Wall Township Public Schools	Board Approval Date: August 19, 2025

Course Title: **AP US Government and Politics**

Course Description:
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. Underpinning the required content of the course are several big ideas that allow students to create meaningful connections among concepts throughout the course. Students will also engage in skill development that requires them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments.

New Jersey Student Learning Standards

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Social Studies

The New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) are reviewed and revised every five years. The 2020 NJSLS in Social Studies was adopted by the State Board of Education on June 3, 2020. Districts are required to implement these standards through the updating of social studies curricula by September 2022. The standards provide the framework for curricular instruction as well

as provide the performance expectations students are expected to meet by the end of each grade band.

Implementation of the standards is mandated by the New Jersey Administrative Code. District boards of education shall ensure that curriculum and instruction are designed and delivered in such a way that all students are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills specified by the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.1(a)). The district must provide sufficient time and resources to ensure that all students can demonstrate that they have met or exceeded the expectations set forth in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies

Intent and Spirit

All students receive social studies instruction from Kindergarten through grade 12. Today's challenges are complex, have global implications, and are connected to people, places, and events of the past. The study of social studies focuses on deep understanding of concepts that enable students to think critically and systematically about local, regional, national, and global issues. Authentic learning experiences that enable students to apply content knowledge, develop social studies skills, and collaborate with students from around the world prepare New Jersey students for college, careers, and civic life. The natural integration of technology in social studies education allows students to overcome geographic borders, apply scientific and mathematical analysis to historical questions and contemporary issues, appreciate cultural diversity, and experience events through the examination of primary sources. The 2020 New Jersey Student Learning Standards — Social Studies (NJSLS-2020) are informed by national and state standards and other documents such as the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, as well as those published by the National Center for History Education, National Council for Social Studies, National Council for Geographic Education, Center for Civic Education, National Council on Economic Education, National Assessment of Educational Progress, and the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Social studies instruction occurs throughout the K–12 spectrum, building in sophistication of learning about history, economics, geography, and civics at all ages.

Mission

Social studies education provides learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and perspectives needed to become active, informed, and contributing members of local, state, national, and global communities.

Vision

An education in social studies fosters a population that:

- Is civic-minded, globally aware, and socially responsible;
- Exemplifies fundamental values of democracy and human rights through active participation in local, state, national and global communities;
- Makes informed decisions about local, state, national, and global events based on inquiry and analysis;
- Considers multiple perspectives, values diversity, and promotes cultural understanding;
- Recognizes the relationships between people, places, and resources as well as the implications of an interconnected global economy;
- Applies an understanding of critical media literacy skills when utilizing technology to learn, communicate, and collaborate with diverse people around the world; and
- Discerns fact from falsehood and critically analyzes information for validity and relevance.

Course Sequence & Pacing	
Unit Title	**Estimated Number of Instructional Periods**
Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy	20
Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government	40
Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	18
Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	10
Unit 5: Political Participation	20
Unit 6: AP Exam Review and Post Exam	22

Unit 1

Desired Results

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

Unit Summary:

Unit 1 explores the philosophical foundations and historical events that shaped the U.S. Constitution and the system of government it established. Students examine key ideas from Enlightenment thinkers, debates between Federalists and Anti-Federalists, the impact of foundational documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation, and the principles embedded in the Constitution. Through analysis of primary sources, institutional

structures, and the concept of federalism, students evaluate how the U.S. balances individual liberties with governmental authority, and how evolving interpretations shape public policy.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

- 6.1.12.HistoryCC.1: Analyze historical events and developments to explain how conflicts and compromises have shaped the U.S. Constitution.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCC.2.a: Analyze how Enlightenment ideas influenced political thought in the U.S.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCC.2.b: Examine the impact of the Constitution and Bill of Rights on people historically and today.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCC.2.a: Analyze the impact of the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution on developing the ideals of liberty, democracy, and republicanism.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.1: Evaluate the impact of political ideologies on U.S. government and policy decisions.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2: Analyze the impact of the principles of the Constitution on political systems, including popular sovereignty, limited government, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, and republicanism.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.a: Use multiple sources to evaluate the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation in resolving issues with the national government.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.b: Examine how the Constitution created a more effective federal government and the compromises it required.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.c: Analyze arguments for and against the ratification of the Constitution as expressed in the Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.2.d: Evaluate how the Constitution distributed power and protected individual rights.
- 6.1.12.CivicsDP.2.a: Compare and contrast the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution in terms of the decision-making powers of national government.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPR.1: Evaluate the purposes, implementation, and impact of the U.S. Constitution and its amendments on the evolution of American constitutional democracy.
- 6.1.12.CivicsDP.1: Analyze the role of citizen participation in the democratic process at the local, state, and national levels, including voting and civic responsibilities.

