CollegeBoard AP®

INCLUDES

- ✓ Course framework
- ✓ Instructional section
- ✓ Sample exam questions

AP® U.S. Government and Politics

COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

Effective
Fall 2022

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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National Constitution Center

AP® U.S. Government and Politics

COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

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Endorsement by the National Constitution Center

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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 COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTIONS ARE UPDATED PERIODICALLY

Please visit AP Central (apcentral.collegeboard.org) to determine whether a more recent course and exam description is available.

About College Board

College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success—including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement® Program. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools.

For further information, visit **collegeboard.org**.

AP Equity and Access Policy

College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging coursework before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

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Acknowledgments

College Board would like to acknowledge the following committee members, consultants, and reviewers for their assistance with and commitment to the development of this course. All individuals and their affiliations were current at the time of contribution.

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SPECIAL THANKS

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About AP

College Board's Advanced Placement® Program (AP®) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies—with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both—while still in high school. Through AP courses in 38 subjects, each culminating in a challenging exam, students learn to think critically, construct solid arguments, and see many sides of an issue—skills that prepare them for college and beyond. Taking AP courses demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most challenging curriculum available to them, and research indicates that students who score a 3 or higher on an AP Exam typically experience greater academic success in college and are more likely to earn a college degree than non-AP students. Each AP teacher's syllabus is evaluated and approved by faculty from some of the nation's leading colleges and universities, and AP Exams are developed and scored by college faculty and experienced AP teachers. Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States grant credit, advanced placement, or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores; more than 3,300 institutions worldwide annually receive AP scores.

AP Course Development

In an ongoing effort to maintain alignment with best practices in college-level learning, AP courses and exams emphasize challenging, research-based curricula aligned with higher education expectations.

Individual teachers are responsible for designing their own curriculum for AP courses, selecting appropriate college-level readings, assignments, and resources. This course and exam description presents the content and skills that are the focus of the corresponding college course and that appear on the AP Exam. It also organizes the content and skills into a series of units that represent a sequence found in widely adopted college textbooks and that many AP teachers have told us they follow in order to focus their instruction. The intention of this publication is to respect teachers' time and expertise by providing a roadmap that they can modify and adapt to their local priorities and preferences. Moreover, by organizing the AP course content and skills into units, the AP Program is able to provide teachers and students with formative assessments—Personal Progress Checks—that teachers can assign throughout the year to measure student progress as they acquire content knowledge and develop skills.

Enrolling Students: Equity and Access

College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underserved. College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging coursework before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

Offering AP Courses: The AP Course Audit

The AP Program unequivocally supports the principle that each school implements its own curriculum that will enable students to develop the content understandings and skills described in the course framework.

While the unit sequence represented in this publication is optional, the AP Program does have a short list of curricular and resource requirements that must be fulfilled before a school can label a course "Advanced Placement" or "AP." Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit, a process through which AP teachers' course materials are reviewed by college faculty. The AP Course Audit was created to provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements for AP courses and to help colleges and universities validate courses marked "AP" on students' transcripts. This process ensures that AP teachers' courses meet or exceed the curricular and resource expectations that college and secondary school faculty have established for college-level courses.

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The AP Course Audit form is submitted by the AP teacher and the school principal (or designated administrator) to confirm awareness and understanding of the curricular and resource requirements. A syllabus or course outline, detailing how course requirements are met, is submitted by the AP teacher for review by college faculty.

Please visit **collegeboard.org/apcourseaudit** for more information to support the preparation and submission of materials for the AP Course Audit.

How the AP Program Is Developed

The scope of content for an AP course and exam is derived from an analysis of hundreds of syllabi and course offerings of colleges and universities. Using this research and data, a committee of college faculty and expert AP teachers work within the scope of the corresponding college course to articulate what students should know and be able to do upon the completion of the AP course. The resulting course framework is the heart of this course and exam description and serves as a blueprint of the content and skills that can appear on an AP Exam.

The AP Test Development Committees are responsible for developing each AP Exam, ensuring the exam questions are aligned to the course framework. The AP Exam development process is a multiyear endeavor; all AP Exams undergo extensive review, revision, piloting, and analysis to ensure that questions are accurate, fair, and valid, and that there is an appropriate spread of difficulty across the questions.

Committee members are selected to represent a variety of perspectives and institutions (public and private, small and large schools and colleges), and a range of gender, racial/ethnic, and regional groups. A list of each subject's current AP Test Development Committee members is available on **apcentral.collegeboard.org**.

Throughout AP course and exam development, College Board gathers feedback from various stakeholders in both secondary schools and higher education institutions. This feedback is carefully considered to ensure that AP courses and exams are able to provide students with a college-level learning experience and the opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications for advanced placement or college credit.

How AP Exams Are Scored

The exam scoring process, like the course and exam development process, relies on the expertise of both AP teachers and college faculty. While multiple-choice questions are scored by machine, the free-response questions and through-course performance assessments, as applicable, are scored by thousands of college faculty and expert AP teachers. Most are scored at the annual AP Reading, while a small portion is scored online. All AP Readers are thoroughly trained, and their work is monitored throughout the Reading for fairness and consistency. In each subject, a highly respected college faculty member serves as Chief Faculty Consultant and, with the help of AP Readers in leadership positions, maintains the accuracy of the scoring standards. Scores on the free-response questions and performance assessments are weighted and combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions, and this raw score is converted into a composite AP score on a 1–5 scale.

AP Exams are **not** norm-referenced or graded on a curve. Instead, they are criterion-referenced, which means that every student who meets the criteria for an AP score of 2, 3, 4, or 5 will receive that score, no matter how many students that is. The criteria for the number of points students must earn on the AP Exam to receive scores of 3, 4, or 5—the scores that research consistently validates for credit and placement purposes—include:

- The number of points successful college students earn when their professors administer AP Exam questions to them.
- The number of points researchers have found to be predictive that an AP student will succeed when placed into a subsequent, higher-level college course.
- Achievement-level descriptions formulated by college faculty who review each AP Exam question.

Using and Interpreting AP Scores

The extensive work done by college faculty and AP teachers in the development of the course and exam and throughout the scoring process ensures that AP Exam scores accurately represent students' achievement in the equivalent college course. Frequent and regular research studies establish the validity of AP scores as follows:

AP Score	Credit Recommendation	College Grade Equivalent
5	Extremely well qualified	A
4	Well qualified	A-, B+, B
3	Qualified	B-, C+, C
2	Possibly qualified	n/a
1	No recommendation	n/a

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While colleges and universities are responsible for setting their own credit and placement policies, most private colleges and universities award credit and/or advanced placement for AP scores of 3 or higher. Additionally, most states in the U.S. have adopted statewide credit policies that ensure college credit for scores of 3 or higher at public colleges and universities. To confirm a specific college's AP credit/placement policy, a search engine is available at **apstudent.org/creditpolicies**

BECOMING AN AP READER

Each June, thousands of AP teachers and college faculty members from around the world gather for seven days in multiple locations to evaluate and score the free-response sections of the AP Exams. Ninety-eight percent of surveyed educators who took part in the AP Reading say it was a positive experience.

There are many reasons to consider becoming an AP Reader, including opportunities to:

- **Bring positive changes to the classroom:** Surveys show that the vast majority of returning AP Readers—both high school and college educators—make improvements to the way they teach or score because of their experience at the AP Reading.
- **Gain in-depth understanding of AP Exam and AP scoring standards:** AP Readers gain exposure to the quality and depth of the responses from the entire pool of AP Exam takers, and thus are better able to assess their students' work in the classroom.
- **Receive compensation:** AP Readers are compensated for their work during the Reading. Expenses, lodging, and meals are covered for Readers who travel.
- **Score from home:** AP Readers have online distributed scoring opportunities for certain subjects. Check **collegeboard.org/apreading** for details.
- **Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs):** AP Readers earn professional development hours and CEUs that can be applied to PD requirements by states, districts, and schools.

How to Apply

Visit **collegeboard.org/apreading** for eligibility requirements and to start the application process.

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AP Resources and Supports

By completing a simple activation process at the start of the school year, teachers and students receive access to a robust set of classroom resources.

AP Classroom

AP Classroom is a dedicated online platform designed to support teachers and students throughout their AP experience. The platform provides a variety of powerful resources and tools to provide yearlong support to teachers and enable students to receive meaningful feedback on their progress.

UNIT GUIDES

Appearing in this publication and on AP Classroom, these planning guides outline all required course content and skills, organized into commonly taught units. Each unit guide suggests a sequence and pacing of content, scaffolds skill instruction across units, organizes content into topics, and provides tips on taking the AP Exam.

PERSONAL PROGRESS CHECKS

Formative AP questions for every unit provide feedback to students on the areas where they need to focus. Available online, Personal Progress Checks measure knowledge and skills through multiple-choice questions with rationales to explain correct and incorrect answers, and free-response questions with scoring information. Because the Personal Progress Checks are formative, the results of these assessments cannot be used to evaluate teacher effectiveness or assign letter grades to students, and any such misuses are grounds for losing school authorization to offer AP courses.*

PROGRESS DASHBOARD

This dashboard allows teachers to review class and individual student progress throughout the year. Teachers can view class trends and see where students struggle with content and skills that will be assessed on the AP Exam. Students can view their own progress over time to improve their performance before the AP Exam.

AP QUESTION BANK

This online library of real AP Exam questions provides teachers with secure questions to use in their classrooms. Teachers can find questions indexed by course topics and skills, create customized tests, and assign them online or on paper. These tests enable students to practice and get feedback on each question.

*To report misuses, please call, 877-274-6474 (International: +1-212-632-1781).

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Digital Activation

In order to teach an AP class and make sure students are registered to take the AP Exam, teachers must first complete the digital activation process. Digital activation gives students and teachers access to resources and gathers students' exam registration information online, eliminating most of the answer sheet bubbling that has added to testing time and fatigue.

AP teachers and students begin by signing in to **My AP** and completing a simple activation process at the start of the school year, which provides access to all AP resources, including AP Classroom.

To complete digital activation:

- Teachers and students sign in to or create their College Board accounts.
- Teachers confirm that they have added the course they teach to their AP Course Audit account and have had it approved by their school's administrator.
- Teachers or AP Coordinators, depending on who the school has decided is responsible, set up class sections so students can access AP resources and have exams ordered on their behalf.
- Students join class sections with a join code provided by their teacher or AP Coordinator.
- Students will be asked for additional registration information upon joining their first class section, which eliminates the need for extensive answer sheet bubbling on exam day.

While the digital activation process takes a short time for teachers, students, and AP Coordinators to complete, overall it helps save time and provides the following additional benefits:

- **Access to AP resources and supports:** Teachers have access to resources specifically designed to support instruction and provide feedback to students throughout the school year as soon as activation is complete.
- **Streamlined exam ordering:** AP Coordinators can create exam orders from the same online class rosters that enable students to access resources. The coordinator reviews, updates, and submits this information as the school's exam order in the fall.
- **Student registration labels:** For each student included in an exam order, schools will receive a set of personalized AP ID registration labels, which replaces the AP student pack. The AP ID connects a student's exam materials with the registration information they provided during digital activation, eliminating the need for pre-administration sessions and reducing time spent bubbling on exam day.
- **Targeted Instructional Planning Reports:** AP teachers will get Instructional Planning Reports (IPRs) that include data on each of their class sections automatically rather than relying on special codes optionally bubbled in on exam day.

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Instructional Model

Integrating AP resources throughout the course can help students develop the course disciplinary practices, skills and conceptual understandings. The instructional model outlined below shows possible ways to incorporate AP resources into the classroom.

Plan

Teachers may consider the following approaches as they plan their instruction before teaching each unit.

- Review the overview at the start of each **unit guide** to identify essential questions, conceptual understandings, and skills for each unit.
- Use the **Unit at a Glance** table to identify related topics that build toward a common understanding, and then plan appropriate pacing for students.
- Identify useful strategies in the **Instructional Approaches** section to help teach the concepts and skills.

Teach

When teaching, supporting resources can be used to build students' conceptual understanding and mastery of skills.

- Use the topic pages in the **unit guides** to identify the required content.
- Integrate the content with a skill, considering any appropriate scaffolding.
- Employ any of the instructional strategies previously identified.
- Use the available resources on the topic pages to bring a variety of assets into the classroom.

Assess

Teachers can measure student understanding of the content and skills covered in the unit and provide actionable feedback to students.

- At the end of each unit, use **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Checks**, as homework or an in-class task.
- Provide question-level feedback to students through answer rationales; provide unit- and skill-level feedback using the progress dashboard.
- Create additional practice opportunities using the **AP Question Bank** and assign them through **AP Classroom**.

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About the AP U.S. Government and Politics Course

AP U.S. Government and Politics provides a college-level, nonpartisan introduction 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 behaviors. They will also 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.

College Course Equivalent

AP U.S. Government and Politics is equivalent to a one-semester introductory college course in U.S. government.

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisite courses for AP U.S. Government and Politics. Students should be able to read a college-level textbook and write grammatically correct, complete sentences.

Project Requirement

The required project adds a civic component to the course, engaging students in exploring how they can affect, and are affected by, government and politics throughout their lives. The project might have students collect data on a teacher-approved political science topic, participate in a community service activity, or observe and report on the policymaking process of a governing body. Students should plan a presentation that relates their experiences or findings to what they are learning in the course.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Course Framework

Preface

We offer this course framework for AP U.S. Government and Politics to the American public and education community. Dedicated teams of college professors and AP high school teachers have worked on this framework for years, gathering wide-ranging input and feedback from the public at large.

The committee members and College Board staff worked with a special intensity and care. We realize that this course is more than just one more class period in a crowded school day; it must be a space in which students immerse themselves in the ideas and knowledge essential to our democracy.

AP U.S. Government and Politics offers students the opportunity to see how individuals and their ideas can shape the world in which they live; it invites them to explore central questions of liberty and justice in practice. The Supreme Court opinions explored in this course are not museum pieces but deeply felt expressions. They all represent real choices and decisions with enormous consequences. We aim for students to read them and discuss them with openness and insight.

The ideas at the heart of the American founding remain as vital and urgent as they were more than 200 years ago; it is our task as educators to make them vivid once more. As we reflect on this course, five principles become clear:

1. Command of the Constitution lies at the center of this course, the touchstone for informed citizenship and scholarship.
2. Students are not spectators but analysts; they must analyze the documents and debates that formed our republic and animate public life today.
3. Knowledge matters; we define a focused body of shared knowledge while leaving room for the variety of state standards and the imaginations of individual teachers.
4. We can't avoid difficult topics, but we can insist on a principled attention to the best arguments on both sides as students read and write.
5. Civic knowledge is every student's right and responsibility; we therefore have the obligation to make the best learning resources, such as the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution, freely available for all.

The aims of this course framework are timeless, and its roots are deeply embedded in the American experiment and the intellectual traditions that animated our founding.

Aristotle famously described humankind as a "political animal." He argued that a person who lives without a political life is incomplete and alone, like an isolated piece on a game board. For Aristotle, participation in civic life is necessary to live fully. In more modern times, President Eisenhower declared that "politics ought to be the part-time profession of every person who would protect the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage."

We are grateful to the AP community of teachers and their colleagues in colleges across our country, whose shared devotion to students forged this course framework. A framework is only an outline of content and skills; the real craft is in the decisions that knowledgeable teachers make every day in the classroom as they develop their curriculum. We are confident that in the hands of AP teachers, this course framework will open doors of opportunity for students throughout their lives.

—From David Coleman, CEO, College Board

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Introduction

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course detailed in this framework reflects what political science teachers, professors, and researchers agree that a college-level government and politics course should teach students to do: analyze and interpret the Constitution, important political documents, and data to better understand the American national government and the political actors who interact with it.

The *AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description* defines what representative colleges and universities typically expect students to know and be able to do in order to earn college credit or placement. Students practice the skills used by political scientists by studying data, political writings from the founding era to the present, the structure of the government as established by the Constitution, and constitutional interpretations handed down by the Supreme Court. Students will show mastery of these skills on the exam through a variety of means, including concept application, data analysis, Supreme Court case comparisons, and writing political science arguments.

Although the course framework is designed to provide a clear and detailed description of the course content and skills, it is not a curriculum. Teachers create their own curricula to meet the needs of their students and any state or local requirements.

The National Constitution Center and College Board

In partnership with the National Constitution Center, College Board has developed a series of classroom lessons and materials related to the U.S. Constitution. This series includes resources to support instruction in AP U.S. Government and Politics, AP Comparative Government and Politics, AP U.S. History, and AP English Language and Composition. These lessons and resources are available to AP teachers via the course homepages at AP Central and to all teachers through the National Constitution Center's **website**.

Maintaining Political Balance

AP U.S. Government and Politics is a nonpartisan course and has been endorsed by the National Constitution Center as well as a range of conservative and liberal scholars for its political balance. The required readings are the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Articles of Confederation, representative Federalist Papers, Brutus No. 1, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." In addition, there are 14 required Supreme Court cases. Additional readings and assignments that teachers select to supplement the course must, as a whole, maintain a political balance. It is expected and required that all AP-authorized courses maintain political balance through a nonpartisan curriculum.

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Course Framework Components

Overview

This course framework provides a description of the what students should know and be able to do to qualify for college credit or placement.

The course framework includes two essential components:

1 DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES AND REASONING PROCESSES

The disciplinary practices and reasoning processes for this course are central to the study and practice of government and politics. Students should develop and apply the described practices on a regular basis over the span of the course.

2 COURSE CONTENT

The course content is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide a suggested sequence for the course. These units comprise the content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master to qualify for college credit and/or placement. This content is grounded in big ideas, which are cross-cutting concepts that build conceptual understanding and spiral throughout the course.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

This section presents the disciplinary practices and reasoning processes that students should develop during the AP U.S. Government and Politics and that form the basis of the tasks on the AP Exam.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Disciplinary Practices

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course provides disciplinary practices that describe what a student should be able to do while exploring course concepts. The table on the next page presents these disciplinary practices, along with their associated skills, which students should develop throughout the course.

The unit guides that follow embed and spiral these skills throughout the course, providing teachers with one way to integrate the skills into the course content with sufficient repetition to prepare students to transfer those skills when taking the AP Exam.

More detailed information about teaching the disciplinary practices can be found in the Instructional Approaches section of this publication.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Disciplinary Practices

Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Practice 4	Practice 5
Concept Application 1 Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.	*SCOTUS Application* 2 Apply Supreme Court decisions.	*Data Analysis* 3 Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics.	*Source Analysis* 4 Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources.	*Argumentation* 5 Develop an argument in essay format.

SKILLS

1.A Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**2.A** Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	**3.A** Describe the data presented.	**4.A** Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	**5.A** Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.
1.B Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**2.B** Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.	**3.B** Describe patterns and trends in data.	**4.B** Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**5.B** Support the argument using relevant evidence.
1.C Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**2.C** Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.	**3.C** Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	**4.C** Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**5.C** Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.
1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	**2.D** Explain how required Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context.	**3.D** Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**4.D** Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	**5.D** Use refutation, concession, and rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.
1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.		**3.E** Explain possible limitations of the data provided.		
		3.F Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided.		

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Reasoning Processes

Reasoning processes describe the cognitive operations that students will be required to apply when engaging with practices on the AP Exam. Students should organize their response around a specific reasoning process that aligns to the intent of the question. The reasoning processes ultimately represent the way practitioners think in the discipline. Specific aspects of the cognitive process are defined under each reasoning process.

Reasoning Process 1	Reasoning Process 2	Reasoning Process 3	Reasoning Process 4
Definition/Classification When demonstrating their knowledge of course concepts, students should:	***Process*** When explaining political processes, students should:	***Causation*** When explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors, students should:	***Comparison*** When explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors, students should:
▪ Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts ▪ Classify concepts ▪ Describe structures and functions ▪ Describe patterns and/or trends ▪ Describe the perspective of a source or author ▪ Describe assumptions and/or reasoning of a source or author	▪ Identify steps and/or stages in a process ▪ Explain how the steps or stages in a process relate to each other ▪ Explain challenges with processes and/or interactions ▪ Explain the relevance or significance of processes and/or interactions	▪ Identify causes and/or effects ▪ Explain the reasons for causes and/or effects ▪ Explain change over time ▪ Explain the significance of causes and/or effects ▪ Explain the implications of change over time	▪ Identify relevant categories of comparison ▪ Identify similarities and/or differences ▪ Explain the reasons for similarities and/or differences ▪ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of similarities and differences

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Course Content

Based on the Understanding by Design® (Wiggins and McTighe) model, this course framework provides a description of the course requirements necessary for student success. The framework specifies what students should know and be able to do, with a focus on big ideas that encompass core principles and theories of the discipline. The framework also encourages instruction that prepares students for advanced political science coursework and active, informed participation in our constitutional democracy.

Big Ideas

The big ideas serve as the foundation of the course and enable students to create meaningful connections among concepts. They are themes that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting the big ideas and applying them in a variety of contexts allow students to develop a deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the big ideas of the course and a brief description of each.

BIG IDEA 1: CONSTITUTIONALISM (CON)
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.

BIG IDEA 2: LIBERTY AND ORDER (LOR)
Governmental laws and policies balancing order and liberty are based on the U.S. Constitution and have been interpreted differently over time.

BIG IDEA 3: CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN A REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY (PRD)
Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate.

continued on next page

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BIG IDEA 4: COMPETING POLICY-MAKING INTERESTS (PMI)
Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies.

BIG IDEA 5: METHODS OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS (MPA)
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.

UNITS

The course content is organized into commonly taught units. The units have been arranged in a logical sequence frequently found in many college courses and textbooks.

The five units in AP U.S. Government and Politics and their weighting on the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam are listed below.

Pacing recommendations at the unit level and on the Course at a Glance provide suggestions for how to teach the required course content and administer the Personal Progress Checks. The suggested class periods are based on a schedule in which the class meets five days a week for 45 minutes each day. While these recommendations have been made to aid planning, teachers should of course adjust the pacing based on the needs of their students, alternate schedules (e.g., block scheduling), or their school's academic calendar.

TOPICS

Each unit is broken down into teachable segments called topics. The topic pages (starting on page 40) contain the required content for each topic. Although most topics can be taught in one or two class periods, teachers are again encouraged to pace the course to suit the needs of their students and school.

