

Name of Course: Civics and Government

Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework

Syllabus [Civics Syllabus](#)

Unit 1: Foundations of Government

Essential Questions

- What is *power*?
- What is *politics*?
- What is *ideology*?
- What is the difference between a *civic right* and a *civic responsibility*?
- Should the government reflect the will of the people?
- What happens in the absence of effective government?
- How does the Declaration of Independence reflect the natural rights philosophy?
- In what ways is Federalism a compromise between the potential tyranny of a unitary system and the possible anarchy of a confederation?
- What Constitutional structures were designed to limit the risk of tyranny of mob rule or potential factious domination?

Standards

- T: 1-8
- T: 10
- T2: 1
- T2: 7
- T2: 9

	● T2:12
Concepts and skills	● Primary Source analysis ● Primary and Secondary source evaluation and citation ● Critical Thinking ● Digital Literacy
Content Objectives "I can Statements"	● I can define the terms citizenship, politics, and government, and give examples of how political solutions to public policy problems are generated through interactions of citizens, civil associations, and government. ● I can describe the purposes and functions of government ● I can define and provide examples of different forms of government, including direct democracy, representative democracy, republic, monarchy, oligarchy, and autocracy. ● I can analyze theoretical perspectives related to the Constitution such as theories on democratic government, republicanism, pluralism, and elitism. ● I can analyze perspectives on the functions and values of voluntary participation by citizens in the civil associations that constitute civil society ● I can analyze founding documents of the United States and Massachusetts, research, analyze and interpret central ideas on government, including popular sovereignty, constitutionalism, republicanism, federalism, individual rights, the social contract and natural rights. ● I can compare and contrast ideas on government of the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists during their debates on ratification of the U.S. Constitution ● I can identify and explain historical and contemporary efforts to narrow discrepancies between foundational ideas and values of American democracy and realities of American political and civic life. ● I can argue and defend positions on issues in which foundational ideas or values are in tension or conflict (e.g., liberty in conflict with equality or authority, individual rights in conflict with national or community interests or perceptions of the common good, or majority rule in conflict with minority rights). ● I can compare and contrast governments that are unitary, confederate, and federal. ● I can Identify and describe provisions of the United States Constitution that define and distribute powers and authority of the federal .
Assessments, products,	● Various assignments based on primary source documents (Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, Federalist Paper #10, Brutus 1, The US Constitution)

vocabulary, practice	• Various relevant news articles from current events, various sources. • Foundations Unit Exam • Active Citizenship Project
Text, Materials, and Resources	• Magruder's American Government, Open Stax American Government 2e, primary source documents (Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, Federalist Paper #10, Brutus 1, The US Constitution) • Various relevant news articles from current events, various sources.

Name of Course : Civics and Government: Grade 12 Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework (Syllabus	
Unit #2 & Title: Legislative Branch	
Essential Questions	• Should the government reflect the will of the people? • What happens in the absence of effective government? • How does our representative government respond to changes in population? Who decides? What happens in cases of bias? • Was the Constitution designed to limit or promote the voices of the masses? • What Constitutional structures were designed to limit the risk of tyranny? • What is the representational role of a member of Congress? • Should Congress reflect the demographics • What are the various influences of legislative decision making?
Standards	• 2.2 • 2.3 • 2.5 • 2.7 • 2.9 • 2.10

	• 2.12 • 4.3 • 4.6	
Concepts and skills	• Argumentative writing • Critical thinking • Quantitative analysis of charts and graphs	•
Content Objectives "I can Statements"	• Explain the function and structure of the legislative branch • Define and explain the significance of the filibuster • Identify the powers assigned to Congress under Article I of of the Constitution • Differentiate between expressed and implied powers • Explain the function and structure of each house of Congress • Evaluate the “Necessary and Proper” clause of the Constitution • Identify the types of congressional committees • Describe the role committees play in the legislative process • Explain the process of reapportionment and redistricting • Analyze the effects of redistricting and gerrymandering • Explore methods for preventing gerrymandering • Identify congressional leadership roles • Explain the responsibilities of a congressional leader • Describe the leadership structure of Congress • Distinguish between majority and minority party • Describe the impact midterm elections have on the executive and legislative branch	
Assessments, products, vocabulary, practice	• Unit tests, Quizzes • Homework and classwork for formative and summative assessment	
Text, Materials, and Resources	• Icivics.com, Ballotpedia, Project Vote Smart, isidewith, govtrack, Oyez.org, USASpending.gov • Gerrymander Puzzle Game • Podcasts: The Daily, Constitutional, 538 Podcast • Film: Slay the Dragon, 2019 • Active Citizenship Project	

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Name of Course: Civics and Government Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework Syllabus	
Unit 3 Executive Branch	
Essential Questions	• What views of the presidency were debated by the Framers? • What factors have contributed to the growth of presidential power? • What are the limits of executive power? • What tools are available to the President to implement foreign policy? • How can the President check the actions of the legislative and judicial branches?
Standards	• T-2.7 • T-2.8 • T-2.10 • T-3.4 • T-5.3 • T-5.4 • T-5.8
Concepts and skills	• Primary and Secondary source evaluation and citation • Critical Thinking • Digital Literacy • Quantitative analysis of charts and graphs

Content Objectives "I can Statements"	● Explain the roles and responsibilities of executive departments and the president's cabinet ● Explain how and why presidential powers were limited during the writing of the Constitution ● Describe how executive departments and agencies enforce governmental policies ● Examine regulatory agencies and their social, economic, and political impact on the country ● Describe how the presidency has changed over the years ● Identify sections of the Constitution that give the president the power to issue executive orders ● Distinguish an executive order from a law ● Explain what executive orders can do ● Identify the roles the executive and legislative branches play in foreign policy ● Explain how federal agencies assist the president in carrying out foreign policy ● Identify the origin and purpose of the president's cabinet ● Describe the process of becoming a member of the cabinet ● Identify the 16 cabinet positions and the general topics for which they are responsible
Assessments, products, vocabulary, practice	● Unit tests, Quizzes ● Homework and classwork for formative and summative assessment ● Monitoring the News ● Electoral College Strategy Simulation
Text, Materials, and Resources	● Magruder's American Government, Open Stax American Government 2e, iCivics, whitehouse.gov ● Various relevant news articles from current events, various sources