- 6.1.12.CivicsHR.1: Evaluate the impact of constitutional protections of individual rights on the U.S. political system.
- 6.1.12.EconNE.2.a: Explain how the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation led to a new economic framework in the Constitution.
- 6.1.12.EconEM.1: Analyze how government promotes economic growth and stability through fiscal and monetary policy.
- 6.1.12.GeoSV.1: Analyze how political decisions impact geographic boundaries, the distribution of power, and social systems.

Advanced Placement: AP US Government & Politics Standards:

- LO 1.1.A: Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
- Skill 1.A: Describe and explain textual evidence.
- LO 1.2.A: Describe the different models of representative democracy.
  Skill 2.B: Compare different political systems, institutions, processes, and policies.
- LO 1.3.A: Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents.
- Skill 3.A: Identify and describe a claim or argument in a text.
- Skill 3.B: Identify and describe evidence used by an author to support a claim or argument in a text.
- LO 1.4.A: Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over the role of the central government.
- Skill 4.B: Explain how the relationship between political institutions and behavior is affected by rules, procedures, and policies.
- LO 1.5.A: Explain the debates about self-government during the drafting of the Constitution.
  LO 1.5.B: Explain how the Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.
- Skill 2.A: Describe political principles, institutions, processes, and behavior.

- LO 1.6.A: Describe the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances.
- LO 1.6.B: Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.
- Skill 5.A: Explain how the U.S. Constitution and other foundational documents function in the context of governmental institutions and political processes.
- LO 1.7.A: Describe how the allocation of powers between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- Skill 4.A: Explain how political systems, processes, and behavior are influenced by rules, procedures, and institutional structures.
- LO 1.8.A: Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.
- LO 1.8.B: Explain how the distribution of power between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- Skill 3.B: Identify and describe evidence used by an author to support a claim or argument in a text.
- LO 1.9.A: Explain how concurrent powers, grants, incentives, and mandates are reflected in the constitutional distribution of power between national and state governments.
- LO 1.9.B: Explain how the distribution of powers among three branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- Skill 5.B: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes
- 9.4.12.CI.1: Demonstrate the ability to reflect, analyze, and use creative skills and ideas.
- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in different careers and situations.

- 9.4.12.GCA.1: Collaborate with individuals to achieve common goals.
- 9.4.12.IML.4: Synthesize information from multiple sources to make ethical and informed decisions.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*): *N/A*

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.
- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints

English Language Arts (ELA)

- RI.11-12.1: Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text.
- RI.11-12.5: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

- W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope (rate of change) and the intercept (constant term) of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12prof.Cr1a: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work (e.g., infographics or political cartooning).
  1.4.12prof.Re7b: Evaluate how interpretations of a presentation or artwork reflect historical and social context.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:	**Unit Enduring Understandings:**
• How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety? • How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system? • How does the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.? • How are democratic ideals reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution? • How do different models of representative democracy influence policy making? • How do Federalist and Anti-Federalist perspectives on government power and individual rights continue to shape political debate today? • How did the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation influence the development of the	• A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development. • The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government. • Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments. • The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved.