Units	Exam Weighting
Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy	**15–22%**
Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government	**25–36%**
Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	**13–18%**
Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	**10–15%**
Unit 5: Political Participation	**20–27%**

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Spiraling the Big Ideas

The following table shows how the big ideas spiral across units.

Big Ideas	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
	Foundations of American Democracy	*Interactions Among Branches of Government*	*Civil Liberties and Civil Rights*	*American Political Ideologies and Beliefs*	*Political Participation*
Constitutionalism CON	✓	✓	✓		
Liberty and Order LOR	✓		✓		
Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy PRD			✓		✓
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Methods of Political Analysis MPA				✓	✓

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Course at a Glance

Plan

The Course at a Glance provides a useful visual organization of the AP U.S. Government and Politics curricular components, including:

- Sequence of units, along with approximate weighting and suggested pacing. Please note, pacing options are provided for teaching the course for a full year and for a single semester.
- Progression of topics within each unit, including the location of required foundational documents or Supreme Court cases.
- Spiraling of the big ideas and practices across units.

Teach

DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

Disciplinary practices spiral across units.

- 1 Concept Application
- 2 SCOTUS Application
- 3 Data Analysis
- 4 Source Analysis
- 5 Argumentation

BIG IDEAS

Big ideas spiral across units.

- CON Constitutionalism
- LOR Liberty and Order
- PRD Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy
- PMI Competing Policy-Making Interests
- MPA Methods of Political Analysis

FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS AND SUPREME COURT CASES

- Foundational Document
- Supreme Court Case

Assess

Assign the Personal Progress Checks—either as homework or in class—for each unit. Each Personal Progress Check contains formative multiple-choice and free-response questions. The feedback from the Personal Progress Checks shows students the areas where they need to focus.

UNIT 1 Foundations of American Democracy

~16/~8 Class Periods | **15–22%** AP Exam Weighting

LOR 1	1.1	Ideals of Democracy
LOR 4	1.2	Types of Democracy
CON 1	1.3	Government Power and Individual Rights
CON 4	1.4	Challenges of the Articles of Confederation
CON 1	1.5	Ratification of the United States Constitution
PMI 4	1.6	Principles of American Government
CON 5	1.7	Relationship Between States and the Federal Government
CON 2	1.8	Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism
CON 5	1.9	Federalism in Action

UNIT 2 Interactions Among Branches of Government

~28/~14 Class Periods | **25–36%** AP Exam Weighting

CON 1	2.1	Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives
CON 3	2.2	Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress
CON 2	2.3	Congressional Behavior
CON 3	2.4	Roles and Powers of the President
CON 1	2.5	Checks on the Presidency
CON 4	2.6	Expansion of Presidential Power
CON 1	2.7	Presidential Communication
CON 2	2.8	The Judicial Branch
CON 1	2.9	Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch
CON 2	2.10	The Court in Action
CON 1	2.11	Checks on the Judicial Branch
CON 4	2.12	The Bureaucracy
CON 1	2.13	Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority
CON 3	2.14	Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable
PMI 3	2.15	Policy and the Branches of Government

Personal Progress Check 1

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions
Free-response: 3 questions
- Concept Application
- Argument Essay (partial)
- Argument Essay (partial)

Personal Progress Check 2

Multiple-choice: ~45 questions
Free-response: 3 questions
- Concept Application
- Quantitative Analysis
- SCOTUS Comparison

NOTE: Partial versions of the free-response questions are provided to prepare students for more complex, full questions that they will encounter on the AP Exam.

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UNIT 3 Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

~26/~13 Class Periods | 13–18% AP Exam Weighting

LOR 1	3.1	The Bill of Rights
LOR 2	3.2	First Amendment: Freedom of Religion
LOR 5	3.3	First Amendment: Freedom of Speech
LOR 4	3.4	First Amendment: Freedom of the Press
LOR 4	3.5	Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms
LOR 5	3.6	Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety
LOR 2	3.7	Selective Incorporation
LOR 5	3.8	Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused
LOR 2	3.9	Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy
PRD 4	3.10	Social Movements and Equal Protection
PMI 2	3.11	Government Responses to Social Movements
CON 2	3.12	Balancing Minority and Majority Rights
CON 1	3.13	Affirmative Action

Personal Progress Check 3

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions
- SCOTUS Comparison
- Argument Essay (partial)
- Argument Essay (partial)

UNIT 4 American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

~22/~11 Class Periods | 10–15% AP Exam Weighting

MPA 1	4.1	American Attitudes About Government and Politics
MPA 3	4.2	Political Socialization
MPA 3	4.3	Changes in Ideology
MPA 4	4.4	Influence of Political Events on Ideology
MPA 3	4.5	Measuring Public Opinion
MPA 3	4.6	Evaluating Public Opinion Data
PMI 1	4.7	Ideologies of Political Parties
PMI 4	4.8	Ideology and Policy Making
PMI 3	4.9	Ideology and Economic Policy
PMI 4	4.10	Ideology and Social Policy

Personal Progress Check 4

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions
- Concept Application
- Quantitative Analysis
- Quantitative Analysis

UNIT 5 Political Participation

~18/~9 Class Periods | 20–27% AP Exam Weighting

MPA 1	5.1	Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior
MPA 3	5.2	Voter Turnout
PMI 1	5.3	Political Parties
PMI 4	5.4	How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt
PMI 3	5.5	Third-Party Politics
PMI 3	5.6	Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making
PMI 1	5.7	Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes
PRD 5	5.8	Electing a President
PRD 5	5.9	Congressional Elections
PRD 5	5.10	Modern Campaigns
PRD 2	5.11	Campaign Finance
PRD 5	5.12	The Media
PRD 2	5.13	Changing Media

Personal Progress Check 5

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions
- Quantitative Analysis
- Argument Essay
- Argument Essay

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Unit Guides

Introduction

Designed with extensive input from the community of AP U.S. Government and Politics educators, the unit guides offer all teachers helpful guidance in building students' skills and knowledge. The suggested sequence was identified through a thorough analysis of the syllabi of highly effective AP teachers and the organization of typical college textbooks.

This unit structure respects new AP teachers' time by providing one possible sequence they can adopt or modify rather than having to build from scratch. An additional benefit is that these units enable the AP Program to provide interested teachers with formative assessments—the Personal Progress Checks—that they can assign their students at the end of each unit to gauge progress toward success on the AP Exam. However, experienced AP teachers who are satisfied with their current course organization and exam results should feel no pressure to adopt these units, which comprise an optional sequence for this course.

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Using the Unit Guides

UNIT 1 | 15–22% AP EXAM WEIGHTING | ~16/~8 CLASS PERIODS

Foundations of American Democracy

BIG IDEA 1
Constitutionalism CON
- Why are there debates about the balance of power between the federal and state governments?

BIG IDEA 2
Liberty and Order LOR
- Is the Bill of Rights necessary? Why or why not?

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI
- How does the Constitution affect you and the choices you make?

Developing Understanding

More than 200 years after the U.S. Constitution was ratified, the compromises that were necessary for ratification—which in some instances led to ambiguity—continue to fuel debate and discussion over how best to protect liberty, equality, order, and private property. This first unit sets the foundation for the course by examining how the framers of the Constitution set up a structure of government intended to stand the test of time. Compromises were made during the Constitutional Convention and ratification debates, and these compromises focused on the proper balance between individual freedom, social order, and equality of opportunity. In subsequent units, students will apply their understanding of the Constitution to the institutions of government and people's daily lives.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

4.A 4.B 5.A 5.B

In the study of government and political science, text-based qualitative sources help political scientists understand how governmental and political institutions and actors function and the reasons for their behaviors. These sources are often actually arguments about what the government does (or should do) and how these actions impact citizens and other people in the country.

In this course, students also learn to write their own arguments. Arguments should be organized around a specific reasoning process that aligns to the purpose for writing (e.g., to explain similarities and differences among political principles, or to explain political processes). Choosing the right reasoning process allows students to establish the line of reasoning for the argument and helps them organize the essay.

In their arguments, students should write claims that take a position, going beyond simply stating facts. Claims should also include additional information that sets up the evidence. This is usually developed through a "because" statement, as in "My claim is the strongest because . . .", which is then followed by specific relevant evidence. Evidence is relevant when it relates to and supports the claim.

Preparing for the AP Exam

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course requires students to apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts and to real-world scenarios. It's not enough for students to know the definition of governmental terms and concepts. On the AP Exam, they will be asked to show a deeper understanding of how these concepts actually work, often by describing and explaining an interaction or application within a given scenario on both multiple-choice and free-response questions.

Students often struggle with explanations. They may define or describe a concept but not fully explain the how or why in the context of the question. Have students practice by asking them to explain the steps, stages, and interactions of processes; explain and link causes and effects; or explain the significance of similarities and differences.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description — Course Framework V.1 | 37

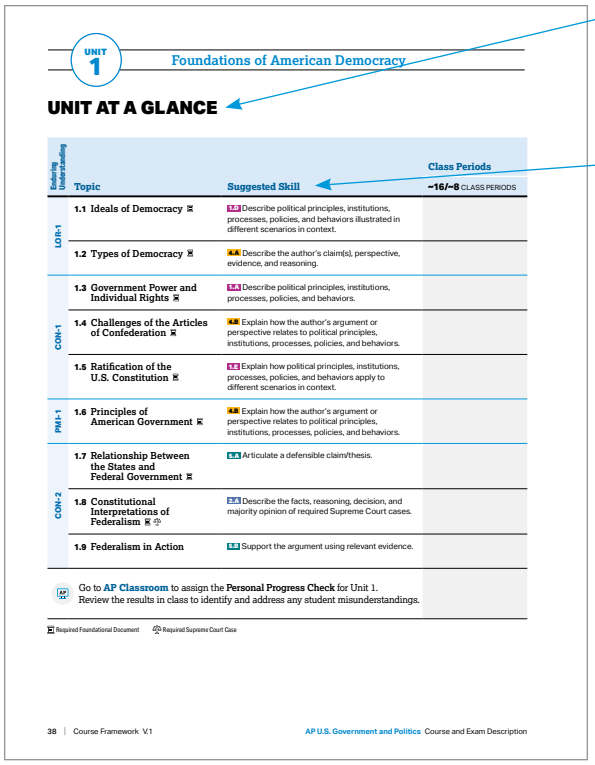
UNIT OPENERS

Developing Understanding provides an overview that contextualizes and situates the key content of the unit within the scope of the course.

Big ideas serve as the foundation of the course and develop understanding as they spiral throughout the course. The **essential questions** are thought-provoking questions that motivate students and inspire inquiry.

Building the Disciplinary Practices describes specific aspects of the practices that are appropriate to focus on in that unit.

Preparing for the AP Exam provides helpful tips and common student misunderstandings identified from prior exam data.



UNIT 1 | Foundations of American Democracy

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~16/~8 CLASS PERIODS
LOR-1	1.1 Ideals of Democracy	1.F Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	1.2 Types of Democracy	4.A Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
CON-1	1.3 Government Power and Individual Rights	1.A Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.4 Challenges of the Articles of Confederation	4.B Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.5 Ratification of the U.S. Constitution	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
PMI-1	1.6 Principles of American Government	4.B Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
CON-2	1.7 Relationship Between the States and Federal Government	5.A Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.	
	1.8 Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism	2.A Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	
	1.9 Federalism in Action	5.B Support the argument using relevant evidence.	

AP Classroom: Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 1. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

Required Foundational Document; Required Supreme Court Case

38 | Course Framework V.1 — AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description

The **Unit at a Glance table** shows the topics, related enduring understandings, and suggested skills. The "class periods" column has been left blank so that teachers can customize the time they spend on each topic.

The **suggested skill** for each topic shows one way teachers can link the content in that topic to a specific AP U.S. Government and Politics skill. The individual skill has been thoughtfully chosen in a way that allows teachers to spiral those skills, along with the disciplinary practices, throughout the course. The questions on the Personal Progress Checks are based on this pairing. However, AP Exam questions can pair the content with any of the skills.

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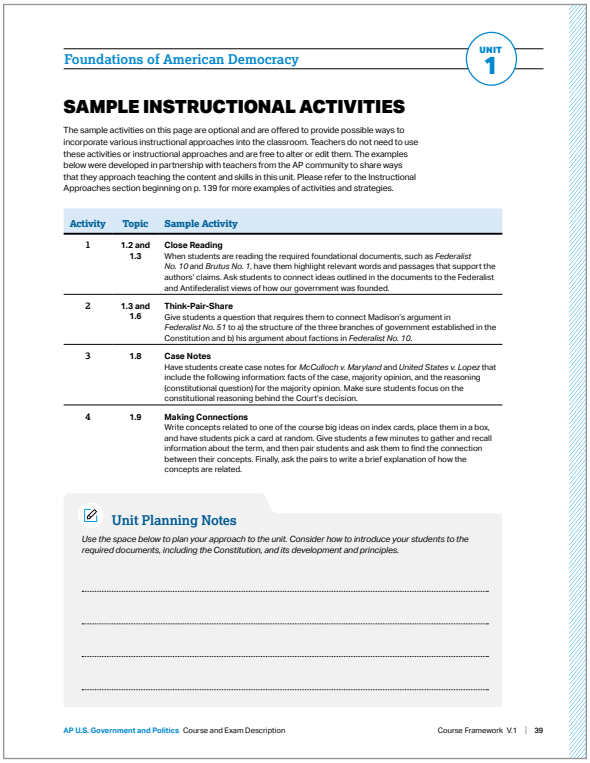
Using the Unit Guides



Foundations of American Democracy

UNIT 1

SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

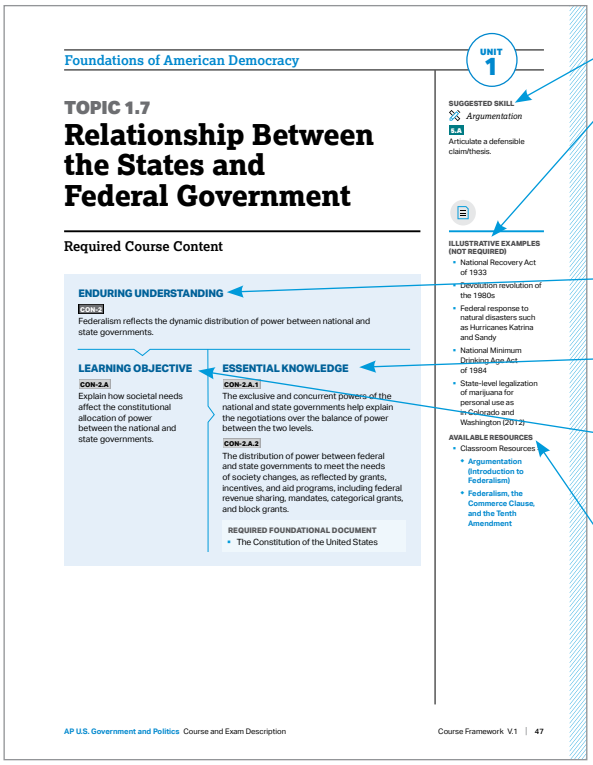
Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	1.2 and 1.3	**Close Reading** When students are reading the required foundational documents, such as *Federalist No. 10* and *Brutus No. 1*, have them highlight relevant words and passages that support the authors' claims. Ask students to connect ideas outlined in the documents to the Federalist and Antifederalist views of how our government was founded.
2	1.3 and 1.6	**Think-Pair-Share** Give students a question that requires them to connect Madison's argument in *Federalist No. 51* to a) the structure of the three branches of government established in the Constitution and b) his argument about factions in *Federalist No. 10*.
3	1.8	**Case Notes** Have students create case notes for *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *United States v. Lopez* that include the following information: facts of the case, majority opinion, and the reasoning (constitutional question) for the majority opinion. Make sure students focus on the constitutional reasoning behind the Court's decision.
4	1.9	**Making Connections** Write concepts related to one of the course big ideas on index cards, place them in a box, and have students pick a card at random. Give students a few minutes to gather and recall information about the term, and then pair students and ask them to find the connection between their concepts. Finally, ask the pairs to write a brief explanation of how the concepts are related.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how to introduce your students to the required documents, including the Constitution, and its development and principles.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description — Course Framework V.1 | 39

The **Sample Instructional Activities** page includes optional activities that can help tie together the content and skills of a particular topic. Additionally, this page offers space for teachers to make notes on their approach to the individual topics and the unit as a whole.



Foundations of American Democracy

UNIT 1

TOPIC 1.7

Relationship Between the States and Federal Government

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-2

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-2.A

Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-2.A.1

The exclusive and concurrent powers of the national and state governments help explain the negotiations over the balance of power between the two levels.

CON-2.A.2

The distribution of power between federal and state governments to meet the needs of society changes, as reflected by grants, incentives, and aid programs, including federal revenue sharing, mandates, categorical grants, and block grants.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.A

Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- National Recovery Act of 1933
- Devolution revolution of the 1980s
- Federal response to natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy
- National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984
- State-level legalization of marijuana for personal use as in Colorado and Washington (2012)

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Classroom Resources
  - Argumentation (Introduction to Federalism)
  - Federalism, the Commerce Clause, and the Tenth Amendment

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TOPIC PAGES

The **suggested skill** offers a possible skill to pair with the topic.

Optional readings and illustrative examples: Where relevant, a list of optional readings and illustrative examples are provided as additional resources, should teachers choose to use them. The list includes common historical documents and secondary sources from a variety of political perspectives.

Enduring understandings are the long-term takeaways related to the big ideas that leave a lasting impression on students.

Essential knowledge statements describe the knowledge required to perform the learning objective.

Learning objectives define what a student should be able to do with content knowledge in order to progress toward the enduring understandings.

Where possible, **available resources** are listed that might help teachers address a particular topic in their classroom.

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REQUIRED COURSE CONTENT LABELING SYSTEM

BIG IDEA	ENDURING UNDERSTANDING	LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
CON *Constitutionalism*	**CON-1** The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.	**CON-1.B** Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.	**CON-1.B.1** Specific incidents and legal challenges that highlighted key weaknesses of the **Articles of Confederation** are represented by the: ▪ Lack of centralized military power to address Shays' Rebellion ▪ Lack of tax law enforcement power **REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT** ▪ Articles of Confederation

Note: Labels are used to distinguish each unique element of the required course content and are used throughout this course and exam description. Additionally, they are used in the AP Question Bank and other resources found in AP Classroom. Enduring understandings are labeled sequentially according to the big idea that they are related to. Learning objectives are labeled to correspond with the enduring understanding they relate to. Finally, essential knowledge statements are labeled to correspond with the learning objective to which they relate.

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Required Foundational Documents

Foundational documents are necessary for students to understand the philosophical underpinnings and political values of the U.S. political system and may serve as the focus of AP Exam questions. The following list represents the required readings for the course as they relate to the enduring understandings. Teachers are encouraged to also use both classic and contemporary scholarly writings in political science to promote the comparison of political ideas and their application to recent events.

Required Foundational Documents

A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development. **LOR-1**

- **FEDERALIST NO. 10**
  The Same Subject Continued: The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection
  teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-10/
- **BRUTUS NO. 1**
  To the Citizens of the State of New-York
  teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/brutus-i/
- **THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**
  www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

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The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government. **CON-1**

- **THE ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION**
  www.ushistory.org/documents/confederation.htm
- **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES (INCLUDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS)**
  constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution

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The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved. **PMI-1**

- **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES (INCLUDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS)**
  constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution
- **FEDERALIST NO. 51**
  The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments
  teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-51/

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments. **CON-2**

- **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES (INCLUDING THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND SUBSEQUENT AMENDMENTS)**
  constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution

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**

- **"LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL" (BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.)**
  web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Letter_Birmingham_Jail.pdf

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers. **CON-4**

- **FEDERALIST NO. 70**
  The Executive Department Further Considered
  teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-70/

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**

- **FEDERALIST NO. 78**
  The Judiciary Department
  teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-78/

Information about many constitutional issues can be found on the National Constitution Center's website: **constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution**. This same information is also available for download for e-readers, tablets, and other mobile devices through the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution App, available at **constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/about#download-app**.

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Required Supreme Court Cases

Supreme Court cases are necessary for students to understand significant legal precedents may serve as the focus of AP Exam questions. The following list represents required Supreme Court cases and their holdings as related to the enduring understandings in the content outline.

AP U.S. Government and Politics students should be familiar with the structure and functions on the U.S. Supreme Court, as well as how the court renders its decisions. This includes knowing how holdings are decided and that justices who are in the minority often write dissents that express their opinions on the case and the constitutional questions. While students will not need to know any dissenting (or concurring) opinions from the required cases, it is important for students to understand the role of dissenting opinions, especially as they relate to future cases on similar issues.

The required Supreme Court cases are widely considered essential content in college courses. Some of the cases may be seen as controversial and some were decided by thin majorities (5 to 4 decisions). Students are not expected or required to either agree or disagree with the Court's decision. Teachers should encourage students to be familiar with the legal arguments on both sides of leading constitutional cases and thoughtfully analyze the majority and dissenting opinions.

Required Supreme Court Cases

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments. **CON-2**

- **MCCULLOCH V. MARYLAND (1819)**
  This case established supremacy of the U.S. Constitution and federal laws over state laws.
- **UNITED STATES V. LOPEZ (1995)**
  Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime.

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**

- **ENGEL V. VITALE (1962)**
  School sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause.
- **WISCONSIN V. YODER (1972)**
  Compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause.
- **TINKER V. DES MOINES INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (1969)**
  Public school students have the right to wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War.

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- **NEW YORK TIMES CO. V. UNITED STATES (1971)**
  This case bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a "heavy presumption against prior restraint" even in cases involving national security.
- **SCHENCK V. UNITED STATES (1919)**
  Speech creating a "clear and present danger" is not protected by the First Amendment.

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**

- **GIDEON V. WAINWRIGHT (1963)**
  This case guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent in a state felony case.
- **MCDONALD V. CHICAGO (2010)**
  The Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms for self-defense is applicable to the states.

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**

- **BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION (1954)**
  Race-based school segregation violates the equal protection clause.

The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum. **PRD-2**

- **CITIZENS UNITED V. FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION (2010)**
  Political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment.

The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch. **CON-3**

- **BAKER V. CARR (1962)**
  This case opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and the development of the "one person, one vote" doctrine by ruling that challenges to redistricting did not raise "political questions" that would keep federal courts from reviewing such challenges.
- **SHAW V. RENO (1993)**
  Majority-minority districts, created under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, may be constitutionally challenged by voters if race is the only factor used in creating the district.

