Explain how the U.S. Constitution reflects a balance between the classical republican concern with promotion of the public good and the classical liberal concern with protecting individual rights; and discuss how the basic premises of liberal constitutionalism and democracy are joined in the Declaration of Independence as “selfevident truths.”
4. Explain how the Founding Fathers’ realistic view of human nature led directly to the establishment of a constitutional system that limited the power of the governors and the governed as articulated in the Federalist Papers.
5. Describe the systems of separated and shared powers, the role of organized interests (Federalist Paper Number 10), checks and balances (Federalist Paper Number 51), the importance of an independent judiciary (Federalist Paper Number 78), enumerated powers, rule of law, federalism, and civilian control of the military.
6. Understand that the Bill of Rights limits the powers of the federal government and state governments.

12.2 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of each of the rights guaranteed under the Bill of Rights and how each is secured (e.g., freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, petition, privacy).
2. Explain how economic rights are secured and their importance to the individual and to society (e.g., the right to acquire, use, transfer, and dispose of property; right to choose one’s work; right to join or not join labor unions; copyright and patent).
3. Discuss the individual’s legal obligations to obey the law, serve as a juror, and pay taxes.

4. Understand the obligations of civic-mindedness, including voting, being informed on civic issues, volunteering and performing public service, and serving in the military or alternative service.
5. Describe the reciprocity between rights and obligations; that is, why enjoyment of one's rights entails respect for the rights of others.
6. Explain how one becomes a citizen of the United States, including the process of naturalization (e.g., literacy, language, and other requirements).

12.3 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.

1. Explain how civil society provides opportunities for individuals to associate for social, cultural, religious, economic, and political purposes.
2. Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.
3. Discuss the historical role of religion and religious diversity.
4. Compare the relationship of government and civil society in constitutional democracies to the relationship of government and civil society in authoritarian and totalitarian regimes.

12.4 Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.

1. Discuss Article I of the Constitution as it relates to the legislative branch, including eligibility for office and lengths of terms of representatives and senators; election to office; the roles of the House and Senate in impeachment proceedings; the role of the vice president; the enumerated legislative powers; and the process by which a bill becomes a law.
2. Explain the process through which the Constitution can be amended.
3. Identify their current representatives in the legislative branch of the national government.
4. Discuss Article II of the Constitution as it relates to the executive branch, including eligibility for office and length of term, election to and removal from office, the oath of office, and the enumerated executive powers.
5. Discuss Article III of the Constitution as it relates to judicial power, including the length of terms of judges and the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.
6. Explain the processes of selection and confirmation of Supreme Court justices.

12.5 Students summarize landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.

1. Understand the changing interpretations of the Bill of Rights over time, including interpretations of the basic freedoms (religion, speech, press, petition, and assembly) articulated in the First Amendment and the due process and equal-protection-of-the-law clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment.
2. Analyze judicial activism and judicial restraint and the effects of each policy over the decades (e.g., the Warren and Rehnquist courts).
3. Evaluate the effects of the Court's interpretations of the Constitution in *Marbury v. Madison*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*, and *United States v. Nixon*, with emphasis on the arguments espoused by each side in these cases.
4. Explain the controversies that have resulted over changing interpretations of civil rights, including those in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*, and *United States v. Virginia (VMI)*.

12.6 Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.

1. Analyze the origin, development, and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties.
2. Discuss the history of the nomination process for presidential candidates and the increasing importance of primaries in general elections.
3. Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.
4. Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office).
5. Discuss the features of direct democracy in numerous states (e.g., the process of referendums, recall elections).
6. Analyze trends in voter turnout; the causes and effects of reapportionment and redistricting, with special attention to spatial districting and the rights of minorities; and the function of the Electoral College.

12.7 Students analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, tribal, and local governments.

1. Explain how conflicts between levels of government and branches of government are resolved.
2. Identify the major responsibilities and sources of revenue for state and local governments.
3. Discuss reserved powers and concurrent powers of state governments.
4. Discuss the Ninth and Tenth Amendments and interpretations of the extent of the federal government's power.
5. Explain how public policy is formed, including the setting of the public agenda and implementation of it through regulations and executive orders.
6. Compare the processes of lawmaking at each of the three levels of government, including the role of lobbying and the media.
7. Identify the organization and jurisdiction of federal, state, and local (e.g., California) courts and the interrelationships among them.
8. Understand the scope of presidential power and decision making through examination of case studies such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, passage of Great Society legislation, War Powers Act, Gulf War, and Bosnia.

12.8 Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.

1. Discuss the meaning and importance of a free and responsible press.
2. Describe the roles of broadcast, print, and electronic media, including the Internet, as means of communication in American politics.
3. Explain how public officials use the media to communicate with the citizenry and to shape public opinion.

12.9 Students analyze the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems across time, with emphasis on the quest for political democracy, its advances, and its obstacles.

1. Explain how the different philosophies and structures of feudalism, mercantilism, socialism, fascism, communism, monarchies, parliamentary systems, and constitutional liberal democracies influence economic policies, social welfare policies, and human rights practices.
2. Compare the various ways in which power is distributed, shared, and limited in systems of shared powers and in parliamentary systems, including the influence and role of parliamentary leaders (e.g., William Gladstone, Margaret Thatcher).
3. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of federal, confederal, and unitary systems of government.

4. Describe for at least two countries the consequences of conditions that gave rise to tyrannies during certain periods (e.g., Italy, Japan, Haiti, Nigeria, Cambodia).
5. Identify the forms of illegitimate power that twentieth-century African, Asian, and Latin American dictators used to gain and hold office and the conditions and interests that supported them.
6. Identify the ideologies, causes, stages, and outcomes of major Mexican, Central American, and South American revolutions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
7. Describe the ideologies that give rise to Communism, methods of maintaining control, and the movements to overthrow such governments in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, including the roles of individuals (e.g., Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Pope John Paul II, Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel).
8. Identify the successes of relatively new democracies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the ideas, leaders, and general societal conditions that have launched and sustained, or failed to sustain, them.

12.10 Students formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within our constitutional democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between the following concepts: majority rule and individual rights; liberty and equality; state and national authority in a federal system; civil disobedience and the rule of law; freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial; the relationship of religion and government.

DISTRICT ESLRS TO BE ADDRESSED:

Students will be:

- **Self-Directed Learners**
Students maintain an awareness of political events in the news, applying principles and knowledge gained in class to their understanding of current events.
- **Constructive Thinkers**
Students understand major issues facing our nation and explore public policy options aimed at constructive solutions.
- **Effective Communicators**
Students engage in presentations of current events to the class, demonstrating effective and appropriate methods to communicate ideas and opinions to others.
- **Collaborative Workers**
Students work together on projects that can include model Congress, mock campaigns, and issue advocacy.
- **Quality Producers/Performers**
Students complete summative tasks modeled on the multiple choice and Free Response Questions that make up the AP Exam.
- **Responsible Citizens**
Through in-depth learning of US government and politics, students are equipped to actively participate in civic life.

The Folsom Cordova Unified School District prohibits discrimination, intimidation, harassment (including sexual harassment) or bullying based on a person's actual or perceived ancestry, color, disability, race or ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or gender expression, immigration status, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. **For concerns/questions or complaints, contact the Title IX Coordinator(s) and Equity Compliance Officer(s): Curtis Wilson, cmwilson@fcusd.org (grades K-5) and Jim Huber, ED. D., jhuber@fcusd.org (grades 6-12), 1965 Birkmont Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA 96742, 916-294-9000 ext.104625**