Constitution? • How did debate and compromise shape the ratification of the Constitution? • How does the Constitution reflect the principle of limited government? • How does federalism divide power between the national and state governments? • How have Supreme Court rulings defined the balance of power between national and state governments? • How does the distribution of power between national and state governments affect policy making?	
Vocabulary: Natural rights, popular sovereignty, social contract, democracy, republicanism, constitutional republic, participatory democracy, pluralist democracy, elite democracy, Federalist No. 10, Brutus No. 1, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, U.S. Constitution, Federalists, Anti-Federalists, Federalist Papers, Shay's Rebellion, Great Compromise, Electoral College, Three-Fifths Compromise, Slave Trade Compromise, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, enumerated powers, implied powers, necessary and proper clause, supremacy clause, commerce clause, full faith & credit clause, Advise and Consent Clause, Informal Amendments, Amendments, Boll of Rights, Tenth Amendment, Fourteenth Amendment, reserved powers, concurrent powers, dual federalism, cooperative	

federalism, categorical grants, block grants, mandates, unfunded mandates, devolution, McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), United States v. Lopez (1995).
Students will be able to: ● Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. ● Describe and explain textual evidence. ● Describe the different models of representative democracy. ● Compare different political systems, institutions, processes, and policies. ● Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents. ● Identify and describe a claim or argument in a text. ● Identify and describe evidence used by an author to support a claim or argument in a text. ● Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over the role of the central government. ● Explain how the relationship between political institutions and behavior is affected by rules, procedures, and policies. ● Explain the debates about self-government during the drafting of the Constitution. ● Explain how the Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government. ● Describe political principles, institutions, processes, and behavior. ● Describe the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances. ● Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments. ● Explain how the U.S. Constitution and other foundational documents function in the context of governmental institutions and political processes. ● Describe how the allocation of powers between national and state governments impacts policy making.

- Explain how political systems, processes, and behavior are influenced by rules, procedures, and institutional structures.
- Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.
- Explain how the distribution of power between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- Identify and describe evidence used by an author to support a claim or argument in a text.
- Explain how concurrent powers, grants, incentives, and mandates are reflected in the constitutional distribution of power between national and state governments.
- Explain how the distribution of powers among three branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.
- Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.

Learning Activities & Differentiation:

- Create a graphic organizer of American political culture
- Analyze the *Declaration of Independence* for democratic ideals.
- Class simulation of participatory vs. elite models.
- Create a cause-effect chart of the *Articles of Confederation* weaknesses.
- *Federalist #10 and Brutus #1* analysis.
- *Federalist #51* analysis.
- Group analysis of compromise outcomes.
- Build flowcharts for checks and balances.
- Chart state vs. federal powers.
- Group work: policy response to disaster scenario.
- Classify types of Grants and mandates using current examples
- Investigate real examples of grant use in NJ
- Case study comparison: *McCulloch v. Maryland vs. U.S. v. Lopez.*
- Apply Unit 1 Concepts to Current Events

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork
- Content Quizzes
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Constitution Test
- Federalism Test

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Unit 1 Progress Check
- Qualitative FRQs
- SCOTUS case analysis

Alternative Assessments:

- Argumentative Essay: Founders intent for a Elite or Pluralistic democratic model of government
- Compare a Modern Policy to Federalist/Anti-Federalist Concerns
- Blog Post or Reflective Essay - “How would Federalist No. 10 authors view the current political climate?”
- Socratic Seminar or Structured Academic Debate - “Which model of democracy is most effective?”

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- BTWs, *American Government*, *Stories of a Nation for the AP Course*, by Abernathy and Waples
- AP Course Exam Description Unit breakdown
- Essential knowledge and Terms

- Unit Study Guide
- AP Classroom videos and practice questions
- *Declaration of Independence*
- *Articles of Confederation*
- *U.S. Constitution* (including Preamble and amendments)
- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Brutus No. 1*
- *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) Case Study
- *United States v. Lopez* (1995) Case Study
- Khan Academy - AP US Government videos and practice questions

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

❖ ***Follow the College Board Accommodations for students when needed.***

Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Offer scaffolded and fill-in-the-blank guided notes
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Use chunking and step-by-step instructions for complex tasks
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable parts with clear steps
- Provide exemplars and models for all major assignments
- Use structured sentence frames and prompts for FRQs
- Reduce reading complexity with simplified texts and visuals

- Give frequent and specific feedback during practice activities

Strategies for Supporting Students with 504 Plans

- Provide preferential seating near instruction or away from distractions
- Allow frequent breaks during lessons or assessments
- Allow typing instead of handwriting for notes and assessments
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Provide a second set of textbooks/materials for home
- Ensure access to quiet testing environments
- Offer visual aids and diagrams alongside written material
- Provide copies of class notes or guided outlines
- Use frequent check-ins and chunk assignments with deadlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Struggling Learners

- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts using visuals
- Use sentence starters and frames for argumentative writing
- Implement peer tutoring or small group reteaching
- Incorporate frequent low-stakes formative checks
- Use real-world scenarios to anchor abstract concepts (e.g., federalism in current events)
- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Incorporate short, captioned instructional videos and audio reviews for core concepts
- Provide guided notes with sentence starters and cloze-style vocabulary activities
- Offer structured graphic templates for graph-based questions
- Break tasks into smaller chunks with step-by-step instructions

- Use visual prompts such as icons, charts, and anchor posters to reinforce vocabulary
- Simplify government scenarios with relatable real-life examples and reduced reading complexity
- Provide extended time on classwork, quizzes, and assessments
- Offer read-aloud and clarification of test directions during assessments
- Use frequent checks for understanding with quick-response tools (e.g., thumbs up/down, mini-whiteboards

Strategies for Supporting Gifted & Talented (G&T) Students

- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry or research
- Use extended or enriched FRQ prompts for deeper analysis
- Allow for peer teaching or leadership roles during class activities
- Invite participation in competitions or outside enrichment programs
- Allow independent research on constitutional debates and Supreme Court cases
- Encourage synthesis across units (e.g., comparing Federalist No. 10 to modern pluralism)
- Offer extension activities like simulated constitutional convention or judicial review

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Incorporate labeled diagrams and charts to explain core concepts limited government & federalism
- Offer sentence frames and structured writing supports for FRQ responses
- Use visual aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing
- Provide oral instructions along with written directions
- Use closed-captioned videos and simplified audio resources for content review
- Scaffold readings with summaries, highlighted text, and guiding questions
- Use visuals and real-life examples to contextualize governmental ideas
- Provide extended time for reading-heavy or writing-intensive tasks

Unit 2

Desired Results

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government

Unit Summary:

Unit 2 explores how the three branches of the federal government — legislative, executive, and judicial — interact and share powers through a system of checks and balances and separation of powers. Students will analyze how powers are distributed and exercised across branches and the ways institutions influence policy making and implementation. This unit emphasizes the constitutional foundations of these interactions, the roles of Congress, the presidency, and the federal courts, and how these branches engage with each other and with interest groups, political parties, and the public. Understanding these dynamics is critical to comprehending the functioning and limitations of American government and democracy.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.3.a: Analyze the impact of the organization and powers of national, state, and local governments on issues related to individual rights and responsibilities.
- 6.1.12.A.5.b Explain how the Constitution created a system of limited government through separation of powers and federalism.
- 6.1.12.A.5.c Evaluate how political parties and interest groups developed as mechanisms to influence governmental policy.
- 6.1.12.A.5.d Analyze the role of the presidency and Congress in policymaking and lawmaking processes.
- 6.1.12.A.5.e Evaluate the significance of landmark Supreme Court decisions in shaping American government and protecting constitutional principles.
- 6.1.12.A.5.f Explain how federal agencies and the bureaucracy influence policy implementation and government operations.

- 6.1.12.A.5.g Analyze the role of public opinion, political participation, and media in influencing government actions.
- 6.1.12.A.6.a Evaluate the effectiveness of checks and balances and separation of powers in resolving conflicts among branches of government.
- 6.1.12.A.6.b Assess the impact of institutional reform efforts and changes in political processes on the function of government.

Advanced Placement: US Government and Politics Standards:

- LO 2.1.A Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of the House of Representatives and the Senate reflect the constitutional goals of representative democracy.
- LO 2.2.A Explain how the powers of Congress are enumerated and implied in the Constitution.
- LO 2.3.A Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.
- LO 2.4.A Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.
- LO 2.5.A Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.
- LO 2.6.A Explain how the president's agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.
- LO 2.7.A Explain how presidents use communication technology to promote their policy agenda.
- LO 2.8.A Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.
- LO 2.9.A Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its interaction with the executive branch.
- LO 2.10.A Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration.
- LO 2.11.A Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.
- LO 2.12.A 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.