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**

- **MARBURY V. MADISON (1803)**
  This case established the principle of judicial review, empowering the Supreme Court to nullify an act of the legislative or executive branch that violates the Constitution.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

UNIT 1

Foundations of American Democracy

15–22%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~16/~8
CLASS PERIODS

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Remember to go to **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 1

Multiple-choice: ~20 questions
Free-response: 3 questions

- Concept Application
- Argument Essay (partial)
- Argument Essay (partial)

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UNIT 1

15–22% AP EXAM WEIGHTING | ~16/~8 CLASS PERIODS

Foundations of American Democracy

BIG IDEA 1
Constitutionalism CON
- Why are there debates about the balance of power between the federal and state governments?

BIG IDEA 2
Liberty and Order LOR
- Is the Bill of Rights necessary? Why or why not?

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI
- How does the Constitution affect you and the choices you make?

Developing Understanding

More than 200 years after the U.S. Constitution was ratified, the compromises that were necessary for ratification—which in some instances led to ambiguity—continue to fuel debate and discussion over how best to protect liberty, equality, order, and private property. This first unit sets the foundation for the course by examining how the framers of the Constitution set up a structure of government intended to stand the test of time. Compromises were made during the Constitutional Convention and ratification debates, and these compromises focused on the proper balance between individual freedom, social order, and equality of opportunity. In subsequent units, students will apply their understanding of the Constitution to the institutions of government and people's daily lives.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

4.A 4.B 5.A 5.B

In the study of government and political science, text-based qualitative sources help political scientists understand how governmental and political institutions and actors function and the reasons for their behaviors. These sources are often actually arguments about what the government does (or should do) and how these actions impact citizens and other people in the country.

In this course, students also learn to write their own arguments. Arguments should be organized around a specific reasoning process that aligns to the purpose for writing (e.g., to explain similarities and differences among political principles, or to explain political processes). Choosing the right reasoning process allows students to establish the line of reasoning for the argument and helps them organize the essay.

In their arguments, students should write claims that take a position, going beyond simply stating facts. Claims should also include additional information that sets up the evidence. This is usually developed through a "because" statement, as in "My claim is the strongest because . . .", which is then followed by specific relevant evidence. Evidence is relevant when it relates to and supports the claim.

Preparing for the AP Exam

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course requires students to apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts and to real-world scenarios. It's not enough for students to know the definition of governmental terms and concepts. On the AP Exam, they will be asked to show a deeper understanding of how these concepts actually work, often by describing and explaining an interaction or application within a given scenario on both multiple-choice and free-response questions.

Students often struggle with explanations. They may define or describe a concept but not fully explain the how or why in the context of the question. Have students practice by asking them to explain the steps, stages, and interactions of processes; explain and link causes and effects; or explain the significance of similarities and differences.

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UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~16/~8 CLASS PERIODS
LOR-1	**1.1** Ideals of Democracy	**1.D** Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	1.2 Types of Democracy	**4.A** Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
CON-1	**1.3** Government Power and Individual Rights	**1.A** Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.4 Challenges of the Articles of Confederation	**4.B** Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.5 Ratification of the U.S. Constitution	**1.E** Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
PMI-1	**1.6** Principles of American Government	**4.B** Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
CON-2	**1.7** Relationship Between the States and Federal Government	**5.A** Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.	
	1.8 Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism	**2.A** Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	
	1.9 Federalism in Action	**5.B** Support the argument using relevant evidence.	

Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 1. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

Required Foundational Document Required Supreme Court Case

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SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	1.2 and 1.3	**Close Reading** When students are reading the required foundational documents, such as *Federalist No. 10* and *Brutus No. 1*, have them highlight relevant words and passages that support the authors' claims. Ask students to connect ideas outlined in the documents to the Federalist and Antifederalist views of how our government was founded.
2	1.3 and 1.6	**Think-Pair-Share** Give students a question that requires them to connect Madison's argument in *Federalist No. 51* to a) the structure of the three branches of government established in the Constitution and b) his argument about factions in *Federalist No. 10*.
3	1.8	**Case Notes** Have students create case notes for *McCulloch v. Maryland* and *United States v. Lopez* that include the following information: facts of the case, majority opinion, and the reasoning (constitutional question) for the majority opinion. Make sure students focus on the constitutional reasoning behind the Court's decision.
4	1.9	**Making Connections** Write concepts related to one of the course big ideas on index cards, place them in a box, and have students pick a card at random. Give students a few minutes to gather and recall information about the term, and then pair students and ask them to find the connection between their concepts. Finally, ask the pairs to write a brief explanation of how the concepts are related.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how to introduce your students to the required documents, including the Constitution, and its development and principles.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Thomas Hobbes's definition of an anarchic "state of nature" in the absence of government, as in the failed state of Somalia
- The Mayflower Compact (1620)
- John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* (1690)
- Baron de Montesquieu's ideas about separating powers in government found in *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748)

AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resources > **Analytical Reading (Declaration of Independence)**

TOPIC 1.1
Ideals of Democracy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-1

A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-1.A

Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-1.A.1

The U.S. government is based on ideas of limited government, including natural rights, popular sovereignty, republicanism, and social contract.

LOR-1.A.2

The **Declaration of Independence**, drafted by Jefferson with help from Adams and Franklin, provides a foundation for popular sovereignty, while the **U.S. Constitution** drafted at the Philadelphia Convention and led by George Washington, with important contributions from Madison, Hamilton, and members of the "Grand Committee," provides the blueprint for a unique form of political democracy in the U.S.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- Declaration of Independence

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TOPIC 1.2
Types of Democracy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-1

A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-1.B

Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the U.S.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-1.B.1

Representative democracies can take several forms along this scale:

- *Participatory democracy*, which emphasizes broad participation in politics and civil society
- *Pluralist democracy*, which recognizes group-based activism by nongovernmental interests striving for impact on political decision making
- *Elite democracy*, which emphasizes limited participation in politics and civil society

LOR-1.B.2

Different aspects of the **U.S. Constitution** as well as the debate between ***Federalist No. 10*** and ***Brutus No. 1*** reflect the tension between the broad participatory model and the more filtered participation of the pluralist and elite models.

LOR-1.B.3

The three models of representative democracy continue to be reflected in contemporary institutions and political behavior.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Brutus No. 1*

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.A

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.

AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resources > **Analytical Reading (*Federalist No. 10* and *Brutus No. 1*)**

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.A

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

OPTIONAL READING

- "Letters from the Federal Farmer #1" (Anti-Federalist publication)

TOPIC 1.3

Government Power and Individual Rights

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-1

The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-1.A

Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-1.A.1

Madison's arguments in ***Federalist No. 10*** focused on the superiority of a large republic in controlling the "mischiefs of faction," delegating authority to elected representatives and dispersing power between the states and national government.

CON-1.A.2

Anti-Federalist writings, including ***Brutus No. 1***, adhered to popular democratic theory that emphasized the benefits of a small, decentralized republic while warning of the dangers to personal liberty from a large, centralized government.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Brutus No. 1*

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TOPIC 1.4
Challenges of the Articles of Confederation

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-1

The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-1.B

Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-1.B.1

Specific incidents and legal challenges that highlighted key weaknesses of the **Articles of Confederation** are represented by the:

- Lack of centralized military power to address Shays' Rebellion
- Lack of tax law enforcement power

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- Articles of Confederation

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- State constitutions during the postcolonial period

AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resources > Analytical Reading (Articles of Confederation)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

TOPIC 1.5

Ratification of the U.S. Constitution

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-1

The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-1.C

Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-1.C.1

Compromises deemed necessary for adoption and ratification of the **Constitution** are represented by the:

- Great (Connecticut) Compromise
- Electoral College
- Three-Fifths Compromise
- Compromise on the importation of slaves

CON-1.C.2

Debates about self-government during the drafting of the **Constitution** necessitated the drafting of an amendment process in Article V that entailed either a two-thirds vote in both houses or a proposal from two-thirds of the state legislatures, with final ratification determined by three-fourths of the states.

CON-1.C.3

The compromises necessary to secure ratification of the **Constitution** left some matters unresolved that continue to generate discussion and debate today.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-1.C

Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-1.C.4

The debate over the role of the central government, the powers of state governments, and the rights of individuals remains at the heart of present-day constitutional issues about democracy and governmental power, as represented by:

- Debates about government surveillance resulting from the federal government's response to the 9/11 attacks
- The debate about the role of the federal government in public school education

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993
- Impeachment proceedings against Presidents Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Bill Clinton
- Congressional response to the Obama administration's executive actions on immigration

TOPIC 1.6

Principles of American Government

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-1

The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-1.A

Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and "checks and balances."

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-1.A.1

The powers allocated to Congress, the president, and the courts demonstrate the separation of powers and checks and balances features of the **Constitution**.

PMI-1.A.2

Federalist No. 51 explains how constitutional provisions of separation of powers and checks and balances control abuses by majorities.

PMI-1.B

Explain the implications of separation of powers and "checks and balances" for the U.S. political system.

PMI-1.B.1

Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the separation of powers and checks and balances.

PMI-1.B.2

Impeachment, removal, and other legal actions taken against public officials deemed to have abused their power reflect the purpose of checks and balances.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- *Federalist No. 51*
- The Constitution of the United States

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TOPIC 1.7
Relationship Between the States and Federal Government

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-2

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-2.A

Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-2.A.1

The exclusive and concurrent powers of the national and state governments help explain the negotiations over the balance of power between the two levels.

CON-2.A.2

The distribution of power between federal and state governments to meet the needs of society changes, as reflected by grants, incentives, and aid programs, including federal revenue sharing, mandates, categorical grants, and block grants.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.A

Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- National Recovery Act of 1933
- Devolution revolution of the 1980s
- Federal response to natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy
- National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984
- State-level legalization of marijuana for personal use as in Colorado and Washington (2012)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.A

Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Daniel Elazar, "Opening the Third Century of American Federalism: Issues and Prospects," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1990)
- New Deal legislation
- Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 and state marriage laws
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
- Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and *United States v. Morrison* (2000)

TOPIC 1.8
Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-2

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-2.B

Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-2.B.1

The interpretation of the **Tenth** and **Fourteenth Amendments**, the commerce clause, the necessary and proper clause, and other enumerated and implied powers is at the heart of the debate over the balance of power between the national and state governments.

CON-2.B.2

The balance of power between the national and state governments has changed over time based on U.S. Supreme Court interpretation of such cases as:

- ***McCulloch v. Maryland*** (1819), which declared that Congress has implied powers necessary to implement its enumerated powers and established supremacy of the **Constitution** and federal laws over state laws
- ***United States v. Lopez*** (1995), which ruled that Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime, introducing a new phase of federalism that recognized the importance of state sovereignty and local control

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-2.B

Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASES

- *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)
- *United States v. Lopez* (1995)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.B

Support the argument using relevant evidence.

TOPIC 1.9

Federalism in Action

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-2

Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-2.C

Explain how the distribution of powers among three federal branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-2.C.1

Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the allocation of powers between national and state governments.

CON-2.C.2

National policy making is constrained by the sharing of power between and among the three branches and state governments.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

UNIT 2

Interactions Among Branches of Government

25–36%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~28/~14
CLASS PERIODS

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Remember to go to **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 2

Multiple-choice: ~45 questions
Free-response: 3 questions

- Concept Application
- Quantitative Analysis
- SCOTUS Comparison

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UNIT 2

25–36% AP EXAM WEIGHTING | ~28/~14 CLASS PERIODS

Interactions Among Branches of Government

BIG IDEA 1
Constitutionalism CON

- Which branch of government is the most powerful? Why?
- Are there really checks and balances when one political party controls all three branches of government? Why or why not?

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI

- In what ways has the evolution of government powers affected Americans and their daily lives?

Developing Understanding

In this unit, students continue to explore policy making, focusing on its complexity and the idea that it is a process involving multiple governmental institutions and actors. Students will look at issues or policies from several different perspectives and then apply their knowledge to better understand the complexity of the policy-making process.

The Constitution grants specific powers to Congress, the presidency, and the courts, each of which exercises informal powers (developed through political practice, tradition, and legislation). Because power is widely distributed, and checks prevent one branch from overreaching or usurping powers from the others, institutional actors are in the position where they must both compete and cooperate in order to govern.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

2.A 2.B 3.A 3.B

The gerrymandering cases in this unit provide an opportunity to introduce students to Supreme Court case analysis. It can help to start by having students describe the facts of the cases, focusing on the reasoning behind the majority opinion. Students often get stuck on the details of a case, or what they think is fair. Guide them to focus on the constitutional issues the justices applied when deciding the case. This focus will help students connect the details from a required case to other sources.

This unit also introduces students to data analysis. Provide opportunities for students to practice identifying data from different types of graphs. At this point in the course, you can have them practice identifying data, patterns, and trends in the data, and drawing conclusions. Students will need direction in order to know how to draw conclusions and apply information from data. Help them practice these skills by linking data to political behaviors using the different branches of government or budgets of bureaucratic agencies.

Preparing for the AP Exam

On the AP Exam, students will need to make connections between political concepts, Supreme Court cases, and arguments in text-based sources. One way that political scientists often think about those connections is to make comparisons between concepts, and students will need to make comparisons and draw conclusions on both the multiple-choice questions and the free-response questions.

When making comparisons, it's important for students to begin by identifying the relevant categories of comparison (i.e., what characteristic or attribute they should compare). Two common mistakes that students make are discussing similarities and differences that are 1) not relevant based on the given task or 2) not shared by the objects of comparison. Once students have identified an appropriate and relevant category of comparison, they can then develop their explanation of why the similarities or differences exist and why they are significant.

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UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~28/~14 CLASS PERIODS
CON-3	2.1 Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives	1.C Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	2.2 Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress	3.A Describe the data presented.	
	2.3 Congressional Behavior	2.A Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	
CON-4	2.4 Roles and Powers of the President	3.B Describe patterns and trends in data.	
	2.5 Checks on the Presidency	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
	2.6 Expansion of Presidential Power	4.A Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
	2.7 Presidential Communication	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
CON-5	2.8 The Judicial Branch	2.B Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.	
	2.9 Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	2.10 The Court in Action	2.C Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.	
	2.11 Checks on the Judicial Branch	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	

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UNIT AT A GLANCE *(cont'd)*

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~28/~14 CLASS PERIODS
PMI-2	**2.12** The Bureaucracy	4.B Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	2.13 Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	2.14 Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable	3.C Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
	2.15 Policy and the Branches of Government	3.D Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	

Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 2. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

Required Foundational Document Required Supreme Court Case

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SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	2.2	**Graphic Organizer** Have students complete Venn diagrams comparing the structure, functions, and powers of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Make sure students use the graphic organizer thoughtfully and are not simply "filling in the blanks."
2	2.5	**Quickwrite** As preparation for a free-response question (FRQ) in which students explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in different contexts (such as in FRQ 1), have them quickwrite ways the president's agenda can affect congressional behavior.
3	2.11	**Socratic Seminar** Use one of the essential questions, such as *Which branch of government is the most powerful? Why?,* to initiate a discussion in which students can illustrate their understanding of the learning objectives and essential knowledge statements.
4	2.15	**Match Claims and Evidence** In early stages of practicing argumentation, ask small groups of students to write claims and supporting evidence statements based on a question that resembles the argument essay prompt (such as one about whether the President or Congress has more power over the bureaucracy). Have groups trade claims and evidence, revise or modify the claims (if necessary), match the claims and evidence, and write statements explaining why the evidence supports the claim.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you can introduce each branch of government and use the disciplinary practices to help students understand how they interact.

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TOPIC 2.1

Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives

Required Course Content

SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.C

Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-3

The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-3.A

Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-3.A.1

The Senate is designed to represent states equally, while the House is designed to represent the population.

CON-3.A.2

Different chamber sizes and constituencies influence formality of debate.

CON-3.A.3

Coalitions in Congress are affected by term-length differences.

CON-3.A.4

The enumerated and implied powers in the **Constitution** allow the creation of public policy by Congress, which includes:

- Passing a federal budget, raising revenue, and coining money
- Declaring war and maintaining the armed forces
- Enacting legislation that addresses a wide range of economic, environmental, and social issues based on the necessary and proper clause

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

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SUGGESTED SKILL
Data Analysis
3.A
Describe the data presented.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)
- Whips
- Calendar assignment
- Rider amendments

TOPIC 2.2
Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-3
The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-3.B
Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-3.B.1
By design, the different structures, powers, and functions of the Senate and the House of Representatives affect the policy-making process.

CON-3.B.2
Though both chambers rely on committees to conduct hearings and debate bills under consideration, different constitutional responsibilities of the House and Senate affect the policy-making process.

CON-3.B.3
Chamber-specific procedures, rules, and roles that impact the policy-making process include:
- Number of chamber and debate rules that set the bar high for building majority support
- Roles of Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, party leadership, and committee leadership in both chambers
- Filibuster and cloture
- Holds and unanimous consent in the Senate
- Role of Rules Committee, Committee of the Whole, and discharge petitions in the House
- Treaty ratification and confirmation role of the U.S. Senate

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-3.B

Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-3.B.4

Congress must generate a budget that addresses both discretionary and mandatory spending, and as entitlement costs grow, discretionary spending opportunities will decrease unless tax revenues increase or the budget deficit increases.

CON-3.B.5

Pork-barrel legislation and logrolling affect lawmaking in both chambers.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.A

Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.

OPTIONAL READINGS

- David Mayhew's "Is Congress 'the Broken Branch'?" *Boston University Law Review* (2009)
- Barbara Sinclair's "From Sam Rayburn to Newt Gingrich: The Development of the Partisan Congress," Chapter 1 of *Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making* (2011)

TOPIC 2.3
Congressional Behavior

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-3

The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-3.C

Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-3.C.1

Congressional behavior and governing effectiveness are influenced by:

- Ideological divisions within Congress that can lead to gridlock or create the need for negotiation and compromise
- Gerrymandering, redistricting, and unequal representation of constituencies have been partially addressed by the Supreme Court decision in ***Baker v. Carr*** (1962), which opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and started the "one person, one vote" doctrine, and the no-racial-gerrymandering decision in ***Shaw v. Reno*** (1993)
- Elections that have led to a divided government, including partisan votes against presidential initiatives and congressional refusal to confirm appointments of "lame-duck" presidents of the opposite party
- Different role conceptions of "trustee," "delegate," and "politico" as related to constituent accountability in each chamber

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASES

- *Baker v. Carr* (1962)
- *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)

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TOPIC 2.4

Roles and Powers of the President

SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.B

Describe patterns and trends in data.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-4

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-4.A

Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-4.A.1

Presidents use powers and perform functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda.

CON-4.A.2

Formal and informal powers of the president include:

- Vetoes and pocket vetoes—formal powers that enable the president to check Congress
- Foreign policy—both formal (commander-in-chief and treaties) and informal (executive agreements) powers that influence relations with foreign nations
- Bargaining and persuasion—informal power that enables the president to secure congressional action
- Executive orders—implied from the president's vested "executive power," or from power delegated by Congress, executive orders allow the president to manage the federal government
- Signing statements—informal power that informs Congress and the public of the president's interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by the president

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Conflicts in Vietnam, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Syria
- No Child Left Behind Act (2001)
- Appointments of Sandra Day O'Connor and Thurgood Marshall
- Failed appointments: Robert Bork, John Tower, and Abe Fortas

TOPIC 2.5

Checks on the Presidency

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-4

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-4.B

Explain how the president's agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-4.B .1

The potential for conflict with the Senate depends upon the type of executive branch appointments, including:

- Cabinet members
- Ambassadors
- White House staff

CON-4.B.2

Senate confirmation is an important check on appointment powers, but the president's longest lasting influence lies in life-tenured judicial appointments.

CON-4.B.3

Policy initiatives and executive orders promoted by the president often lead to conflict with the congressional agenda.

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TOPIC 2.6

Expansion of Presidential Power

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.A

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt's State of the Union Address (1941)
- William Howard Taft's *Our Chief Magistrate and His Powers* (1916)
- *Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography* (1913)

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-4

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-4.C

Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-4.C.1

Justifications for a single executive are set forth in ***Federalist No. 70***.

CON-4.C.2

Term-of-office and constitutional-power restrictions, including the passage of the **Twenty-Second Amendment**, demonstrate changing presidential roles.

CON-4.C.3

Different perspectives on the presidential role, ranging from a limited to a more expansive interpretation and use of power, continue to be debated in the context of contemporary events.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- The Constitution of the United States
- *Federalist No. 70*

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- President Reagan's televised "Address to the Nation on Federal Tax Reduction" (1981)

TOPIC 2.7

Presidential Communication

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-4

The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-4.D

Explain how communication technology has changed the president's relationship with the national constituency and the other branches.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-4.D.1

The communication impact of the presidency can be demonstrated through such factors as:

- Modern technology, social media, and rapid response to political issues
- Nationally broadcast State of the Union messages and the president's bully pulpit used as tools for agenda setting

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TOPIC 2.8

The Judicial Branch

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.B

Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-5

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-5.A

Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-5.A.1

The foundation for powers of the judicial branch and how its independence checks the power of other institutions and state governments are set forth in:

- **Article III of the Constitution**
- ***Federalist No. 78***
- ***Marbury v. Madison* (1803)**

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- The Constitution of the United States
- *Federalist No. 78*

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Martin v. Hunter's Lessee* (1816)
- New Deal conflict (Congress)
- *United States v. Nixon* (1974)

TOPIC 2.9

Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-5

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-5.B

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-5.B.1

Precedents and *stare decisis* play an important role in judicial decision making.

CON-5.B.2

Ideological changes in the composition of the Supreme Court due to presidential appointments have led to the Court's establishing new or rejecting existing precedents.

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TOPIC 2.10

The Court in Action

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.C

Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-5

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-5.B

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-5.B.3

Controversial or unpopular court decisions can lead to challenges to the court's legitimacy and power that Congress and the president can address only through future appointments, legislation changing the Court's jurisdiction, or refusing to implement decisions.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education* (1970)
- *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974)
- Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing plan
- Sixteenth Amendment and federal income tax

TOPIC 2.11

Checks on the Judicial Branch

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-5

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-5.B

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

CON-5.C

Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-5.B.4

Political discussion about the Supreme Court's power is illustrated by the ongoing debate over judicial activism versus judicial restraint.