- LO 2.13.A Explain how the exercise of judicial review and the Court's independence can lead to challenges with existing laws or precedents.
- LO 2.14.A Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.
- LO 2.15.A Explain how the bureaucracy, Congress, and the president work together to implement public policy.
- Skill 1.B Apply political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in context.
- Skill 1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in different scenarios and contexts.
- Skill 1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios.
- Skill 2.C Compare facts, issues, holdings, reasoning, decisions, and majority opinions between a required SCOTUS case and a non-required case.
- Skill 3.D Explain what data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes
- 9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.

- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints
- 8.2.12.EC.1 Analyze a product or system to determine how political, economic, social, and ecological factors influenced its development.

English Language Arts (ELA)

- RI.11-12.1: Accurately cite strong and thorough textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.5: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope (rate of change) and the intercept (constant term) of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12prof.Re7b: Evaluate how interpretations of a presentation or artwork reflect historical and social context.
- 1.4.12acc.Re8a: Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 1.4.12prof.Cn11a: Describe how media artworks influence and are influenced by societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How does the Constitution establish and limit the powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches?
- In what ways do the branches check and balance each other?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Constitutional Structure Enables Branch Interaction

  The U.S. Constitution's separation of powers and system of checks and balances are foundational frameworks that define how legislative, executive,

• How do congressional powers impact policy making and representation? • What factors influence the lawmaking process in Congress? • How does the presidency interact with Congress and the courts? • What is the role of bureaucracy in policy implementation? • How do federal courts influence government and society? • What factors shape judicial decision-making and judicial review? • How do political parties and interest groups affect interactions among branches? • How do informal and formal powers of the branches shape governance? • How does interbranch conflict affect policy outcomes and government effectiveness?	and judicial authorities interact within U.S. government. • Bicameralism Shapes Legislative Dynamics The bicameral design of Congress—with its distinct structures, powers, and roles between the House and Senate—ensures diverse representation and balances speed of policy with thoughtful deliberation. • Congressional Powers Influence Policymaking Congress's range of enumerated and implied powers, including fiscal and regulatory authorities, significantly shapes public policy and reflects constitutional ambitions. • Presidential Powers are Both Formal and Flexible The presidency encompasses constitutionally

• How do contemporary issues highlight the interactions and tensions among branches? • What role does public opinion play in the balance of power? • How does federalism affect the relationships among branches? • How do historical and contemporary events illustrate changes in branch interactions?	defined powers (like veto and commander-in-chief) along with inherent and informal tools (such as executive orders, executive agreements, and the bully pulpit) that evolve to fit contemporary governance. • Federal Bureaucracy Uses Delegated Authority to Administer Policy Federal agencies implement laws via discretionary rule-making and application of policy, translating legislative intent into everyday implementation through structured bureaucratic systems. • Judicial Review Sustains the Rule of Law The power of courts to interpret and invalidate governmental actions helps maintain constitutional order, reinforcing legal precedent through stare decisis while adapting through evolving

	interpretations. • Checks and Balances Promote Accountability Reciprocal oversight among Congress, the President, and the courts—including appointment approval, budgetary control, judicial review, and legislative revisions—helps prevent domination and preserve balance. • Interbranch Tensions Directly Influence Policy Outcomes The dynamic tensions and negotiation among branches—ranging from cooperation to dispute—shape whether laws are enacted, policies enforced, or directives overturned. • Political Actors and Public Opinion Mediate Governance

	Political parties, interest groups, media, and the public serve as intermediaries that influence how branches act, respond to public demands, and remain accountable. • Federalism Shapes Branch Function and Limits Federal-state relations inform how branches operate, check one another, and deliver public services in a multi-layered governance structure. • Policy Outcomes Result from Branch Distribution The distribution of power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches creates multiple access points and constraints, which stakeholders use to enter policy processes.
Vocabulary: Formal power, informal power, bicameral, judicial review, stare decisis, discretionary authority, iron triangle, issue network, oversight, precedent, rule-making authority, red tape, patronage, merit system, discretionary spending,	