CON-5.C.1

Restrictions on the Supreme Court are represented by:

- Congressional legislation to modify the impact of prior Supreme Court decisions
- Constitutional amendments
- Judicial appointments and confirmations
- The president and states evading or ignoring Supreme Court decisions
- Legislation impacting court jurisdiction

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TOPIC 2.12
The Bureaucracy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-2

The federal bureaucracy implements federal policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-2.A

Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-2.A.1

Tasks performed by departments, agencies, commissions, and government corporations are represented by:

- Writing and enforcing regulations
- Issuing fines
- Testifying before Congress
- Issue networks and "iron triangles"

PMI-2.A.2

Political patronage, civil service, and merit system reforms all impact the effectiveness of the bureaucracy by promoting professionalism, specialization, and neutrality.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- Pendleton Civil Service Act (1883)
- Transportation Safety Administration (TSA)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

TOPIC 2.13

Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-2

The federal bureaucracy implements federal policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-2.B

Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-2.B.1

Discretionary and rule-making authority to implement policy are given to bureaucratic agencies, including:

- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of Education
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Federal Elections Commission (FEC)
- Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

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TOPIC 2.14

Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-2

The federal bureaucracy implements federal policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-2.C

Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-2.C.1

Oversight and methods used by Congress to ensure that legislation is implemented as intended are represented by:

- Committee hearings
- Power of the purse

PMI-2.C.2

As a means to curtail the use of presidential power, congressional oversight serves as a check of executive authorization and appropriation.

PMI-2.D

Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration.

PMI-2.D.1

Presidential ideology, authority, and influence affect how executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration.

PMI-2.D.2

Compliance monitoring can pose a challenge to policy implementation.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.C

Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Oversight of intelligence agencies following the 9/11 terrorist attacks
- Joint committees
- Budget and Impoundment Control Act (1974)
- Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 11246 (Affirmative Action and Government Contracts)
- EPA Superfund management under the Reagan administration

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.D

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- Legislative veto

TOPIC 2.15

Policy and the Branches of Government

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-2

The federal bureaucracy implements federal policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-2.E

Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-2.E.1

Formal and informal powers of Congress, the president, and the courts over the bureaucracy are used to maintain its accountability.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

UNIT 3

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

In Fall 2022, this course and exam description was updated to reflect that *Roe v. Wade* was overturned by the Supreme Court in 2022. *Roe v. Wade* will not appear on the 2023 AP US Government and Politics Exam

13–18%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~26/~13
CLASS PERIODS

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Remember to go to **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 3

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions

- SCOTUS Comparison
- Argument Essay (partial)
- Argument Essay (partial)

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UNIT 3

13–18% AP EXAM WEIGHTING | ~26/~13 CLASS PERIODS

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

BIG IDEA 1
Constitutionalism CON
- In what ways does the Constitution attempt to limit abuse of government powers?

BIG IDEA 3
Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy PRD
- How can individuals and groups help protect civil liberties and civil rights?

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI
- Why have Supreme Court decisions about civil liberties and civil rights changed over time?

Developing Understanding

Students will connect the founding principles of our government to the debates over the appropriate balance of liberty and order, noting how citizens and other groups have pursued policy solutions to protect the civil liberties and civil rights of all Americans, laying the foundation for later discussions about other ways citizens can participate in the government.

The U.S. Constitution, primarily through the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment, protects the civil liberties and civil rights of citizens, though the extent of those protections and the need to protect the safety and general welfare of individuals has long been debated. Through social movements, legal challenges, and acts of Congress, citizens have attempted to restrict the government from unduly infringing on individual rights and from denying equal protection under the law.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

2.C 5.A 5.B

This unit focuses on the analysis and application of SCOTUS cases. In addition to knowing the facts and decision of the required SCOTUS cases, students should analyze the majority opinion, focusing on the constitutional issues (such as the various interpretations of the Bill of Rights, including the due process clause) considered by the justices. This level of knowledge allows students to think like political scientists and compare two cases that relate to the same constitutional issue and draw conclusions about why the Supreme Court may have ruled in a similar or different way in each case.

Students continue to develop the practice of argumentation in this unit by using relevant evidence to support their claim. When using documents as evidence, students should not focus on summarizing the content of a document, but instead on explaining the significance of the evidence and explaining how and why it supports the claim and line of reasoning.

Preparing for the AP Exam

The SCOTUS comparison free-response question on the AP Exam asks students to go beyond simply identifying the similarities and differences between cases. They apply information from a required case and explain how that information is relevant to a non-required case. Then, students demonstrate the ability to transfer understanding of political concepts, behaviors, or processes from a required Supreme Court case to a non-required one.

Students should be able to use the required Supreme Court cases in other ways, such as applying knowledge about a required case to a reading, a scenario, and possibly a political cartoon. Students often struggle with analyzing political cartoons. They should practice interpreting visual clues and then using these clues to determine the argument and relate it to political principles, institutions, processes, or behaviors.

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UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~26/~13 CLASS PERIODS
LOR-2	3.1 The Bill of Rights	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	3.2 First Amendment: Freedom of Religion	2.A Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	
	3.3 First Amendment: Freedom of Speech	5.A Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.	
	3.4 First Amendment: Freedom of the Press	4.D Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	3.5 Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms	4.A Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
	3.6 Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety	5.B Support the argument using relevant evidence.	
LOR-3	3.7 Selective Incorporation	2.B Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources	
	3.8 Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused	5.C Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.	
	3.9 Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy	2.A Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.	
PRD-1	3.10 Social Movements and Equal Protection	4.C Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
PMI-3	3.11 Government Responses to Social Movements	2.B Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.	

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UNIT AT A GLANCE *(cont'd)*

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~26/~13 CLASS PERIODS
CON-6	**3.12** Balancing Minority and Majority Rights ⚖	2.C Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.	
	3.13 Affirmative Action	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
	Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 3. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.		

Required Foundational Document ⚖ Required Supreme Court Case

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SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	3.2	**Graphic Organizer** To practice comparing required Supreme Court cases to a related case, give students a pair of cases—for example, *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972) and *Oregon v. Smith* (1990)—and have them use a Venn diagram to come up with similarities and differences between the cases. Guide students to use valid categories for comparison, such as facts, majority opinion, and the reasoning (constitutional question) for the majority opinion.
2	3.3	**Think-Pair-Share** To practice comparing required Supreme Court cases to a related case, give students a pair of cases—for example, *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969) and *Bethel School District No. 403 v. Fraser* and have them use Think-Pair-Share to come up with similarities, differences, and relevance to political institutions or processes.
3	3.10	**Fishbowl** Ask students to discuss the arguments presented in "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." Have some students form an inner circle to discuss how the arguments relate to political activism and how citizens can affect our government and its policies. The remaining students will form an outer circle to listen, respond, and evaluate.
4	3.11	**Matching Claims and Evidence** Ask small groups of students to write claims and supporting evidence statements based on an argument essay question (such as *Which had more of an impact on the expansion of civil rights: an activist Supreme Court, a motivated legislature, or movements by citizens?*). Have groups trade claims and evidence, revise or modify the claims (if necessary), match the claims and evidence, and write statements explaining why the evidence supports the claim.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to pace your teaching of the many required Supreme Court cases in this unit so students have time to fully understand them.

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TOPIC 3.1
The Bill of Rights

SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
LOR-2.A Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.	**LOR-2.A.1** The **U.S. Constitution** includes a **Bill of Rights** specifically designed to protect individual liberties and rights. **LOR-2.A.2** Civil liberties are constitutionally established guarantees and freedoms that protect citizens, opinions, and property against arbitrary government interference. **LOR-2.A.3** The application of the **Bill of Rights** is continuously interpreted by the courts. **REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT** ▪ The Constitution of the United States
LOR-2.B Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.	**LOR-2.B.1** The **Bill of Rights** consists of the first ten Amendments to the **Constitution**, which enumerate the liberties and rights of individuals. **REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT** ▪ The Constitution of the United States

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SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.A

Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.

TOPIC 3.2

First Amendment: Freedom of Religion

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-2.C

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-2.C.1

The interpretation and application of the **First Amendment**'s establishment and free exercise clauses reflect an ongoing debate over balancing majoritarian religious practice and free exercise, as represented by such cases as:

- ***Engel v. Vitale*** (1962), which declared school sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause
- ***Wisconsin v. Yoder*** (1972), which held that compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASES

- *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)

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TOPIC 3.3

First Amendment: Freedom of Speech

SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.A

Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943)
- *Morse v. Frederick* (2007)

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-2.C

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-2.C.2

The Supreme Court has held that symbolic speech is protected by the **First Amendment**, demonstrated by ***Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District*** (1969), in which the court ruled that public school students could wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War.

LOR-2.C.3

Efforts to balance social order and individual freedom are reflected in interpretations of the First Amendment that limit speech, including:

- Time, place, and manner regulations
- Defamatory, offensive, and obscene statements and gestures
- That which creates a "clear and present danger" based on the ruling in ***Schenck v. United States*** (1919)

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASES

- *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)
- *Schenck v. United States* (1919)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.D

Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

TOPIC 3.4

First Amendment: Freedom of the Press

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-2.C

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-2.C.4

In ***New York Times Co. v. United States*** (1971), the Supreme Court bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a "heavy presumption against prior restraint" even in cases involving national security.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971)

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TOPIC 3.5

Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.A

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008)

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-2.C

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-2.C.5

The Supreme Court's decisions on the **Second Amendment** rest upon its constitutional interpretation of individual liberty.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

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SUGGESTED SKILL
Argumentation
5.B
Support the argument using relevant evidence.

TOPIC 3.6

Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-2
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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-2.D
Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-2.D.1
Court decisions defining cruel and unusual punishment involve interpretation of the **Eighth Amendment** and its application to state death penalty statutes.

LOR-2.D.2
The debate about the **Second** and **Fourth Amendments** involves concerns about public safety and whether or not the government regulation of firearms or collection of digital metadata promotes or interferes with public safety and individual rights.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT
- The Constitution of the United States

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TOPIC 3.7
Selective Incorporation

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.B

Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- Bans on polygamy and use of peyote in religious ceremonies

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-3

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-3.A

Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-3.A.1

The doctrine of selective incorporation has imposed limitations on state regulation of civil rights and liberties as represented by ***McDonald v. Chicago*** (2010), which ruled the **Second Amendment**'s right to keep and bear arms for self-defense in one's home is applicable to the states through the **Fourteenth Amendment**.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.C

Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Riley v. California* (2014)

TOPIC 3.8

Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-3

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-3.B

Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-3.B.1

The Court has on occasion ruled in favor of states' power to restrict individual liberty, as, for example, when speech can be shown to increase the danger to public safety.

LOR-3.B.2

The Miranda rule involves the interpretation and application of accused persons' due process rights as protected by the **Fifth** and **Sixth Amendments**, yet the Court has sanctioned a "public safety" exception that allows unwarned interrogation to stand as direct evidence in court.

LOR-3.B.3

Pretrial rights of the accused and the prohibition of unreasonable searches and seizures are intended to ensure that citizen liberties are not eclipsed by the need for social order and security, including:

- The right to legal counsel, speedy and public trial, and an impartial jury
- Protection against warrantless searches of cell phone data under the **Fourth Amendment**
- Limitations placed on bulk collection of telecommunication metadata (Patriot and USA Freedom Acts)

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-3.B

Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

LOR-3.B.4

The due process clause has been applied to guarantee the right to an attorney and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures, as represented by:

- ***Gideon v. Wainwright*** (1963), which guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent
- The exclusionary rule, which stipulates evidence illegally seized by law enforcement officers in violation of the suspect's **Fourth Amendment** right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures cannot be used against that suspect in criminal prosecution.

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.A

Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925)
- Hyde Amendment of 1976 barred the use of certain federal funds to pay for abortions outside of incest, rape, or endangerment to the life of the pregnant woman
- *Board of Education of Independent School District No. 92 of Pottawatomie County v. Earls* (2008)

TOPIC 3.9

Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

LOR-3

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.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

LOR-3.B

Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

LOR-3.B.5

While a right to privacy is not explicitly named in the Constitution, the court has interpreted the due process clause to protect the right of privacy from state infringement. This interpretation of the due process clause has been the subject of controversy.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

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TOPIC 3.10
Social Movements and Equal Protection

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-1

The Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-1.A

Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-1.A.1

Civil rights protect individuals from discrimination based on characteristics such as race, national origin, religion, and sex; these rights are guaranteed to all citizens under the due process and equal protection clauses of the **U.S. Constitution**, as well as acts of Congress.

PRD-1.A.2

The leadership and events associated with civil, women's, and LGBT rights are evidence of how the equal protection clause can support and motivate social movements, as represented by:

- Dr. Martin Luther King's **"Letter from a Birmingham Jail"** and the civil rights movement of the 1960s
- The National Organization for Women and the women's rights movement
- The pro-life (anti-abortion) movement

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- The Constitution of the United States
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.C

Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Equal treatment in public accommodations (Title II), equal employment opportunities (Title VII), and opportunities for women to participate in athletics (Title IX)
- *Reed v. Reed* (1971)
- Hatch Amendment (proposed 1981)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.B

Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources

TOPIC 3.11
Government Responses to Social Movements

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-3

Public policy promoting civil rights is influenced by citizen-state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-3.A

Explain how the government has responded to social movements.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-3.A.1

The government can respond to social movements through court rulings and/or policies.

- ***Brown v. Board of Education*** (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the **Fourteenth Amendment**'s equal protection clause
- The Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972
- The Voting Rights Act of 1965

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)

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TOPIC 3.12

Balancing Minority and Majority Rights

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.C

Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-6

The Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen-state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-6.A

Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-6.A.1

Decisions demonstrating that minority rights have been restricted at times and protected at other times include:

- State laws and Supreme Court holdings restricting African-American access to the same restaurants, hotels, schools, etc., as the majority white population based on the "separate but equal" doctrine.
- ***Brown v. Board of Education*** (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the **Fourteenth Amendment**'s equal protection clause
- The Supreme Court upholding the rights of the majority in cases that limit and prohibit majority-minority districting.

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Milliken v. Bradley* (1974)
- *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1* (2007)
- *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978)
- *Gratz v. Bollinger* and *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003)

TOPIC 3.13
Affirmative Action

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

CON-6

The Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen-state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

CON-6.A

Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

CON-6.A.2

The debate on affirmative action includes justices who insist that the **Constitution** is colorblind and those who maintain that it forbids only racial classifications designed to harm minorities, not help them.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

UNIT 4

American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

10–15%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~22/~11
CLASS PERIODS

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Remember to go to **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 4

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions

- Concept Application
- Quantitative Analysis
- Quantitative Analysis

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UNIT 4

10–15% AP EXAM WEIGHTING | ~22/~11 CLASS PERIODS

American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI

- How do our core beliefs about the role of government affect our behavior?
- How does our view of what freedom is shape our opinions?

BIG IDEA 5
Methods of Political Analysis MPA

- Why are some opinion polls better than others?
- How can policy-makers use information from political science to make decisions?

Developing Understanding

Connecting the application of political science methods to the development of social and economic policies that Americans support, advocate for, and adopt is foundational to understanding the ideologies of political parties and patterns of political participation. American political beliefs are shaped by founding ideals, core values, linkage institutions (i.e., elections, political parties, interest groups, and the media in all its forms), and the changing demographics of citizens. These beliefs about government, politics, and the individual's role in the political system influence the creation of public policies.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

3.C 3.D 4.C

This unit provides a great opportunity to integrate data analysis with an investigation of American attitudes about government and politics, how those attitudes develop and change over time, and how political scientists measure and evaluate political attitudes and behaviors. Students should be able to correctly interpret and connect what they see in the data to course concepts in order to draw conclusions. Drawing conclusions requires students to make inferences based on the patterns and trends in the data and their knowledge of political concepts.

This is also a good time to have students analyze political concepts from secondary sources and explain how they relate to a political concept. Books by political scientists, opinion pieces in major publications, and scholarly online articles will often connect to current events and be a great resource. Students should analyze the argument, considering how the author responds to opposing or differing perspectives.

Preparing for the AP Exam

The AP Exam requires students to analyze quantitative data presented visually and apply that analysis to their understanding of political concepts in both the multiple-choice and free-response sections.

In both types of questions, students will need to be able to: (1) identify and describe the data, (2) describe patterns or trends in data, (3) draw conclusions about patterns or trends in data, and (4) explain how the data relates or demonstrates a political concept, principle, or behavior.

Students often struggle to connect conclusions drawn from data to political concepts, such as behavior. Encourage them to take their conclusions further and explain the relationship. Political scientists use data and their knowledge of political institutions and processes to explain how, for example, members of a political party, voters, or interest groups may react to certain public opinion data.

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UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skill	Class Periods ~22/~11 CLASS PERIODS
MPA-1	**4.1** American Attitudes About Government and Politics	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	4.2 Political Socialization	3.A Describe the data presented.	
	4.3 Changes in Ideology	3.B Describe patterns and trends in data.	
	4.4 Influence of Political Events on Ideology	4.B Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
MPA-2	**4.5** Measuring Public Opinion	3.C Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
	4.6 Evaluating Public Opinion Data	3.D Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
PMI-4	**4.7** Ideologies of Political Parties	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
	4.8 Ideology and Policy Making	4.D Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	4.9 Ideology and Economic Policy	3.E Explain possible limitations of the data provided.	
	4.10 Ideology and Social Policy	4.C Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	

Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 4. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

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SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	4.1	**Close Read** Have students read an excerpt from a secondary political source, such as a news article or a book by a political theorist, that is related to political socialization. Ideas can be found in the optional readings on the topic pages. Have students identify the writer's argument and the evidence used to support that argument, and relate the argument to a political behavior.
2	4.2	**Discussion Group** Assign students to groups to discuss the learning objective from this topic—*Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization*—with the view to help them develop new understandings by hearing the views of their classmates. After discussion, ask groups to present their conclusions on the factors and whether or not their group reached a consensus.
3	4.5	**Create Representation** Give groups of students data from a few current public opinion polls and ask the groups to create a visual representation of the data. Let students decide the best type of visual (graph, table, etc.) to use and make sure they correctly label the visual. To ensure understanding, have groups trade with each other and review the graphs.
4	4.6 and 4.8	**Guided Discussion** This topic offers a lot of fodder for discussion about how political actors use polling data. You can use brainstorming and quickwrite as strategies during a guided discussion in which you help students understand fiscal policy polling data and how the data may affect political behavior.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to scaffold your instruction of data analysis and encourage your students to make connections between what they learn from the data and specific political concepts.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

OPTIONAL READINGS

- Alexis de Tocqueville's "The Origin of the Anglo-Americans" and "Social Condition of the Anglo-Americans," Chapters 2 and 3 of *Democracy in America* (1835)
- Suzanne Mettler's *Confronting the Submerged State* (2011)
- George Will's *Statecraft as Soulcraft: What Government Does* (1983)

TOPIC 4.1

American Attitudes About Government and Politics

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-1

Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-1.A

Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-1.A.1

Different interpretations of core values, including individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, and limited government, affect the relationship between citizens and the federal government and that citizens have with each other.

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TOPIC 4.2
Political Socialization

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-1

Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-1.B

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-1.B.1

Family, schools, peers, media, and social environments (including civic and religious organizations) contribute to the development of an individual's political attitudes and values through the process of political socialization.

MPA-1.B.2

As a result of globalization, U.S. political culture has both influenced and been influenced by the values of other countries.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.A

Describe the data presented.

OPTIONAL READINGS

- Robert Putnam's "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," *Journal of Democracy* (1995)
- Participating in Scouts or serving on a school board
- Thomas Friedman's *The World Is Flat 3.0* (2007) or Joseph Stiglitz's *Making Globalization Work* (2006)
- Matt Barreto and Gary Segura's *Latino America: How America's Most Dynamic Population Is Poised to Transform the Politics of the Nation* (2014)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.B

Describe patterns and trends in data.

OPTIONAL READING

- Cathy J. Cohen's *Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics* (2010)

TOPIC 4.3

Changes in Ideology

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-1

Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-1.B

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-1.B.3

Generational and life cycle effects also contribute to the political socialization that influences an individual's political attitudes.

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TOPIC 4.4

Influence of Political Events on Ideology

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-1

Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-1.B

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-1.B.4

The relative importance of major political events to the development of individual political attitudes is an example of political socialization.

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SUGGESTED SKILL
Data Analysis
3.C
Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.

TOPIC 4.5
Measuring Public Opinion

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-2
Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-2.A
Describe the elements of a scientific poll.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-2.A.1
Public opinion data that can impact elections and policy debates is affected by such scientific polling types and methods as:

- Type of poll (opinion polls, benchmark or tracking polls, entrance and exit polls)
- Sampling techniques, identification of respondents, mass survey or focus group, sampling error
- Type and format of questions

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TOPIC 4.6

Evaluating Public Opinion Data

SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.D

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Carter–Reagan election of 1980
- Obama–Romney election of 2012
- Clinton–Trump election of 2016

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-2

Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-2.B

Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-2.B.1

The relationship between scientific polling and elections and policy debates is affected by the:

- Importance of public opinion as a source of political influence in a given election or policy debate
- Reliability and veracity of public opinion data

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

TOPIC 4.7

Ideologies of Political Parties

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-4

Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-4.A

Explain how ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-4.A.1

The Democratic Party (D or DEM) platforms generally align more closely to liberal ideological positions, and the Republican Party (R or GOP) platforms generally align more closely to conservative ideological positions.

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TOPIC 4.8

Ideology and Policy Making

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-4

Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-4.B

Explain how U.S. political culture (e.g., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-4.B.1

Because the U.S. is a democracy with a diverse society, public policies generated at any given time reflect the attitudes and beliefs of citizens who choose to participate in politics at that time.

PMI-4.B.2

The balancing dynamic of individual liberty and government efforts to promote stability and order has been reflected in policy debates and their outcomes over time.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.D

Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Seymour Martin Lipset's "Ideology, Politics, and Deviance," Chapter 1 of *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (1996)
- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996
- DREAM Act and debate over making English the official national language
- Multiculturalism versus assimilation

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.E

Explain possible limitations of the data provided.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Ideological positions on the inheritance tax
- Ideological positions on the minimum wage

TOPIC 4.9
Ideology and Economic Policy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-4

Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-4.C

Describe different political ideologies on the role of government in regulating the marketplace.

PMI-4.D

Explain how political ideologies vary on the government's role in regulating the marketplace.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-4.C.1

Liberal ideologies favor more governmental regulation of the marketplace, conservative ideologies favor fewer regulations, and libertarian ideologies favor little or no regulation of the marketplace beyond the protection of property rights and voluntary trade.