mandatory spending, executive order, executive agreement, executive privilege, bully pulpit, veto, pocket veto, line-item veto, Advise and Consent clause, filibuster, cloture, hold, unanimous consent, committee of the whole, discharge petition, trustee model, delegate model, politico model, standing committee, select committee, conference committee, Speaker of the House, Senate majority leader, Whip, party polarization, divided government, confirmation process, bureaucracy, bureaucratic discretion, implementation, independent regulatory commission, government corporation, spoil system, civil service reform, administrative adjudication, pathologies of bureaucracy, judicial branch, Supreme Court, inferior courts, constitutional courts, legislative courts, original jurisdiction, appellate jurisdiction, criminal law, civil law, plaintiff, defendant, prosecution, plea bargain, judicial review, life tenure of justices, originalist, judicial activist, amicus curiae brief, precedent, majority opinion, dissenting opinion, concurring opinion, writ of certiorari, rule of four, docket, oral argument, amicus curiae brief, judicial activism, judicial restraint, life tenure, confirmation process, senatorial courtesy, court-packing,legal brief, solicitor general, law clerks, per curiam opinion, court of appeals (circuit courts), district courts, stare decisis, Federalist No. 70, Federalist No. 78, Marbury v. Madison

Students will be able to:

- Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of the House of Representatives and the Senate reflect the constitutional goals of representative democracy.
- Explain how the powers of Congress are enumerated and implied in the Constitution.
- Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.
- Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.
- Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.
- Explain how the president's agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.
- Explain how presidents use communication technology to promote their policy agenda.
- Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.
- Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its interaction with the executive branch.
- Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration.

- Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.
- 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.
- Explain how the exercise of judicial review and the Court's independence can lead to challenges with existing laws or precedents.
- Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.
- Explain how the bureaucracy, Congress, and the president work together to implement public policy.
- Apply political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in context.
- Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in different scenarios and contexts.
- Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios.
- Compare facts, issues, holdings, reasoning, decisions, and majority opinions between a required SCOTUS case and a non-required case.
- Explain what data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Learning Activities & Differentiation:

- Diagram the structure of Congress highlighting differences between House and Senate.
- Analyze excerpts from the Constitution (Article I) to identify enumerated powers.
- Group debates on the impact of implied powers (Necessary and Proper Clause).
- Case study analysis of McCulloch v. Maryland.
- Create a timeline of key congressional acts showing use of enumerated and implied powers.
- Simulate the process of a bill becoming law through a class mock Congress.
- Research on current congressional leaders.
- Analyze presidential speeches and executive orders.
- Debate the limits and expansions of presidential power. (War Powers Act FRQ)
- Create organizational charts of federal agencies.

- Case studies on how a policy is implemented by a federal agency
- Map the federal court system hierarchy.
- Moot court simulations analyzing judicial review cases.
- Compare originalist vs. judicial activist philosophies.
- Role-play Supreme Court justices' decision-making processes.
- Interactive games illustrating checks and balances scenarios.
- Research local political parties and interest groups.
- Debate scenarios requiring interbranch cooperation.
- Use real-world scenarios to prompt students to describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in context (e.g., how vetoes affect lawmaking or how executive orders shape administrative action)
- Have students compare required Supreme Court cases (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *McCulloch v. Maryland*) with related non-required cases using graphic organizers and think–pair–share exercises.
- Ask students to explain what quantitative data (e.g., federal budget charts, oversight statistics) imply about government processes, such as legislative oversight of agencies.
- Incorporate SCOTUS comparison progress checks, prompting students to use reasoning and comparison tools for court case analysis.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork
- Content Quizzes
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Congress Test

- President & Bureaucracy Test
- Judiciary Test

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Unit 2 Progress Check
- Qualitative FRQs
- SCOTUS case analysis

Alternative Assessments:

- Current Events Presentation - Students select and present a current event that illustrates interbranch tension, media influence, or bureaucratic discretion, analyzing it through Unit 2 concepts..
- Rule-Making Simulation - Students act as members of an independent regulatory agency, drafting a new rule under discretionary authority, then face mock Congressional oversight based on their decisions.
- Judicial Review Case Analysis - Students write briefs and deliver oral arguments on a Supreme Court case, applying the doctrine of stare decisis and judicial review to support their position.
- Political Cartoon Analysis or Creation - Analyze political cartoons on interbranch conflict or create original ones addressing contemporary issues related to Unit 2 themes.
- Argumentative Essay - Students compose a comparative essay that evaluates formal vs. informal presidential powers, utilizing course vocabulary and citing specific constitutional clauses or historical examples.
- Argumentative Essay: Founders intent for a Trustee or Delegate model of representation.
- Contemporary Scenario Roundtable - Students analyze a modern interbranch conflict—such as recent executive orders or oversight hearings—and present short, data-driven pitches using course terms and institutional knowledge