PMI-4.D.1

Ideological differences on marketplace regulation are based on different theoretical support, including Keynesian and supply-side positions on monetary and fiscal policies promoted by the president, Congress, and the Federal Reserve.

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TOPIC 4.10

Ideology and Social Policy

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-4

Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-4.E

Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of the government in addressing social issues.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-4.E.1

Liberal ideologies tend to think that personal privacy—areas of behavior where government should not intrude—extends further than conservative ideologies do (except in arenas involving religious and educational freedom); conservative ideologies favor less government involvement to ensure social and economic equality; and libertarian ideologies disfavor any governmental intervention beyond the protection of private property and individual liberty.

PMI-4.F

Explain how different ideologies impact policy on social issues.

PMI-4.F.1

Policy trends concerning the level of government involvement in social issues reflect the success of conservative or liberal perspectives in political parties.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.C

Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992)
- Ideological positions on school vouchers litigated in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002)
- Differing state requirements for marriage and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) ruling on same-sex marriage

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

UNIT 5

Political Participation

20–27%
AP EXAM WEIGHTING

~18/~9
CLASS PERIODS

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Remember to go to **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

Personal Progress Check 5

Multiple-choice: ~30 questions
Free-response: 3 questions

- Quantitative Analysis
- Argument Essay
- Argument Essay

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Political Participation

BIG IDEA 3
Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy PRD

- Why do some people choose to participate in government while others do not?
- How does your social network affect your political beliefs?

BIG IDEA 4
Competing Policy-Making Interests PMI

- Why might you join a political party? Why might you choose not to?

BIG IDEA 5
Methods of Political Analysis MPA

- How does who you are affect whether you participate or not?

Developing Understanding

Students should understand the many ways that they can influence policy-makers and impact the decisions that will affect their daily lives.

The principle of rule by the people is the bedrock of the American political system and requires that citizens engage and participate in the development of policy. Under our Constitution, governing is achieved directly through citizen participation, although there are institutions (e.g., political parties, interest groups, and mass media) that inform, organize, and mobilize support to influence government and politics, resulting in many venues for citizen influence on policy making.

Building the Disciplinary Practices

3.D 5.A 5.B 5.C 5.D

Throughout the course, students have been gradually introduced to argumentation and have had regular opportunities to practice this skill. In this unit, students continue to write defensible claims, support claims with relevant evidence, and establish a line of reasoning, but now also use refutation, concession, or rebuttal when they respond to alternative perspectives.

Just as political scientists do in their arguments, students should be able to identify an opposing or alternate perspective about a political principle, institution, process, or behavior and use evidence to explain why that perspective is not as valid or credible as their own claim.

As students build toward more complex skills, it helps to ask them to identify and explain limitations they discover when analyzing and interpreting quantitative data. Limitations can include data from a limited demographic, opt-in polling (like on social media), a biased polling source, the way questions were asked, and more.

Preparing for the AP Exam

To complete their argument essays, students will respond to an opposing or alternative perspective. It is not enough for students to simply identify an opposing or alternative perspective. They must demonstrate a correct understanding of the perspective by briefly describing it, and then refute, concede, or rebut that perspective.

This task is often difficult for students. Many students can identify an opposing or alternative perspective, but they struggle to explain why the other perspective is incorrect or why another perspective might be equally as valid as their own argument. To help students master this skill, ask them to identify evidence that would support an alternative perspective when establishing their own claims. Then, have them explain why, in the face of this evidence, they still chose to support a different claim. This thought process shows students one way of effectively rebutting, refuting, or conceding an alternative perspective. Key phrases such as "while some may argue" or "even though some evidence supports" can help them frame their counterarguments.

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UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods ~18/~9 CLASS PERIODS
MPA-3	**5.1** Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior	**1.D** Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.	
	5.2 Voter Turnout	**3.C** Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
PMI-5	**5.3** Political Parties	**1.B** Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	5.4 How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt	**4.B** Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	5.5 Third-Party Politics	**3.D** Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	5.6 Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making	**3.F** Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided.	
	5.7 Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes	**1.E** Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.	
PRD-2	**5.8** Electing a President	**5.A** Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.	
	5.9 Congressional Elections	**5.B** Support the argument using relevant evidence.	
	5.10 Modern Campaigns	**5.C** Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.	
	5.11 Campaign Finance	**2.B** Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.	

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UNIT AT A GLANCE *(cont'd)*

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods ~18/~9 CLASS PERIODS
PRD-3	**5.12** The Media	5.D Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.	
	5.13 Changing Media	2.D Explain how required Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context.	

Go to **AP Classroom** to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 5. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

Required Foundational Document Required Supreme Court Case

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SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate various instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities or instructional approaches and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching the content and skills in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 139 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	5.2	**Look for a Pattern** Using a complex graph with at least two data sets—for example, showing voting patterns by age and gender—have students compare the data to find a trend and draw a conclusion. They should also explain their reasoning. For example, a graph may show that less than 40 percent of people under the age of 24 vote, but over 70 percent of people aged 65–74 vote. Students could conclude that candidates are unlikely to champion issues favored mostly by the young because young people are not as likely to vote as older people.
2	5.7	**Debate** Facilitate a debate about the various groups that influence policy in our government today. Ask students to take a position on which group they believe has the most influence and to provide relevant supporting evidence to back up their claims.
3	5.13	**Self/Peer Revision** Ask students to write an argument based on the following prompt: *Which of the following factions have the most impact on national elections today: political parties, special interest groups, or the media?* Ask students to use evidence from *Federalist No. 10* to support their claims. Have students perform self- and peer revisions of their practice argument essays so they have the opportunity to review their practice claims, supporting evidence, sourcing, and analysis and reasoning.

Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to scaffold your student practice of argumentation in conjunction with the unit content. If teaching this unit near the beginning of the year, it helps to focus on teaching students to write claims and establish supporting evidence instead of writing full argument essays.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.D

Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.

TOPIC 5.1

Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-3

Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-3.A

Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-3.A.1

Legal protections found in federal legislation and the **Fifteenth**, **Seventeenth**, **Nineteenth**, **Twenty-Fourth**, and **Twenty-Sixth Amendments** relate to the expansion of opportunities for political participation.

REQUIRED FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENT

- The Constitution of the United States

MPA-3.B

Describe different models of voting behavior.

MPA-3.B.1

Examples of political models explaining voting behavior include:

- Rational choice—Voting based on what is perceived to be in the citizen's individual interest
- Retrospective voting—Voting to decide whether the party or candidate in power should be reelected based on the recent past
- Prospective voting—Voting based on predictions of how a party or candidate will perform in the future
- Party-line voting—Supporting a party by voting for candidates from one political party for all public offices at the same level of government

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.C

Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.

OPTIONAL READINGS

- Rob Paral's "Stepping Up: The Impact of the Newest Immigrant, Asian, and Latino Voters," Immigration Policy Center (2013)
- "The Diversifying Electorate—Voting Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin in 2012 (and Other Recent Elections)," U.S. Census Bureau (May 2013)
- David RePass's "Issue Salience and Party Choice," *American Political Science Review* (1971)

TOPIC 5.2
Voter Turnout

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

MPA-3

Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

MPA-3.C

Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

MPA-3.C.1

Structural barriers, political efficacy, and demographics can predict differences in voter turnout in the U.S., and the following can influence voter turnout among democracies worldwide:

- National versus state-controlled elections
- Voter registration laws and procedures
- Voting incentives or penalties or fines
- Election type (midterm or presidential)

MPA-3.C.2

Demographic characteristics and political efficacy or engagement are used to predict the likelihood of whether an individual will vote.

MPA-3.C.3

Factors influencing voter choice include:

- Party identification and ideological orientation
- Candidate characteristics
- Contemporary political issues
- Religious beliefs or affiliation, gender, race and ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics

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TOPIC 5.3
Political Parties

SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.B

Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- 2012 Democratic and Republican party platforms

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-5

Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE
PMI-5.A Describe linkage institutions.	PMI-5.A.1 Linkage institutions are channels that allow individuals to communicate their preferences to policy-makers: ▪ Parties ▪ Interest groups ▪ Elections ▪ Media
PMI-5.B Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.	PMI-5.B.1 The functions and impact of political parties on the electorate and government are represented by: ▪ Mobilization and education of voters ▪ Party platforms ▪ Candidate recruitment ▪ Campaign management, including fundraising and media strategy ▪ The committee and party leadership systems in legislatures

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Source Analysis

4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- Mitt Romney's ORCA and Barack Obama's Project Narwhal in the 2012 campaign

TOPIC 5.4

How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-5

Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-5.C

Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-5.C.1

Parties have adapted to candidate-centered campaigns, and their role in nominating candidates has been weakened.

PMI-5.C.2

Parties modify their policies and messaging to appeal to various demographic coalitions.

PMI-5.C.3

The structure of parties has been influenced by:

- Critical elections and regional realignments
- Campaign finance law
- Changes in communication and data-management technology

PMI-5.C.4

Parties use communication technology and voter data management to disseminate, control, and clarify political messages and enhance outreach and mobilization efforts.

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TOPIC 5.5
Third-Party Politics

SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.D

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-5

Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-5.D

Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidate success.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-5.D.1

In comparison to proportional systems, winner-take-all voting districts serve as a structural barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.

PMI-5.D.2

The incorporation of third-party agendas into platforms of major political parties serves as a barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Data Analysis

3.F

Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Tobacco subsidies
- Tax cuts under George W. Bush
- Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (1965)
- E. E. Schattschneider's *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (1960)

TOPIC 5.6

Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-5

Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-5.E

Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-5.E.1

Interest groups may represent very specific or more general interests, and can educate voters and office holders, conduct lobbying, draft legislation, and mobilize membership to apply pressure on and work with legislators and government agencies.

PMI-5.E.2

In addition to working within party coalitions, interest groups exert influence through long-standing relationships with bureaucratic agencies, congressional committees, and other interest groups; such relationships are described as "iron triangles" and "issue networks," and they help interest groups exert influence across political party coalitions.

PMI-5.F

Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.

PMI-5.F.1

Interest group influence may be impacted by:

- Inequality of political and economic resources
- Unequal access to decision makers
- "Free rider" problem

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TOPIC 5.7
Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PMI-5

Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policymakers.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PMI-5.G

Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PMI-5.G.1

Single-issue groups, ideological/social movements, and protest movements form with the goal of impacting society and policy making.

PMI-5.G.2

Competing actors such as interest groups, professional organizations, social movements, the military, and bureaucratic agencies influence policy making, such as the federal budget process, at key stages and to varying degrees.

PMI-5.G.3

Elections and political parties are related to major policy shifts or initiatives, occasionally leading to political realignments of voting constituencies.

SUGGESTED SKILL

Concept Application

1.E

Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- Club for Growth supporting limits on taxation

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.A

Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE (NOT REQUIRED)

- 2000 presidential election

TOPIC 5.8
Electing a President

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-2

The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-2.A

Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential election.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-2.A.1

The process and outcomes in U.S. presidential elections are impacted by:

- Incumbency advantage phenomenon
- Open and closed primaries
- Caucuses
- Party conventions
- General (presidential) elections
- The Electoral College

PRD-2.B

Explain how the Electoral College facilitates and/or impedes democracy.

PRD-2.B.1

The winner-take-all allocation of votes per state (except Maine and Nebraska) under the setup of the Electoral College compared with the national popular vote for president raises questions about whether the Electoral College facilitates or impedes democracy.

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.B

Support the argument using relevant evidence.

TOPIC 5.9

Congressional Elections

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-2

The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-2.C

Explain how the different processes work in U.S. congressional elections.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-2.C.1

The process and outcomes in U.S. congressional elections are impacted by:

- Incumbency advantage phenomenon
- Open and closed primaries
- Caucuses
- General (presidential and midterm) elections

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.C

Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.

OPTIONAL READINGS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES (NOT REQUIRED)

- Canvasing and phone banking
- Sasha Issenberg's *Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns* (2012)

TOPIC 5.10
Modern Campaigns

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-2

The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-2.D

Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-2.D.1

The benefits and drawbacks of modern campaigns are represented by:

- Dependence on professional consultants
- Rising campaign costs and intensive fundraising efforts
- Duration of election cycles
- Impact of and reliance on social media for campaign communication and fundraising

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TOPIC 5.11
Campaign Finance

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Application

2.B

Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-2

The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-2.E

Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-2.E.1

Federal legislation and case law pertaining to campaign finance demonstrate the ongoing debate over the role of money in political and free speech, as set forth in:

- Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, which was an effort to ban soft money and reduce attack ads with "Stand by Your Ad" provision: "I'm [candidate's name] and I approve this message"
- ***Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*** (2010), which ruled that political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the **First Amendment**

PRD-2.E.2

Debates have increased over free speech and competitive and fair elections related to money and campaign funding (including contributions from individuals, political action committees [PACs], and political parties).

PRD-2.E.3

Different types of PACs influence elections and policy making through fundraising and spending.

REQUIRED SUPREME COURT CASE

- *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* (2010)

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SUGGESTED SKILL

Argumentation

5.D

Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.

OPTIONAL READINGS

- FiveThirtyEight.com blog by Nate Silver
- "Understanding the Participatory News Consumer," A Pew Trust Report (March 1, 2010)

TOPIC 5.12
The Media

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-3

The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-3.A

Explain the media's role as a linkage institution.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-3.A.1

Traditional news media, new communication technologies, and advances in social media have profoundly influenced how citizens routinely acquire political information, including news events, investigative journalism, election coverage, and political commentary.

PRD-3.A.2

The media's use of polling results to convey popular levels of trust and confidence in government can impact elections by turning such events into "horse races" based more on popularity and factors other than qualifications and platforms of candidates.

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TOPIC 5.13
Changing Media

SUGGESTED SKILL

SCOTUS Analysis

2.D

Explain how required Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context.

OPTIONAL READING

- Malcolm Gladwell's "Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted," *The New Yorker* (Oct. 4, 2010)

Required Course Content

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

PRD-3

The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

PRD-3.B

Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

PRD-3.B.1

Political participation is influenced by a variety of media coverage, analysis, and commentary on political events.

PRD-3.B.2

The rapidly increasing demand for media and political communications outlets from an ideologically diverse audience have led to debates over media bias and the impact of media ownership and partisan news sites.

PRD-3.B.3

The nature of democratic debate and the level of political knowledge among citizens is impacted by:

- Increased media choices
- Ideologically oriented programming
- Consumer-driven media outlets and emerging technologies that reinforce existing beliefs
- Uncertainty over the credibility of news sources and information

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Project Guide

Making the Civic Connection

To be authorized as an AP U.S. Government and Politics course, teachers must submit a course syllabus for review that complies with the following:

Curricular Requirement 14: Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the AP U.S. Government and Politics course framework that culminates in a presentation of findings. (See **AP U.S. Government and Politics Course Audit Curricular Requirements** on AP Central.)

The project can involve student participation in nonpartisan service-learning opportunities, government-based internship programs, or a choice from a teacher-approved list of research project ideas.

While the project is not part of the AP Exam grade, it does provide students with the opportunity to engage in a sustained, real-world activity that will deepen their understanding of course content and help them develop the disciplinary practices that are assessed on the exam.

Project Guidelines

A relevant project applies course concepts to real-world political issues, processes, institutions, and policy making. For example, students might investigate a question by collecting and analyzing data; participate in a relevant service learning or civic event; or develop a sustained, applied investigation about local issues. Students would then communicate their findings or experiences in a way that conveys or demonstrates their understanding of course content.

You have flexibility in how to set up, connect, and assess student performance on the project. The following are important considerations.

The project must require students to:

- Connect course concepts to real-world issues
- Demonstrate disciplinary practices
- Share/communicate their findings in an authentic way (e.g., presentation, article, speech, brochure, multimedia, podcast, political science fair)

The project may be:

- Undertaken either by individuals or small groups of students
- Completed before or after the AP Exam or integrated throughout or at a specific point in the course
- Partisan based, if so chosen by the student(s)

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You should:

- Ensure that the project complies with local school/district guidelines and policies
- Consider the length of the course (half year versus full year) when determining the complexity of the project
- Ensure that projects are appropriate for:
  - the age and maturity of the student
  - the availability of resources and necessary transportation
  - the political climate in your community
- Assist students in choosing project topics and determining scope
- Provide feedback to students about conceptual understanding and skill development

You should not:

- Assign students to partisan-based projects; while allowed, such projects must be of the student's own choosing

GUIDING STUDENTS IN SELECTING REASONABLE POLITICAL ISSUES OR FIELDS OF INQUIRY

The key to a successful project is choosing an appropriate issue or inquiry, which may be difficult for students. You may want to prepare a list of ideas for student research. Because students will be sharing their work in some capacity, each student or group should work on a different issue or inquiry.

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course framework is packed with content that can generate project or topic ideas. Asking students to turn enduring understandings into questions to be answered is a great way to help them begin the process of inquiry. Additionally, the required foundational documents or Supreme Court cases might spark interest and provide context for a project.

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Project Suggestions

The following pages present potential project ideas that can be conducted by either individuals or groups as appropriate. Relevant enduring understandings are also provided to show how each project idea relates to the course.

The projects in this list illustrate a range of complexity and length. Please note that some of the more complex and extensive projects will offer the greatest opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of course concepts and develop disciplinary practices.

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PROJECT SUGGESTIONS

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
Develop a Position *Research a local, state, or national issue related to a political principle. Propose potential options or alternatives. Develop an argument that describes the intended outcome of the option, explains how it would be implemented, and refutes opposing arguments.* **PMI-5:** Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policymakers.	Develop a display board to present the issue, options, and proposals that will be shared in a class, school, or community political science fair. **OR** Write a letter or letters to elected officials explaining your position and proposal.	**Sample Letter to Elected Officials** from the American Library Association Sample letter and other resources from the **North Los Angeles Regional Center** **Writing Effective Letters to Your Legislators** from the National Court Reporters Association Videos with tips for civic engagement on **Citizen University**
Analyze Public Opinion *Develop and implement a survey about a political topic or policy. Analyze the data and make a policy recommendation. Discuss the possible impact of the policy if implemented.* **MPA-1:** Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.	Develop a visual display of the data and present findings and recommendations to an appropriate group, organization, or institution (e.g., school board) as a podcast, video, letter, or other authentic format.	Survey creation tools on **Google Forms** or **Typeform** Polling analysis and data from the **Pew Research Center** Maps, population statistics, and other data from the **U.S. Census Bureau**
Media Literacy Project *Select a political issue and research how that issue is being framed and reported on in multiple media outlets. Use this investigation to develop a framework for discerning false, misleading, or biased information, including determining criteria for what makes a source credible.* **PRD-3:** The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.	Create a guide to media literacy for peers, using your findings on how one story is covered by various outlets to make recommendations about savvy media use.	Web literacy resources from **November Learning** Media literacy resources from the **Newseum**, **Media Literacy Now**, or **PBS NewsHour** websites **Tips on Writing a Good Letter to the Editor** from the National Council of Teachers of English

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PROJECT SUGGESTIONS *(cont'd)*

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
Local Civic Engagement *Identify and research an issue of current debate. Attend a school board, city council, or local government meeting related to that issue. Observe and document policy-making processes and outcomes.* **OR** *Set up a class or school forum where policy-makers or advocates with differing perspectives have the opportunity to discuss and debate the issue. Document the differing perspectives and implications.* **CON-2:** Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.	Present your own perspective during a public comment period during a public meeting. Write a letter to the editor for the school or local paper, blog, or online forum relating your argument or perspective.	**Tips for Speaking at a Town or Public Meeting** from the American Public Health Association
Legislator Lobby Day *After thoroughly researching a policy issue, meet with local legislators to discuss the issue.* **PMI-4:** Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American politics.	Develop a list of evidence-based talking points and leave behind a document for use when meeting with elected officials. **OR** Develop a brochure for community members that explains the issue.	**How to organize a lobby day** on the Classroom to Capitol website
Campaign Consultants *During an election season, research important issues, voter perspectives, and policies impacting a particular elected position. Assume the role of campaign consultant(s) who must advise candidates currently running for office.* **PRD-2:** The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.	Create a mock campaign proposal and then be interviewed by the teacher or classmates. The campaign proposal should illustrate the candidate's strategy based on data and might include key messaging, storyboards, scripts, visual imagery, videos, and/or posters for the candidate.	Tips for creating online campaigns on **Facebook** and **Crowdpac** **7 Ways to Effectively Market Your Candidate** from Campaigns and Elections

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PROJECT SUGGESTIONS *(cont'd)*

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
Mock Congress *Conduct a mock Congress. Students assume the roles of members of Congress seeking to enact a legislative agenda. They research an issue, write a draft of a bill, and write a floor speech to introduce the proposed legislation. Other students assume the roles of other legislators and engage in a congressional debate.* *Note: This activity may be part of a larger statewide or national competition or event.* **PMI-1:** The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved.	Deliver the floor speech proposing the legislation and provide evidence-based answers to questions posed about the bill.	**We the People mock Congress national finals** on YouTube **My E-Congress User's Guide** from the Youth Leadership Initiative **The New York State YMCA Youth and Government program**
Citizen Action Campaign *Design a citizen action campaign to increase awareness about a policy issue or to increase civic participation.* *Investigate the issue and an advocacy group that engages with that issue or action.* **PMI-4:** Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American politics.	Develop a policy memo detailing the issue, the position of the campaign, and strategies for enacting the policy. Include which governmental institutions or bodies would be most likely to create policy change. **OR** Create a blog or public service announcement (e.g., YouTube video or radio commercial) to inform or persuade others.	**Policy Memo Writing Tips** from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs How to design an infographic on **Piktochart** **How to Create the Perfect Public Service Announcement** from the Center for Digital Education Strategies for civic engagement such as **The Future of Civic Engagement** from the National League of Cities or **Rock the Vote**

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PROJECT SUGGESTIONS *(cont'd)*

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
Service Learning *Design and participate in a community service project that relates to and builds deeper understanding of a course concept.* **MPA-1:** Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.	Write and publish an article (e.g., for a newspaper, blog, magazine, school website) that describes the service project and its relevance to a course concept.	**Incorporating Service Learning into All AP Courses** on AP Central **Introducing AP with WE Service** on WE **Service-Learning Toolkit** from the Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships at the University of South Florida
Government in My Community *Collect and annotate articles from local sources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, websites) about government actions in the community.* **PMI-1:** The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom in preserved.	Compile a portfolio of the articles with analyses of the implications and impact of the governmental actions and outcomes.	**Using Technology: Electronic Portfolios in the K–12 Classroom** from Education World

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Instructional Approaches

Selecting and Using Course Materials

Using a wide array of source material helps students become proficient with the disciplinary practices and develop a conceptual understanding of the U.S. government and its interactions. In addition to using a college-level textbook that will provide required course content, students should have regular opportunities to examine primary and secondary source material in different and varied forms, as well as other types of political science scholarship. Rich, diverse source material provides more flexibility in designing learning activities that develop the habits of thinking like a political scientist that are essential for student success in the course.

Textbooks

The AP U.S. Government and Poltics course requires the use of a college-level textbook. Also, because the disciplinary practices are fundamental to the course, a textbook that focuses on skill instruction is useful.

While nearly all college-level U.S. government textbooks address the five units of the AP U.S. Government and Politics course, they do not always do so in a balanced fashion. In that case, it will be important for teachers to identify other types of secondary sources and supplement the textbook accordingly to ensure that each of the five topic areas receives adequate attention. Some textbooks review historical contexts of events such as the constitutional debates or various civil rights movements. Since this is a political science course rather than a history course, teachers should focus on how those debates or movements shaped or relate to our present-day government. Ultimately, it is best to select a textbook that closely aligns with the course framework and the disciplinary practices.

While teachers select textbooks locally, an **example textbook list** of college-level textbooks that meet the AP Course Audit resource requirements is found on AP Central.

Supreme Court Cases

AP U.S. Government and Politics students should be familiar with the structure and functions of the U.S. Supreme Court as well as how the court renders its decisions. This includes knowing how holdings are decided and that justices who are in the minority often write dissents that express their opinions on the case and the constitutional questions. While students will not need to know any dissenting (or concurring) opinions from the required cases, it is important for students to understand the role of dissenting opinions, especially as they relate to future cases on similar issues.

For the required Supreme Court cases, students should know the major details of each case, the holding in the majority opinion, and the constitutional principle used by the majority of justices to support their finding. On the AP Exam, students will need to apply this information to a real-world scenario or in comparison to another case.

The course framework requires the analysis of 14 cases, which are listed on page 32.

There are four key elements for students to understand about these U.S. Supreme Court cases: the facts, the issue(s), the holdings, and the reasoning behind the decisions.

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Text-Based Qualitative Sources (Primary and Secondary Sources)

Political science writing differs from writing in other fields. It focuses on what influences political behavior and attitudes (e.g., voting, party identification, candidate support) and how political ideas and policies are developed and implemented.

Students in this AP course are required to analyze primary and secondary source material, including arguments written by political scientists and others, in order to deepen their understanding of the key concepts addressed by the textbook and to engage in the required disciplinary practices. Students are *not* expected to conduct original research, but they should be introduced to scholarly political science research articles.

FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course features nine required foundational documents to help students understand the philosophies of the founders and their critics, and how discussions about ways to implement those philosophies have shaped the government.

These documents are:

- The Declaration of Independence
- The Articles of Confederation
- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Brutus No. 1*
- *Federalist No. 51*
- The Constitution of the United States
- *Federalist No. 70*
- *Federalist No. 78*
- "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

Most of these documents were written in the late 18th century and contain some high-level language. It is important for students to be able to read and accurately interpret these documents.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Student success in the course also depends on exposure to and analysis of multiple secondary sources in which political scientists present and explain their arguments. The most common secondary sources students should encounter include editorials, journal articles, news media articles, Supreme Court case analyses, and essays and books by political scientists. The course framework includes suggested supplemental readings for many of the essential knowledge statements, but the choice of which secondary texts to use is entirely up to you. Choose a variety of sources that represent different points of view and that will engage students while enhancing learning. Select high-interest readings and add new articles to keep up with rapidly changing events.

Quantitative Sources

Political science courses require students to engage with data in a variety of ways. The analysis, interpretation, and application of quantitative information are vital skills for students in AP U.S. Government and Politics. New textbooks and publishers' resources often contain quantitative information presented via charts, graphs, or other infographics, but that data may soon become out of date. Research institutions such as the **Pew Research Center** are good resources for current data to practice quantitative skills with students.

Visual Sources

Students will encounter a variety of visual sources on the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam. Some visuals contain data, such as a map showing Electoral College results. Other visuals may illustrate political principles, processes, or behaviors, such as a map of a gerrymandered congressional district. Visual information may also be expressed in a political cartoon or an infographic.

It is important to give students practice with a wide variety of visual sources. The textbook may contain some maps and cartoons, and the following resources provide a wealth of visuals to choose from for bell-ringer exercises and skills practice.

Additional resources include:

- The **Political Maps** website
- ***The Week*** (U.S. edition) website
- The cartoons section of the ***U.S. News & World Report*** website

Evaluating Quality and Credibility of Different Sources and Perspectives

Students have unprecedented access to information, so it is more important than ever to help them determine the credibility of sources. The disciplinary practices require students to evaluate the quality and credibility of different information sources and perspectives and derive supportable conclusions.

Teachers might want to provide students with a list of news media websites with different perspectives, such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*,

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the Huffington Post, Politico, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Real Clear Politics also offers a wide range of articles each day from different sources and on a variety of topics.

Students can examine international perspectives on U.S. government and politics through the BBC website, and English language versions of Al Jazeera and TASS. Schools might subscribe to databases of credible articles from trusted sources such as *Issues and Controversies*, available through the **ABC-CLIO database**.

The table below explains how students might address credibility or reliability of various sources.

Criteria	Considerations	Examples and Illustrations
Credibility	▪ Credibility requires students to obtain information from sources with knowledge and expertise in political science. Sources can be print, online, or expert interviews. ▪ Because many students are using the Internet or database sources, they should consider the following: ◆ The domain name extensions, which indicate who publishes and owns the domain ◆ Commonly used extensions, including: • .edu (educational organization) • .com (company) • .org (any organization) • .gov (government agency) • .net (network) ◆ The author(s) of the website ◆ The credibility of sources cited in the materials as well as any websites they link to ▪ Read past the first slash in the domain name to see if the page might be someone's personal page. A personal page might be less credible or include a bias that distorts the facts. ▪ Finding out who the authors are, their credentials, and the organization(s) they are associated with will help determine whether they are qualified to write about the topic. ▪ An article that includes citations of resources is often more credible.	▪ Design a lesson to help students identify political perspective by comparing the headlines from different news sources, such as Fox News and MSNBC. ▪ Have students examine the language used in the lead stories, as well as the pictures that accompany them. ▪ Ask students to compare the focus of local news with that of national and international sources and discuss possible reasons certain stories are not covered in the news. ▪ Have students synthesize their findings in a short paper examining the role of the media in providing citizens with political information.
Reliability	▪ Students should examine the content of a source (the evidence) to ensure it supports their claims and provides insight and knowledge that relates to the topic. This means that evidence is only relevant when it addresses both the topic in context and the student's argument. ▪ Because we are investigating political processes and institutions that are changing and evolving, it is important to consider whether the information provided is the most current.	▪ An article about the life of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader-Ginsburg may not be relevant in supporting a claim about a particular Supreme Court decision. ▪ A public opinion poll from 2008 might not be relevant in 2018.

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Instructional Strategies

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course framework details the concepts and skills students must master in order to be successful on the AP Exam. In order to address those concepts and skills effectively, it helps to incorporate a variety of instructional approaches and best practices into daily lessons and activities. The following table presents strategies that could help students apply their understanding of course concepts.

Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Create Representations	Students create tables, graphs, or other infographics to interpret text or data.	Helps students organize information using multiple ways to present data.	Give students a set of data, such as voting patterns by gender and ethnicity, and have them create a graph that best shows the data and the trends.
Close Reading	Students read, reread, and analyze small chunks of text word for word, sentence by sentence, and line by line.	Develops comprehensive understanding of text.	When students are reading the required foundational documents, have them highlight relevant words and passages that support the author's claim.
Critique Reasoning	Through collaborative discussion, students critique the arguments of others, questioning the author's perspective, evidence presented, and reasoning behind the argument.	Helps students learn from others as they make connections between concepts and learn to support their arguments with evidence and reasoning that make sense to peers.	Using *Federalist No. 70*, have students critique the argument for a strong executive. Have them examine the author's perspective and the evidence and reasoning he uses to support his position.
Debate	Students present an informal or formal argument that defends a claim with reasons while others defend different claims about the same topic or issue. The goal is to debate ideas without attacking the people who defend those ideas.	Gives students an opportunity to collect and orally present evidence supporting the arguments for or against a proposition or issue.	Have students debate which branch of government is the most powerful, using evidence and reasoning to support their claims.

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Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Debriefing	Teachers facilitate a discussion that leads to consensus understanding or helps students identify the key conclusions or takeaways.	Helps students solidify and deepen understanding of content.	For complex issues such as the bureaucracy, lead students in a debrief to ensure understanding.
Discussion Group	Students engage in an interactive, small group discussion, often with assigned roles (e.g., questioner, summarizer, facilitator, evidence keeper) to consider a topic, text, or question.	Helps students gain new understanding of or insight into a text or issue by listening to multiple perspectives.	Assign students to groups to discuss a learning objective, such as *Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization*, with a view to helping them gain information and show their understanding.
Fishbowl	Some students form an inner circle and model appropriate discussion techniques while an outer circle of students listens, responds, and evaluates.	Provides students with an opportunity to engage in a formal discussion and to experience roles both as participant and active listener; students also have the responsibility of supporting their opinions and responses using specific textual evidence.	Use this strategy to discuss the arguments presented in the required documents and how they relate to our current government.
Graphic Organizer	These provide a way to represent ideas and information visually (e.g., Venn diagrams, flowcharts, cluster maps).	Provides students with a visual system for organizing multiple ideas, details, and/or textual support to be included in a piece of writing.	Graphic organizers can be helpful when comparing political beliefs, ideologies, principles, and models. Make sure students use any organizer thoughtfully and are not simply "filling in the blanks."
Guided Discussion	A guided discussion is an umbrella strategy that allows for the use of different techniques as you guide students through the lesson.	Helps students see the big picture and builds their confidence when dealing with difficult content or new skills.	Use brainstorming and quickwrite as strategies during a guided discussion to help students understand polling data about fiscal policy and how the data may affect political behavior.
Jigsaw	Each student in a group reads a different text or different passage from a single text, taking on the role of "expert" on what was read. Students share the information from that reading with students from other groups and then return to their original groups to share their new knowledge.	Helps students summarize and present information to others in a way that facilitates an understanding of a text (or multiple texts) or issue without having each student read the text in its entirety; by teaching others, they become experts.	Use this strategy to facilitate understanding of high-level readings, such as the *Federalist Papers* and other foundational documents.

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Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Look for a Pattern	Students evaluate data or create visual representations to find a trend.	Helps students identify patterns that may be used to draw conclusions.	Show students a complex graph with at least two data sets—for example, showing voting patterns by age and gender—and have them compare the data to find a trend and draw a conclusion.
Making Connections	Students are given a concept, term, required case, or document and asked to write what they know about it. Then, students are paired and asked to determine, describe, and then explain the connection between the two concepts.	Reinforces the fact that political concepts are often connected and provides the opportunity for students to make and explain connections between and among these concepts.	Write concepts related to one of the course big ideas on cards and place them in a box. Have students pick a card at random. Give students a few minutes to gather and recall information about the term and then pair students and ask them to find the connection between their concepts. Finally, ask the pairs to write a brief explanation of how the concepts are related.
Match Claims and Evidence	Students are given sample claims (most of which can be improved upon) to evaluate and revise. Then students match their revised claims with pieces of evidence that can be used to support the claims. Once matched, students write a statement explaining how and why the evidence supports the claim.	Provides opportunities for students to edit existing claims and match those claims with evidence in preparation for writing their own argument essays.	In the early stages of practicing argumentation, ask small groups of students to write claims and supporting evidence statements based on a question structured in the same way as FRQ 4 (such as which branch of government is the most powerful). Have groups trade claims and evidence, revise or modify the claims (if necessary), match the claims and evidence, and write statements explaining why the evidence supports the claim.
Quickwrite	Students write for a short, specific amount of time about a designated topic.	Helps generate ideas in a short time.	As preparation for the free-response question in which students apply content knowledge to political processes, principles, or behaviors (as in FRQ 1), have them write ways the president's agenda can affect Congress or ways congressional behaviors can affect bureaucratic agencies.

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Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Self/Peer Revision	Students work alone or with a partner to examine a piece of writing for accuracy and clarity.	Provides students with an opportunity to edit a written text to ensure the correctness of identified components.	Have students perform self- and peer revisions of their practice argument essays so they have the opportunity to review their practice claims, supporting evidence, sourcing, and analysis and reasoning.
Socratic Seminar	This is a focused discussion tied to a topic, essential question, or selected text in which students ask questions of one another. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.	Helps students arrive at a new understanding by asking questions that clarify: challenging assumptions; probing perspective and point of view; questioning facts, reasons, and evidence; or examining implications and outcomes.	Use the essential questions, such as *Which branch of government is the most powerful? Why?* to initiate discussion during which students can illustrate their understanding of the learning objectives and essential knowledge statements.
Think-Pair-Share	Students think through a question or issue alone, pair with a partner to share ideas, and then share results with the class.	Enables the development of initial ideas that are then tested with a partner in preparation for revising ideas and sharing them with a larger group.	To practice comparing required Supreme Court cases to other related cases, give students a pair of cases and have them use Think-Pair-Share to come up with similarities, differences, and relevance to political institutions or processes.

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Developing the Disciplinary Practices

Throughout the course, students will develop skills that are fundamental to the discipline of political science. Since these disciplinary practices represent the complex skills that adept political scientists demonstrate, students will benefit from multiple opportunities to develop these skills in a scaffolded manner.

While a high school civics course provides students with information about American government, a college-level political science course will challenge students to put that knowledge into action through various discipline-based practices common to the field. One of the aims of the AP U.S. Government and Politics course is to have students think like political scientists.

The disciplinary practices articulated in the course framework equip students to understand, analyze, and apply political information in a process similar to that followed by political scientists. This process begins with a close analysis of quantitative and qualitative sources and reaches its conclusion when evidence is used effectively to support an argument about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors.

College Board has developed several skills-based activities in partnership with master teachers. These individual activities include both course content and scaffolded skills development and are listed in the Available Resources section of the Topic Pages.

Resources include:

- **SCOTUS Case Analysis Activities**
  - Provide practice for SCOTUS Application (Practice 2)
- **Data Analysis Activities**
  - Provide practice for Data Analysis (Practice 3)
- **Analytical Reading Activities**
  - Provide practice for Source Analysis (Practice 4)
- **Argumentation Activities**
  - Provide practice for Argumentation (Practice 5)

The course framework features a suggested skill for each course topic. However, teachers are free to use either that skill or one of their choosing to allow students to practice the skills using course content. It is important to help students develop all the skills throughout the course, and teachers should use their professional judgment to sequence and scaffold them appropriately for their students.

The tables on the pages that follow look at each of the skills and provide examples of questions along with instructional strategies for incorporating those practices into instruction.

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Disciplinary Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context

Political scientists practice their discipline through the application of knowledge to different contexts and scenarios and the current political environment. Student in the AP U.S. Government and Politics course have this same opportunity through this disciplinary practice.

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for teaching students to successfully apply political concepts in the course.

Disciplinary Practice 1: *Concept Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
1.A. *Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ Describe characteristics and traits of terms and concepts. ▪ Classify terms and concepts.	Students need to demonstrate understanding by describing and explaining before they can apply their knowledge. So, before beginning a deeper discussion on gerrymandering and congressional elections, have students describe how members of the House of Representatives are elected and the length of their terms. (Topics 2.1 and 2.3)	▪ Look for a Pattern
1.B. *Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ Identify and describe the steps and/or stages in a process. ▪ Explain how and why a process changes. ▪ Explain the significance of a process.	Ask students to explain the process of congressional apportionment and the principles and processes involved in drawing congressional districts. (Topic 2.3)	▪ Discussion Group ▪ Graphic Organizer ▪ Making Connections
1.C. *Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ Identify the relevant, specific categories for comparing similarities and differences. ▪ Explain the reasons for the relevant similarities and differences. ▪ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of the similarities and differences.	Make sure students understand that they need to identify relevant and specific similarities and differences. They should compare like factors. Ask students to identify and then explain relevant, specific similarities and differences among liberal, conservative, and libertarian ideologies. Have them compare like categories, such as economic policy or social policy. (Topics 4.9–4.10)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Graphic Organizer ▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Making Connections

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Disciplinary Practice 1: *Concept Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
1.D. *Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.*	▪ Describe how political behaviors, policies, institutions, or constitutional interpretations have changed over time based on specific examples. ▪ Describe the reasons for causes and effects. ▪ Describe the concepts using real-world scenarios.	Ask students to explain how a political process, such as a presidential election, has changed over time. (Topic 5.8) Have students explain reasons why presidential elections have changed, such as the influence of special interest groups on campaign finance. (Topics 5.10–5.11) Ask students to describe how presidential elections have changed based on real-world scenarios, such as the ruling in the *Citizens United* case, or in a scenario such as if the Supreme Court were to overturn *Citizens United*. (Topic 5.11)	▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Discussion Group
1.E. *Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.*	▪ Explain how political behaviors, policies, institutions, or constitutional interpretations have changed over time, using specific examples and scenarios. ▪ Explain the potential implications of policies or behaviors change over time. ▪ Identify and explain the reasons for causes and effects.	Have students examine a political institution, such as the bureaucracy, and explain how that institution has changed over time. (Topic 2.12) Ask students to explain the implications of the growing bureaucracy. (Topic 2.13) Students could point to expansions in the bureaucracy due to events such as 9/11 or a scenario in which an administration reduces the scope of or eliminates some bureaucratic agencies. (Topic 2.13)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Debate ▪ Discussion Group

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Disciplinary Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions

Studying the application of Supreme Court cases helps students understand the implications of the required Supreme Court decisions, making the concepts relevant to their lives today.

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for teaching students to successfully apply Supreme Court cases in the course.

Disciplinary Practice 2: *SCOTUS Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
2.A. *Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.*	▪ Describe specific events that led to a Supreme Court case ▪ Describe the ruling of the Court ▪ Describe the reasoning used by the majority that led to the holding	Have students develop a case brief or a set of case notes for each required Supreme Court case. Each set of notes should include the basic facts of the case, the majority decision, and the reasoning behind the majority opinion. (Topic 3.3)	▪ Graphic Organizer ▪ Close Reading ▪ Guided Discussion
2.B. *Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources.*	▪ Describe the political principle or concept demonstrated in both the Supreme Court case and the document. ▪ Explain what the document and the case have in common and why. ▪ Explain the implications of the case for the document author's claim or vice versa.	In a pairing/comparison exercise, have students relate the reasoning, decision, and opinion in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* (2010) to Madison's argument in *Federalist No. 10*. (Topic 5.11)	▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Graphic Organizer ▪ Fishbowl ▪ Socratic Seminar
2.C. *Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case.*	▪ Find relevant, specific categories to compare two Supreme Court cases. ▪ Using those categories, explain the similarities and differences between the details of the cases and the decisions of the Supreme Court. ▪ Identify the constitutional principle on which the decisions were based. ▪ Identify the majority opinions in the cases. ▪ Identify the reasoning behind the majority opinions. ▪ Compare the reasoning behind the majority opinions of the two cases.	Ask students to compare a required Supreme Court case, such as *Engel v. Vitale*, and a non-required but similar case, such as *Town of Greece, NY v. Galloway*. Have students identify and describe in detail the similarities and differences in these cases. Students should recognize that both cases were based on the establishment clause from the First Amendment, but that the Supreme Court's decisions were different. They should also be able to explain why the Court found differently in *Greece v. Galloway*. (Topic 3.2)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Debate ▪ Graphic Organizer

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Disciplinary Practice 2: *SCOTUS Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
2.D. *Explain how required Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context*	▪ Describe patterns and trends. Use these to extend and apply Supreme Court cases in different contexts and scenarios.	Ask students to describe the underlying constitutional principle in *Wisconsin v. Yoder*. Tell students that California has passed a law requiring parents to vaccinate their children. Have them explain how *Wisconsin v. Yoder* may be used as precedent if this law were to come before the current Supreme Court. Then ask them to explore how the Court might rule on this case based on precedent and the current makeup of the Court. (Topic 3.2)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Debate ▪ Discussion Group ▪ Making Connections ▪ Socratic Seminar

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Disciplinary Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphics, maps, and infographics

The analysis, interpretation, and application of quantitative information are vital skills for students in AP U.S. Government and Politics. Analysis skills can be taught using any type of quantitative information, but students should use current data so that they can draw accurate conclusions and apply that knowledge to the enduring understandings and learning objectives in the course framework.

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for implementing quantitative resources in the course.

Disciplinary Practice 3: *Data Analysis*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
3.A. *Describe the data presented.*	▪ How is the data presented? ▪ What does the data show?	Have students analyze a bar graph showing the percentage of voters in presidential elections by age range and have them determine what the data shows. (Topic 5.2)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Create Representations
3.B. *Describe patterns and trends in data.*	▪ What do you notice about the data? ▪ What trends and patterns can you identify from the data?	Ask students to describe the patterns and trends in the data, such as that voting percentage increases as people age. (Topic 5.2)	▪ Debriefing ▪ Create Representations
3.C. *Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.*	▪ Why is the data displayed as it is? ▪ What does the author of the chart or graph want to show us? ▪ What conclusions can you draw by comparing the trends you found in the data? ▪ What evidence do you have to support that conclusion?	Challenge students to compare the trends and draw a conclusion about the data. They should also explain their reasoning. For example, a graph may show that less than 40% of people under the age of 24 vote, but over 70% of people aged 65–74 vote. Students could conclude that candidates are unlikely to champion issues favored mostly by the young because young people are not as likely to vote as older people. (Topics 5.2–5.4)	▪ Debriefing ▪ Guided Discussion

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Disciplinary Practice 3: *Data Analysis*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
3.D. *Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ What concept or principle does this data remind you of? ▪ How does this data relate to a political process? ▪ What could political parties learn from this data that would affect how they operate?	Have students apply this information to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior. Students could use this data to explain how political parties choose candidates and party platforms. (Topics 5.3–5.4)	▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Guided Discussion
3.E. *Explain possible limitations of the data provided.*	▪ What does the data not tell you? ▪ What do you know about the group or organization providing the data? How does that knowledge influence what conclusions you can draw from the data?	Lead students to analyze possible limitations of the data that is represented, such as that it shows only age and no other demographics. (Topic 5.2)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Create Representations ▪ Discussion Group
3.F. *Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided.*	▪ How does the way the data is presented limit what we can know about the political concept or principle? ▪ How does the way the data is presented limit its value?	Lead students to analyze possible limitations in how the data is represented visually. One limitation could be that a bar graph shows voting percentage by age range as one data point but does not represent the fluctuation within those age ranges that a line graph would show. (Topic 5.2)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Create Representations ▪ Discussion Group

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Disciplinary Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources

TEXT-BASED SOURCES

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course requires students to analyze texts in terms of perspective, conclusions, and supporting evidence, and understand how they illustrate principles and processes of U.S. government. The primary function of using sources in this course is to help students understand the principles and processes of U.S. government. In these texts, the founders, political scientists, and other scholars develop their ideas and arguments.

To understand the argument, reasoning, and implications of these texts, students should:

- Identify the author and the author's perspective
- Put the author's thesis or claim in their own words
- Identify the reasoning the author uses to justify the claim
- Explain the evidence used to support the argument and the reasoning
- Identify evidence that supports alternative perspectives
- Explain how the alternative perspectives refute or rebut the author's argument
- Critique the author's argument, pointing out its strengths and weaknesses
- Explain the implications of the author's argument
- Explain how the author's argument relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for implementing qualitative text-based resources in the course.

Disciplinary Practice 4: *Source Analysis—Text-Based Sources*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
4.A. *Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.*	▪ Who is the author? ▪ What is the author's perspective? ▪ Why did the author write this? ▪ What do I know about the author and what the author thinks about government and political principles? ▪ What is the author's argument? ▪ What evidence does the author use to support the argument? ▪ What reasoning does the author use to justify the argument?	Lead students on a close reading of *Federalist No. 10*. Ask them to identify the author, his perspective, and his argument. Then ask students to identify what evidence and reasoning Madison provides in support of his argument. (Topic 1.2)	▪ Close Reading ▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Jigsaw

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Disciplinary Practice 4: *Source Analysis—Text-Based Sources*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
4.B. *Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ What political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior have you studied that is related to the author's claim and argument? ▪ How is the author's claim or argument related to that political principle or concept?	Have students connect Madison's historical argument to the way our government is run today. (Topics 1.2–1.3)	▪ Socratic Seminar ▪ Discussion Group ▪ Self/Peer Revision ▪ Making Connections
4.C. *Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ What would happen if you followed the author's advice? ▪ How does the author's position affect an American political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior?	Challenge students to determine how Madison's argument in *Federalist No. 10* affected the political processes and institutions that led to the ratification of the Constitution. (Topics 1.2–1.3 and 1.5)	▪ Discussion Group ▪ Socratic Seminar

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VISUAL SOURCES

Maps, infographics, and political cartoons can also help students understand the principles and processes of U.S. government. Often the visual presentation of a political science concept, such as gerrymandering, carries more weight than a textual source provides. At the same time, political cartoons provide insight into factions, ideologies, and the relationship between the government and the people.

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for implementing analysis of visual sources in the course.

Disciplinary Practice 4: *Source Analysis—Visual Sources*

Skills	Type of Visual	Questions/Tasks	Sample Instructional Strategies
4.A. *Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.*	**Map**	▪ What is being shown in the map? ▪ What perspective is being shown in the map?	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Create Representations
	Infographic	▪ What is being presented through this infographic? ▪ Who created the infographic? ▪ What argument is the creator making? ▪ What perspective can you identify?	▪ Look for a Pattern
	Political Cartoon	▪ Describe the characters, objects, and actions in the cartoon. What is the cartoon about? How does the text help convey the message? ▪ What claim is the cartoonist trying to convey?	▪ Jigsaw ▪ Think-Pair-Share
4.C. *Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	**Map**	▪ What are the implications of the author's perspective? Relate that to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior.	▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Debate ▪ Quickwrite
	Infographic	▪ What are the implications of the details from the infographic? ▪ How do the images in the infographic affect the author's argument?	▪ Debate ▪ Discussion Group ▪ Quickwrite
	Political Cartoon	▪ Which perspective is the cartoonist supporting? ▪ What alternative perspectives exist? ▪ What is the implication of the cartoonist's argument?	▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Debate ▪ Quickwrite

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Disciplinary Practice 4: *Source Analysis—Visual Sources*

Skills	Type of Visual	Questions/Tasks	Sample Instructional Strategies
4.D. *Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	**Map**	▪ How does what you see relate to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior?	▪ Think-Pair-Share ▪ Graphic Organizer
	Infographic	▪ What are the elements in the infographic saying about a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior?	▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Think-Pair-Share
	Political Cartoon	▪ Relate the cartoonist's message to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior. What is the cartoonist saying about this issue?	▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Think-Pair-Share

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Disciplinary Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Political scientists examine data, evidence, and differing perspectives to develop claims about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. As they begin to articulate their positions, political scientists use reasoning processes that rely on their awareness of different types of relationships, connections, and patterns within the data, evidence, and perspectives. They then formulate a claim, or thesis, and develop an argument that explains how the claim is supported by the available evidence.

A strong argument also accounts for how some evidence might seem to refute or rebut the claim, addressing alternate perspectives. Students should practice creating persuasive and meaningful arguments to improve their proficiency with each of these practices in turn.

APPLYING REASONING

In order to develop an argument, political scientists formulate a claim, or thesis, that is based on logical reasoning. A meaningful claim must be based in evidence, defensible, and evaluative; it must take a stance on an issue that could plausibly be argued differently; and it must go beyond simply listing causes or factors, qualifying its assertions by looking at an issue from multiple perspectives or through different lenses. The reasoning used in the thesis often sets up the structure of the argument in the essay that follows. These reasonings might involve:

- Explaining political processes, relationships among or between processes, and/or issues or implications surrounding these processes
- Identifying areas of similarity or difference between issues, policies, ideologies, or institutions in order to consider possible underlying reasons for similarity or difference
- Considering both the immediate causes or effects of an event as well as long-term causes or effects, and assigning a relative significance to each

The table that follows provides examples of questions and instructional strategies for teaching students to successfully write an argument essay in the course.

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Disciplinary Practice 5: *Argumentation*

Skills	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
5.A. *Articulate a defensible claim/ thesis.*	▪ What possible positions could you take based on the question and the evidence? ▪ What position do you want to take? What claim will you make? ▪ What is your purpose (to define, show causality, compare, or explain a process)? ▪ What reasons justify your claim and achieve your purpose? ▪ What evidence supports your claim and reasoning? ▪ What evidence runs counter to your claim and reasoning? ▪ Write a defensible claim or thesis statement that reflects your reasoning and evidence.	Give students a question, such as *Which of the following is most responsible for the expansion of civil rights and liberties: social movements, an activist Supreme Court, or a motivated legislative branch?* Use *"Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), or Article I of the U.S. Constitution in addition to your knowledge of the U.S. government as evidence to support your position. Students should analyze all possibilities and the evidence for and against each position. Have students choose a position and write a defensible claim or thesis that reflects their reasoning and evidence. (Topic 3.12)	▪ Match Claims and Evidence ▪ Debate ▪ Quickwrite
5.B. *Support the argument using relevant evidence.*	▪ What evidence supports your claim? ▪ How does the evidence support your claim?	Have students identify and explain the evidence that supports their position, with an emphasis on *how* the evidence supports the claim. (Topic 3.12)	▪ Match Claims and Evidence ▪ Critique Reasoning
5.C. *Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis.*	▪ Explain why your evidence supports your claim, using a transition such as *because* or *therefore*. ▪ Question your reasoning. Does it make sense? Have you provided a solid explanation of your reasoning?	Ask students to "close the loop" and explain *why* the evidence supports their claim by using reasoning processes. (Topic 3.12)	▪ Match Claims and Evidence ▪ Critique Reasoning
5.D. *Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternative perspectives.*	▪ What evidence goes against your claim? ▪ What could someone with an opposing view say about your claim, based on the evidence? ▪ Taking the rebuttal evidence into account, why is your claim still the best?	Challenge students to identify and explain evidence that refutes or rebuts their claim. A strong essay acknowledges contrary positions and uses other evidence to show why the author's position is the best choice. (Topic 3.12)	▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Debate ▪ Self/Peer Revision

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Developing the Reasoning Processes

Reasoning processes describe the cognitive operations that students will be required to apply when engaging with practices on the AP Exam. Students should organize their response around a specific reasoning process that aligns to the intent of the question. The reasoning processes ultimately represent the way practitioners think in the discipline.

Tasks based on the reasoning processes lend themselves to developing assessment questions. The examples in the table below provide several ideas.

In addition, the course learning objectives can also be broken down by reasoning process. For example, let's look at Learning Objective PMI-4.A: *Explain how the ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates*. In order for students to perform that task, they would need to use the process of causation to explain how ideology affects policy debates.

The following table provides some suggestions for ways of approaching the reasoning processes in the AP U.S. Government and Politics course.

Reasoning Process	Questions/Tasks	Examples	Sample Instructional Strategies
Definition/ Classification *Students will need to demonstrate their knowledge of course concepts.*	▪ Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts.	▪ Describe characteristics of federalism. (Topic 1.7)	▪ Look for a Pattern ▪ Making Connections ▪ Guided Discussion
	▪ Classify concepts.	▪ Classify policy positions based on ideology. (Topic 4.8)	
	▪ Describe structures and functions.	▪ Describe the role of the majority leader. (Topic 2.2)	
	▪ Describe patterns and/ or trends.	▪ Describe the trend from multiple sets of voting data over several years. (Topic 5.2)	
	▪ Describe the perspective of a source or author.	▪ Describe Hamilton's perspective in *Federalist No. 78*. (Topic 2.8)	
	▪ Describe assumptions and/or reasoning of a source or author.	▪ Describe Dr. King's reasoning in "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." (Topic 3.10)	

continued on next page

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Reasoning Process	Questions/Tasks	Examples	Sample Instructional Strategies
Process *Students will need to explain political processes.*	▪ Identify steps and/or stages in a process. ▪ Explain how the steps or stages in a process relate to each other. ▪ Explain challenges with processes and/or interactions. ▪ Explain implications of processes and/or interactions.	▪ Identify how a bill moves through the committee process. (Topic 2.2) ▪ Explain how political parties use primaries and caucuses to choose presidential candidates. (Topic 5.8) ▪ Explain challenges with our current system of elections. (Topic 5.8) ▪ Explain how Congress can use the budget process to control the bureaucracy. (Topic 2.14)	▪ Discussion Group ▪ Socratic Seminar ▪ Think-Pair-Share
Causation *Students will need to explain causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ Identify causes and/or effects. ▪ Explain the reasons for causes and/or effects. ▪ Explain change over time. ▪ Explain the significance of causes and/or effects. ▪ Explain implications of change over time.	▪ Identify some effects of the expanded powers of the president. (Topic 2.6) ▪ Explain the reasons why successive presidents have expanded their powers. (Topic 2.6) ▪ Explain how civil rights have expanded over time. (Topic 3.10) ▪ Explain how the expanded power of the president has affected the concept of checks and balances. (Topic 2.5) ▪ Explain how the makeup of the Supreme Court and public opinion has led to the expansion and contraction of civil rights over time. (Topics 3.10–3.12)	▪ Quickwrite ▪ Debriefing ▪ Jigsaw
Comparison *Students will need to explain similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.*	▪ Identify relevant categories of comparison. ▪ Identify similarities and/or differences. ▪ Explain the reasons for similarities and/or differences. ▪ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of similarities and differences.	▪ Compare two linkage institutions using the ways they can affect policy decisions. (Topics 5.6–5.7) ▪ Identify relevant differences between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. (Topics 1.4–1.5) ▪ Explain why the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution differ, using relevant categories of comparison. (Topics 1.4–1.5) ▪ Explain how two similar Supreme Court cases can have different outcomes, and the significance of that difference. (Topic 2.10)	▪ Graphic Organizer ▪ Critique Reasoning ▪ Fishbowl

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AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Exam Information

Exam Overview

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam assesses student understanding of the disciplinary practices and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. The exam is 3 hours long and includes 55 multiple-choice questions and 4 free-response questions. The details of the exam, including exam weighting and timing, can be found below:

Section	Question Type	Number of Questions	Exam Weighting	Timing
I	**Multiple-choice questions**	**55**	**50%**	**80 minutes**
II	**Free-response questions**	**4**		**100 minutes (recommended timing below)**
	Question 1: Concept Application (3 points)		12.5%	20 minutes
	Question 2: Quantitative Analysis (4 points)		12.5%	20 minutes
	Question 3: SCOTUS Comparison (4 points)		12.5%	20 minutes
	Question 4: Argument Essay (6 points)		12.5%	40 minutes

The exam assesses content from the five big ideas for the course:
Big Idea 1: Constitutionalism
Big Idea 2: Liberty and Order
Big Idea 3: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy
Big Idea 4: Competing Policy-Making Interests
Big Idea 5: Methods of Political Analysis

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The AP Exam also assesses the five units of the course with the following exam weighting on the multiple-choice section:

Units	Exam Weighting
Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy	**15–22%**
Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government	**25–36%**
Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	**13–18%**
Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	**10–15%**
Unit 5: Political Participation	**20–27%**

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How Student Learning Is Assessed on the AP Exam

The AP U.S. Government and Politics disciplinary practices are assessed on the AP Exam as detailed below.

	Multiple-Choice Section	Free-Response Section
Practice 1: Concept Application	Individual and set-based multiple-choice questions assess students' ability to apply political concepts and processes in hypothetical and authentic contexts. Students will need to describe, explain, and compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	Free-response question 1 focuses exclusively on Practice 1.
Practice 2: SCOTUS Application	Individual and set-based multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to apply Supreme Court decisions in authentic contexts. Students will need to describe and compare relevant information about the required Supreme Court Cases. Students will also need to explain how required Supreme Court cases relate to non-required Supreme Court Cases, foundational documents, and other sources.	Free-response question 3 focuses primarily on Practice 2.
Practice 3: Data Analysis	Set-based multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics. Students will need to describe and explain data and explain the relationship between the data and political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behavior.	Free-response question 2 focuses exclusively on Practice 3.
Practice 4: Source Analysis	Set-based multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources. Students will need to describe and explain claims, evidence, perspective, and reasoning in sources. Additionally, students will need to explain how text-based and visual sources relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	Practice 4 is not explicitly assessed in the free-response section.
Practice 5: Argumentation	No multiple-choice questions explicitly assess the argumentation practice.	Free-response question 4 focuses exclusively on Practice 5.

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Section I: Multiple-Choice

The first section of the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam includes 55 multiple-choice questions appearing either as individual questions or in sets of typically two to four questions each. The following chart lays out the different types of questions.

Question Type	Number of Questions	Stimulus Type	Practices Assessed
Quantitative analysis	Five sets: two to three questions per set	Each set includes one or more of the following quantitative data as a stimulus: line graphs, charts, tables, maps, and/or infographics.	Practice 3 primarily; also Practices 1 and 2
Text-based analysis	Two sets: three to four questions per set	One set includes a foundational document as a stimulus. The other set includes as a stimulus a primary or secondary text-based source.	Practice 4 primarily; also Practices 1 and 2
Visual source analysis	Three sets: two questions per set	Each set includes one visual stimulus, including a map, image, cartoon, and/or infographic.	Practice 4 primarily; also Practices 1 and 2
Individual multiple-choice questions	Approximately 30	No stimulus	Practices 1 and 2

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Section II: Free-Response

The second section of the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam includes four free-response questions, each weighted equally.

Free-response question 1: Concept Application presents students with an authentic scenario. This question assesses student ability to describe and explain the effects of a political institution, behavior, or process. Additionally, this question assesses student ability to transfer understanding of course concepts and apply them in a new situation or scenario.

Free-response question 2: Quantitative Analysis presents students with quantitative data in the form of a table, graph, map, or infographic. This question assesses students' ability to perform the following:

- Describe the data presented
- Describe a pattern, trend, similarity, or difference in the data presented
- Draw a conclusion based on the data
- Explain how the data demonstrate a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior

Free-response question 3: SCOTUS Comparison presents students with information about a non-required Supreme Court Case. For the required Supreme Court case, students should know the facts, the issue(s), the holdings, and the reasoning behind the decisions. On the AP Exam, students will need to apply this information to a real-world scenario or in comparison to another case. This question assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Identify a similarity or difference between the non-required Supreme Court case and a specified Supreme Court case required in the course
- Describe the facts, issue(s), holding, reasoning, or decision of the required Supreme Court case specified in the question
- Explain a similarity or difference in the facts, issues, holdings, reasonings, or decisions of the two Supreme Court cases
- Explain how the holding, reasoning, or decision in the required or non-required Supreme Court case demonstrates a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior

Free-response question 4: Argument Essay assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question and establishes a line of reasoning
- Provide evidence from one of the foundational documents listed in the question to support the claim
- Provide evidence from a second foundational document or from knowledge of course concepts to support the claim
- Use reasoning to explain why the evidence supports the claim
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal

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Task Verbs Used in Free-Response Questions

The following task verbs are commonly used in the free-response questions:

Compare: Provide a description or explanation of similarities and/or differences.

Define: Provide a specific meaning for a word or concept.

Describe: Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic.

Develop an argument: Articulate a claim and support it with evidence.

Draw a conclusion: Use available information to formulate an accurate statement that demonstrates understanding based on evidence.

Explain: Provide information about how or why a relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning. Explain "how" typically requires analyzing the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome, whereas explain "why" typically requires analysis of motivations or reasons for the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome.

Identify: Indicate or provide information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation.

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Sample Exam Questions

The sample exam questions that follow illustrate the relationship between the course framework and the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam and serve as examples of the types of questions that appear on the exam. After the sample questions is a table that shows to which skill, learning objective(s), and unit each question relates. The table also provides the answers to the multiple-choice questions.

Section I: Multiple-Choice

1. Despite concerns raised by her constituents, a member of the House of Representatives votes in favor of a bill, believing that in the long term it is in the best interest of her constituents. This is an example of which of the following models of representation?
   (A) Delegate
   (B) Politico
   (C) Trustee
   (D) Virtual

2. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the arguments made in *The Federalist* 10 and *Brutus* 1?

	The Federalist 10	*Brutus* 1
(A)	Factions are inevitable with popular sovereignty.	A strong national government is needed.
(B)	Factions are most dangerous at the local level.	Small republics are best for stable governments.
(C)	Power should be concentrated in the executive branch to address factions.	National government is too far from the people.
(D)	The effects of factions cannot be controlled.	Popular sovereignty leads to anarchy.

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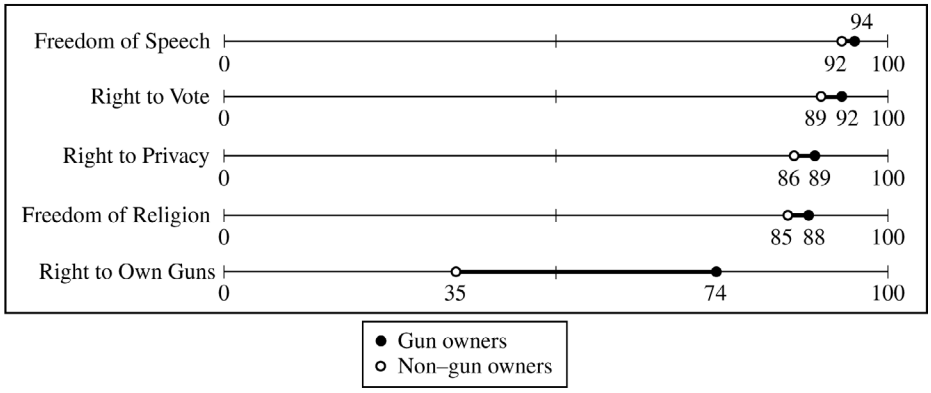
Questions 3 and 4 refer to the chart.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VIEWS ON CIVIL LIBERTIES AND GUN OWNERSHIP
Percent who agree the specific right/liberty is essential to their own sense of freedom



Source: Survey of United States adults conducted March 13-27 and April 4, 2017, Pew Research Center

3. According to the data, both gun owners and non–gun owners
   (A) answered similarly regarding the importance of the right to own guns
   (B) believed that the right to vote was less critical than freedom of religion
   (C) chose freedom of speech as most crucial to their own liberty
   (D) demonstrated deep division between one another in most categories

4. Which of the following best explains how poll respondents regard the relationship between the right to own guns and personal freedom?
   (A) The poll shows there is an ongoing debate over whether gun control laws promote or interfere with individual rights.
   (B) The poll shows that gun owners and non-gun owners have widely different views over a range of civil liberties issues.
   (C) The poll shows that party polarization has a sizable impact on elections and policy making at each level of government.
   (D) The poll shows that even the courts have mixed opinions as to whether the second amendment involves individual liberty.

5. Which of the following powers allows both the federal and state governments to make policies involving taxation?
   (A) Concurrent powers
   (B) Exclusive powers
   (C) Implied powers
   (D) Enumerated powers

6. In which of the following ways could the president try to limit the impact of a Supreme Court decision?
   (A) Calling for the removal of the Supreme Court justices
   (B) Instructing the Department of Justice to not enforce a provision of the decision
   (C) Passing legislation that overrides the Court's opinion
   (D) Changing the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court

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Questions 7–9 refer to the excerpt below.

> The vice of the groupist theory is that it conceals the most significant aspects of the system. The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent. Probably about 90 percent of the people cannot get into the pressure system.
>
> The notion that the pressure system is automatically representative of the whole community is a myth fostered by the universalizing tendency of modern group theories. *Pressure politics is a selective process* ill designed to serve diffuse interests. The system is skewed, loaded, and unbalanced in favor of a fraction of a minority.
>
> —E. E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People*, 1960

7. Which of the following best captures the author's argument regarding the forms of democracy?
   (A) Pluralist democracy, which seeks to shield elites from popular opinion, functions best when individual citizens do not participate in the process.
   (B) Participatory democracy, which emphasizes limited participation, marginalizes those who do not have the economic means to participate.
   (C) Pluralist democracy, though it involves groups at different stages of the process of developing policy, excludes a significant portion of the population.
   (D) Participatory democracy, which emphasizes expanded participation, creates too much conflict within the system.

8. Which of the following statements about interest groups would the author most likely agree with?
   (A) Interest groups play the important function of including more people in elections.
   (B) Interest groups undermine stability by creating too much conflict and polarization in politics.
   (C) Interest groups tend to over-represent elite interests.
   (D) Interest groups have less power in American government than political parties have.

9. Which of the following activities would the author most likely be concerned about interest groups engaging in?
   (A) Educating and mobilizing citizens around their cause
   (B) Introducing legislation that limits the power of others
   (C) Representing broad segments of society and sparking emotional political debates
   (D) Forming iron triangles with bureaucratic agencies and congressional committees

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10. According to the United States Constitution, all revenue bills must
    (A) be passed by a conference committee
    (B) originate in the House of Representatives
    (C) be passed by two-thirds of the Senate
    (D) be reviewed by the Supreme Court

11. Which of the following illustrates an economic policy most likely supported by an ideologically liberal individual?
    (A) The Federal Reserve increasing interest rates
    (B) Congress increasing the minimum wage
    (C) A bill that would decrease funding for the food stamp program
    (D) A state lowering income taxes to attract businesses

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Questions 12 and 13 refer to the political cartoon.

12. Which of the following is the best interpretation of the political cartoon?
    (A) Members of Congress are richer than the people they represent.
    (B) Members of Congress represent a wide diversity of political and economic interests.
    (C) Members of Congress receive political contributions from many special interest groups.
    (D) Members of Congress are specialists in economic policy issues.

13. Which of the following Supreme Court cases is most related to the topic in the cartoon?
    (A) *United States* v. *Lopez* (1995)
    (B) *McDonald* v. *Chicago* (2010)
    (C) *Shaw* v. *Reno* (1993)
    (D) *Citizens United* v. *Federal Elections Commission* (2010)

14. Which of the following arguments best supports a claim that the electoral college violates democratic principles?
    (A) The winner-take-all system encourages candidates to campaign in every state, which limits the attention each state will receive from the candidates.
    (B) Electors are chosen by the voters in each state, which gives parties undue influence over candidates' success.
    (C) Smaller states are disproportionately advantaged by the two additional electoral votes granted to each state for its senators.
    (D) The electoral college lacks transparency because electors frequently switch their vote during the national convention.

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15. Which of the following best describes the holding in *Baker* v. *Carr* (1961)?
    (A) Unequal representation of citizens in legislative districts is unconstitutional and may be reviewed by the courts.
    (B) Political issues such as reapportionment, redistricting, and gerrymandering are to be resolved by the legislative branch.
    (C) Racial gerrymandering is a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause.
    (D) Gerrymandering that favors a single party is not subject to legal action because there is no standard to determine how a state legislative district map should be drawn.

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Section II: Free-Response

The following are examples of the kinds of free-response questions found on the exam.

Concept Application (Free-Response Question 1 on the AP Exam)

The National Association of Home Builders, a national interest group that represents over 140,000 members in the home construction industry, has endorsed David Valadao (R) for reelection in California's Twenty-First Congressional District in the 2018 midterm election.

"Rep. Valadao has made housing and home ownership a top national priority and understands that expanding housing opportunities for all Americans is essential to the economic and social well-being of our nation," said Randy Noel, chairman of the National Association of Home Builders.

"We are proud to endorse Rep. Valadao for reelection in November because he helped to shepherd the landmark tax reform bill through Congress that will put more money into the pockets of hard-working families, reduce the tax burden for small businesses and promote job and economic growth," Noel said.

Recent polls show Valadao holding an 11-point lead over Democratic challenger T. J. Cox.

Source: "Valadao Picks Up Several Endorsements," *Hanford Sentinel* (Hanford, CA), October 19, 2018.

After reading the scenario, respond to A, B, and C below:

(A) Describe an action being taken by the National Association of Home Builders in the scenario.

(B) Explain how the action described in Part A affects policy making in Congress.

(C) Another group interested in conserving land in California supports the Democratic candidate in the election. Rather than having 140,000 members, the group is led by a few very wealthy families. Explain how this difference will likely affect the conservationist group's strategy in the election.

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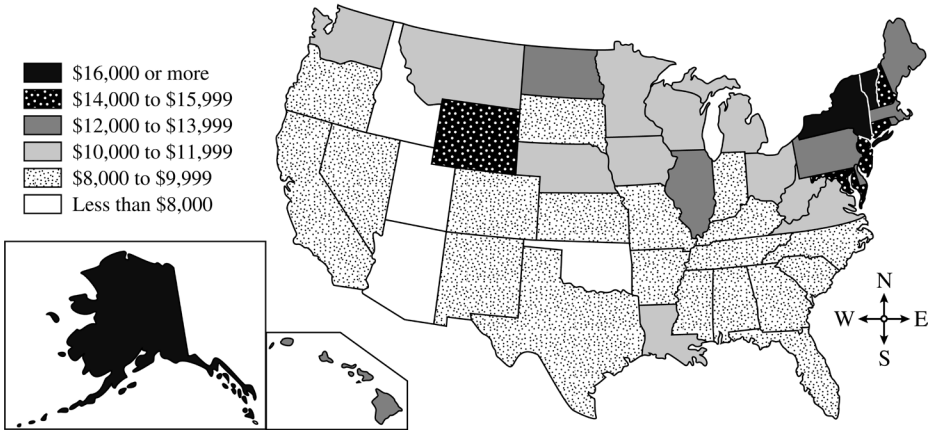
PUBLIC EDUCATION SPENDING: AMOUNT SPENT PER PUPIL BY STATE IN 2014



Source: FairVote. www.census.gov

Quantitative Analysis (Free-Response Question 2 on the AP Exam)

Use the information graphic to answer the questions.

(A) Identify the most common level of education spending by states in the Southeast.

(B) Describe a similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region, as illustrated in the information graphic.

(C) Draw a conclusion about that similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region illustrated in the information graphic.

(D) Explain how public education spending as shown in the information graphic demonstrates the principle of federalism.

SCOTUS Comparison (Free-Response Question 3 on the AP Exam)

In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which among other things guaranteed workers the right to join a labor union and collectively bargain with employers. The law also established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an independent agency responsible for enforcing the law.

The Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation fired ten workers attempting to unionize its plant located in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. When the National Labor Relations Board determined this to be in violation of the recently passed NLRA, the company sued claiming that labor relations had only an indirect effect on commerce, and thus Congress did not have the constitutional power to regulate it.

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In the subsequent case, *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (1937), the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the National Labor Relations Board by a 5–4 vote, holding that the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation conducted interstate commerce and that industrial labor relations affects that commerce.

(A) Identify the constitutional clause that is common in both *United States* v. *Lopez (1995)* and *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (1937).

(B) Explain how the facts in *United States* v. *Lopez* led to a different holding than in *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation*.

(C) Explain how the holding in *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* affected the balance of power between the states and the national government.

Argument Essay (Free-Response Question 4 on the AP Exam)

Develop an argument that explains which of the three models of representative democracy—participatory, pluralist, or elite—best achieves the founders' intent for American democracy in terms of ensuring a stable government run by the people.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- Brutus 1
- Federalist No. 10
- U.S. Constitution

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence
  - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed above.
  - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

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Answer Key and Question Alignment to Course Framework

Multiple-Choice Question	Answer	Skill	Learning Objective	Unit
1	C	1.E	CON-3.C	2
2	B	1.C	CON-1.A	1
3	C	3.A	LOR-2.B	3
4	A	3.C	LOR-2.B	3
5	A	1.B	CON-2.A	1
6	B	1.B	CON-5.C	2
7	C	4.A	LOR-1.B	1
8	C	4.B	PMI-5.F	5
9	D	4.B	PMI-5.E	5
10	B	1.A	CON-3.A	2
11	B	1.E	PMI-4.D	4
12	C	4.D	PRD-2.E	5
13	D	2.D	PRD-2.E	5
14	C	1.B	PRD-2.B	5
15	A	2.A	CON-3.C	2

Free-Response Question	Question Type	Skill	Learning Objectives	Unit
1	Concept Application	1.D, I.E	PMI-5.E, PMI-5.G	5
2	Quantitative Analysis	3.A, 3.B, 3.C, 3.D	CON-2.A	1
3	SCOTUS Comparison	1.E, 2.A, 2.C	CON-2.A, CON-2.B	1
4	Argument Essay	5.A, 5.B, 5.C, 5.D	LOR-1.A, LOR-1.B, CON-1.A, MPA-3.A, PMI-5.B, PMI-5.D, PRD-2.B	1, 5

The scoring information for the questions within this course and exam description, along with further exam resources, can be found on the **AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam Page** on AP Central.

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Scoring Guidelines

Question 1: Concept Application

The National Association of Home Builders, a national interest group that represents over 140,000 members in the home construction industry, has endorsed David Valadao (R) for reelection in California's Twenty-First Congressional District in the 2018 midterm election.

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Recent polls show Valadao holding an 11-point lead over Democratic challenger T. J. Cox.

Source: "Valadao Picks Up Several Endorsements," *Hanford Sentinel* (Hanford, CA), October 19, 2018.

After reading the scenario, respond to A, B, and C below:

(A) Describe an action being taken by the National Association of Home Builders in the scenario.

(B) Explain how the action described in Part A affects policy making in Congress.

(C) Another group interested in conserving land in California supports the Democratic candidate in the election. Rather than having 140,000 members, the group is led by a few very wealthy families. Explain how this difference will likely affect the conservationist group's strategy in the election.

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Scoring Guideline for Question 1: Concept Application — 3 points

Learning Objectives: PMI-5.E PMI-5.G

(A) Describe an action being taken by the National Association of Home Builders in the scenario. — **1 point** 1.D

Acceptable description:

- By releasing a statement supporting Representative Valadao, the Home Builders Association is educating voters about the candidate in the upcoming election.

(B) Explain how the action described in Part A affects policy making in Congress. — **1 point** 1.E

Acceptable explanations include:

- By publicly supporting candidates in elections, interest groups demonstrate to members of Congress their ability to affect elections, which could lead to members of Congress supporting the legislation promoted by the Home Builders Association.
- If interest groups publicly support candidates, members of Congress will likely recognize the political power of those interest groups when considering legislation that affects those groups. So, if members of Congress oppose this legislation, they run the risk of facing potential opposition from the Home Builders Association in the next election.

(C) Explain how this difference will likely affect the conservationist group's strategy in the election. — **1 point** 1.E

Acceptable explanations include:

- Groups with more members, such as the Home Builders Association, are generally more active in endorsing and publicly supporting candidates because they have strength in numbers with their memberships. A group that does not have many members but has funding, such as the conservationist group described in the scenario, will need to consider a different strategy, such as forming a political action committee or a super PAC.
- A conservationist group will probably use a different strategy because they have less members. Since they have money for funding they could collect large amounts of money to donate to the campaign.

Total for question 1 — **3 points**

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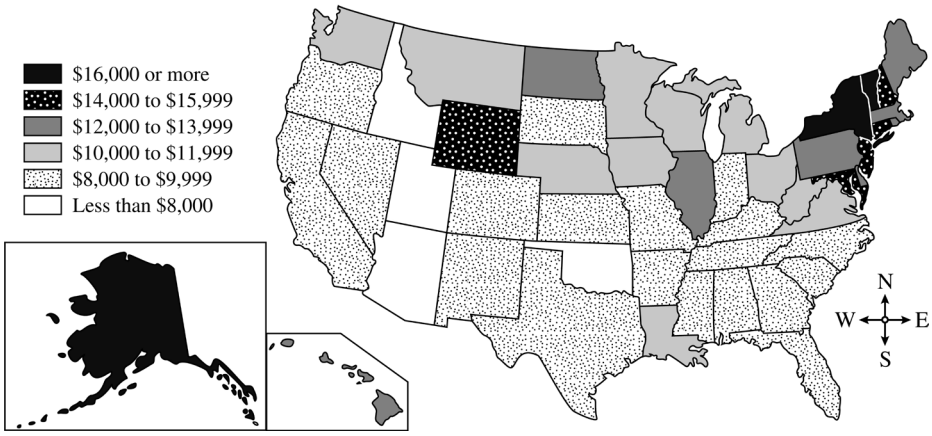
Question 2: Quantitative Analysis

PUBLIC EDUCATION SPENDING: AMOUNT SPENT PER PUPIL BY STATE IN 2014



Source: FairVote. www.census.gov

Use the information graphic to answer the questions.

(A) Identify the most common level of education spending by states in the Southeast.

(B) Describe a similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region, as illustrated in the information graphic.

(C) Draw a conclusion about that similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region illustrated in the information graphic.

(D) Explain how public education spending as shown in the information graphic demonstrates the principle of federalism.

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Scoring Guideline for Question 2: Quantitative Analysis — 4 points

Learning Objectives: CON-2.A

(A)	Identify the most common level of education spending by states in the Southeast. • $8,000-$9,999	**1 point** 3.A
(B)	Describe a similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region, as illustrated in the information graphic. **Acceptable descriptions include:** • The Northeast region of the United States spends the highest amount of money on public education than any other region in the U.S. • Southern states spend much less per student on public education than the Northeast states.	**1 point** 3.B
(C)	Draw a conclusion about that similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region illustrated in the information graphic. **Acceptable conclusions include:** • One possible conclusion is that Northern states are wealthier and thus can afford to spend more. • Southern states may spend less because their priorities are not focused on public education while the Northeast values education more.	**1 point** 3.C
(D)	Explain how public education spending as shown in the information graphic demonstrates the principle of federalism. **Acceptable explanations include:** • While the national government requires states to provide education, states are permitted to create and organize their own education systems. Thus, as shown in the map all states spend money on education, but each spends a different amount per pupil.	**1 point** 3.D
	Total for question 2	**4 points**

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Question 3: SCOTUS Comparison

In 1935, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which among other things guaranteed workers the right to join a labor union and collectively bargain with employers. The law also established the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), an independent agency responsible for enforcing the law.

The Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation fired ten workers attempting to unionize its plant located in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania. When the National Labor Relations Board determined this to be in violation of the recently passed NLRA, the company sued claiming that labor relations had only an indirect effect on commerce, and thus Congress did not have the constitutional power to regulate it.

In the subsequent case, *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (1937), the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the National Labor Relations Board by a 5–4 vote, holding that the Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation conducted interstate commerce and that industrial labor relations affects that commerce.

(A) Identify the constitutional clause that is common in both *United States* v. *Lopez (1995)* and *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* (1937).

(B) Explain how the facts in *United States* v. *Lopez* led to a different holding than in *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation*.

(C) Explain how the holding in *National Labor Relations Board* v. *Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* affected the balance of power between the states and the national government.

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Scoring Guideline for Question 3: SCOTUS Comparison — 4 points

Learning Objectives: CON-2.A CON-2.B

(A)	Identify the constitutional clause that is common in both *United States v. Lopez* (1995) and *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones* (1937). • The commerce clause.	**1 point** 2.C
(B)	Explain how the facts in *United States v. Lopez* led to a different holding than in *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones and Laughling Steel Corporation*. One point for describing relevant information. • In *United States v. Lopez*, the court ruled that the commerce clause did not extend to creating gun free school zones.	**1 point** 2.A
	One point for correctly explaining how the facts of both cases led to a different holding. • In *United States v. Lopez*, gun possession was not an economic activity that could be considered interstate commerce under the commerce clause. In the *NLRB v. Jones* case, Congress determined that labor disputes were related to interstate commerce and, thus, could be regulated by the federal government.	**1 point** 2.C
(C)	Explain how the holding in *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones and Laughlin Steel Corporation* affected the balance of power between the states and the national government **Acceptable explanations include the following:** • By granting Congress more authority to make laws under the commerce clause, and also to establish a regulatory agency to rule in labor disputes, it substantially increased the power of the federal government. • The *NLRB v. Jones* case applied a very broad interpretation of what affects "interstate commerce" under the commerce clause. This increases the authority of Congress to make laws and establish agencies which increases the power of the federal government.	**1 point** 1.E
	Total for question 3	**4 points**

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Question 4: Argument Essay

Develop an argument that explains which of the three models of representative democracy—participatory, pluralist, or elite—best achieves the founders' intent for American democracy in terms of ensuring a stable government run by the people.

Use at least one piece of evidence from one of the following foundational documents:

- Brutus 1
- Federalist No. 10
- U.S. Constitution

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence
  - One piece of evidence must come from one of the foundational documents listed above.
  - A second piece of evidence can come from any other foundational document not used as your first piece of evidence, or it may be from your knowledge of course concepts
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

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Scoring Guidelines for Question 4: Argument Essay — 6 points

Learning Objectives: LOR-1.A LOR-1.B CON-1.A MPA-3.A PMI-5.B PMI-5.D PRD-2.B

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row A **Claim/Thesis** **(0-1 points)** 5.A	**0 points**	**1 point** Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: • The intended claim or thesis only restates the prompt • The intended claim or thesis does not make a claim that responds to the prompt	**Responses that earn this point:** • The claim or thesis responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning • The response must include a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about which of the three models of representative democracy – participatory, pluralist, or elite – best achieves the founders' intent for American Democracy
	Examples that do not earn this point: Restates the prompt • *"Three models of representative democracy—participatory, pluralist, and elite - are all ways of achieving a stable government"* Does not respond to the prompt • *"The founders' intent for American democracy was to ensure a stable government as shown in the Constitution"*	**Examples that earn this point:** • *"It is clear that the main intent of the founders best aligns with the model of elite representative democracy. The rules crafted for appointment of Congress members and the president demonstrate an elitist model of democracy for the nation"* • *"The founders wanted the people to play a main role in the government and that is why the participatory model of representative democracy best describes the American political system"* • *"The model that best describes the American political system is the pluralist theory of representative democracy, where groups compete to make society better"*
	Additional Notes: • The claim or thesis must consist of one or more sentences that may be located anywhere in the response • A claim or thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning	

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria			
Row B **Evidence (0-3 points)** 5.B	**0 points**	**1 point** Provides one piece of evidence that is relevant to the topic of the prompt	**2 points** Uses one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis	**3 points** Uses two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the claim or thesis
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes			
	Responses that do not earn points: • Do not provide any accurate evidence • Provide evidence that is not relevant to the topic	**Responses that earn 1 point:** • Must provide one piece of evidence relevant to the topic of the prompt • May or may not have a claim or thesis	**Responses that earn 2 points:** • Must provide one piece of specific and relevant evidence that supports the claim or thesis. This evidence can come from one of the foundational documents listed in the prompt, any other foundational document, or from knowledge of course concepts	**Responses that earn 3 points:** • Must provide two pieces of specific and relevant evidence that support the claim or thesis. One of these pieces of evidence **must** come from a foundational document listed in the prompt. The other piece of evidence can come from a different foundational document or from knowledge of course concepts
	Examples that do not earn points: Not specific • *"The Federalist 10 defended the Constitution* Not relevant to course concepts in the prompt • *"The Constitution gives Congress the power to tax"*	**Examples of evidence that are relevant to the topic of the prompt:** • *"The Constitution states the terms of offices and after those holding office must enter reelection"* • *"Brutus I wanted the people to have the power warning that the Constitution would create a federal government that would possess absolute and uncontrollable power"*	**Examples of acceptable specific and relevant evidence that support the argument (1 example is one piece of evidence):** • *"The elitist model intentions of the founders are further seen in the electoral college system. In this system, the people are allowed the initial vote for president, or the 'popular vote,' which determines the composition of the electorate"* • *"The Constitution includes a Bill of Rights which includes the rights/liberties of the people. This gives people an incentive to be part of the governing process"* • *"The Constitution also includes several amendments that give the people more of a say in government. For example, the 17th Amendment gives the people the power to vote for their senators allowing them to participate more in the government"* • *"Federalist 10 shows that the founders wanted a pluralist democracy. Federalist 10 describes that factions are dangerous but are inevitable"*	
	Additional Notes: • To earn two or three points in Row B, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A) • To earn three points, the response must use one of the foundational documents listed in the prompt			

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row C **Reasoning (0-1 points)** 5.C	**0 points**	**1 point** Explains how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: • Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis • Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis	**Responses that earn this point:** • Must explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis
		Examples of reasoning that explain how evidence supports the claim or thesis: • *"However the actual vote for president is left to a small number of individuals (electors) who cast the final ballots rather than just using the popular vote, mirroring the philosophies of the elite model"* • *"All of these amendments to the Constitution allowed the people to participate more in government demonstrating that the founders wanted the public to be involved in their government"* • *"This is a prime example of how pluralism is the best representation of American democracy because there are factions like political parties in the government, but they allow everyone's voice to be heard"*
	Additional Notes: • To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A) and support that argument with at least one piece of specific and relevant evidence (earned at least 2 points in Row B) • The explanation of the relationship between one piece of evidence and the claim or thesis is sufficient to earn this point"	

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Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
Row D **Responds to Alternate Perspectives (0-1 points)** 5.D	**0 points**	**1 point** Responds to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal
	Decision Rules and Scoring Notes	
	Responses that do not earn this point: • Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis • May identify or describe an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective • Refute a foundational document rather than an alternate perspective to the provided claim or thesis	**Responses that earn this point:** • Must describe an alternate perspective AND refute, concede, or rebut that perspective
	Examples of responses that do not earn the point: **Restates the opposite of the claim or thesis** • *"Those who argue that the founders wanted an elite mode of democracy are incorrect because it is clear they wanted a participatory system"* **Describes an alternate perspective but does not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective** • *"Although it is obvious that the elite model of democracy is what the founders intended, some argue that the founders actually wanted a participatory system of democracy in order to give the people authority over the government"*	**Examples of acceptable responses to an alternate perspective may include:** • *"Advocates of the participatory theory may argue that citizens have the power to participate by voting in elections in the United States. However, the founders designed a government which allowed for representation of the people, while leaving the more complex and important decisions to a well-educated few, as demonstrated by the systems of elections for both senators and the president"* • *"A counter argument is that the elite model is the best. This is supported by the United States Constitution, which gives the most power to property holding, wealthy, white males. This does not best reflect the founders' intent because the founders wanted the people, the citizens, in the United States to be in control. This is not possible with the elitist theory because only the wealthy have any say in the government under the elitist model, not all citizens"*
	Additional Notes: • To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A) • Responses that demonstrate an incorrect understanding of the alternate perspective do not earn this point	

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