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- BTWs, *American Government*, *Stories of a Nation for the AP Course*, by Abernathy and Waples
- AP Course Exam Description Unit breakdown

- Essential knowledge and Terms
- Unit Study Guide
- AP Classroom videos and practice questions
- *U.S. Constitution* (including Preamble and amendments)
- *Federalist No. 70*
- *Federalist No. 78*
- *Baker v. Carr* (1962) Case Study
- *Shaw v. Reno* (1993) Case Study
- Khan Academy - AP US Government videos and practice questions

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

❖ ***Follow the College Board Accommodations for students when needed.***

Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Offer scaffolded and fill-in-the-blank guided notes
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Use chunking and step-by-step instructions for complex tasks
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable parts with clear steps
- Provide exemplars and models for all major assignments
- Use structured sentence frames and prompts for FRQs
- Reduce reading complexity with simplified texts and visuals

- Give frequent and specific feedback during practice activities

Strategies for Supporting Students with 504 Plans

- Provide preferential seating near instruction or away from distractions
- Allow frequent breaks during lessons or assessments
- Allow typing instead of handwriting for notes and assessments
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- Provide a second set of textbooks/materials for home
- Ensure access to quiet testing environments
- Offer visual aids and diagrams alongside written material
- Provide copies of class notes or guided outlines
- Use frequent check-ins and chunk assignments with deadlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Struggling Learners

- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts using visuals
- Use sentence starters and frames for argumentative writing
- Implement peer tutoring or small group reteaching
- Incorporate frequent low-stakes formative checks
- Use real-world scenarios to anchor abstract concepts (e.g., branches & bureaucracy in current events)
- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Incorporate short, captioned instructional videos and audio reviews for core concepts
- Provide guided notes with sentence starters and cloze-style vocabulary activities
- Offer structured graphic templates for graph-based questions
- Break tasks into smaller chunks with step-by-step instructions

- Use visual prompts such as icons, charts, and anchor posters to reinforce vocabulary
- Simplify government scenarios with relatable real-life examples and reduced reading complexity
- Provide extended time on classwork, quizzes, and assessments
- Offer read-aloud and clarification of test directions during assessments
- Use frequent checks for understanding with quick-response tools (e.g., thumbs up/down, mini-whiteboards

Strategies for Supporting Gifted & Talented (G&T) Students

- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry or research
- Use extended or enriched FRQ prompts for deeper analysis
- Allow for peer teaching or leadership roles during class activities
- Invite participation in competitions or outside enrichment programs
- Allow independent research on constitutional debates and Supreme Court cases
- Encourage synthesis across units (e.g., comparing Federalist No. 10 to branches and bureaucracy)
- Offer extension activities like simulated constitutional convention or judicial review

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Incorporate labeled diagrams and charts to explain core concepts including checks and balances
- Offer sentence frames and structured writing supports for FRQ responses
- Use visual aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing
- Provide oral instructions along with written directions
- Use closed-captioned videos and simplified audio resources for content review
- Scaffold readings with summaries, highlighted text, and guiding questions
- Use visuals and real-life examples to contextualize governmental ideas
- Provide extended time for reading-heavy or writing-intensive tasks

Unit 3

Desired Results

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Unit Summary:

Unit 3 of the AP US Government & Politics course focuses on the foundational principles, legal interpretations, and landmark Supreme Court cases that shape civil liberties and civil rights in the United States. This unit explores how the Constitution protects individual freedoms, such as freedom of speech, religion, and privacy, and how these rights have been interpreted and limited over time. It also examines the evolution of civil rights, particularly the struggle to achieve equality under the law for historically marginalized groups through legislation and judicial decisions. Students analyze key Supreme Court rulings and legislative acts that have defined the balance between individual rights and governmental power, and explore the ongoing debates about the scope and limits of civil liberties and civil rights in a diverse and changing society.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.a: Draw conclusions about how the Constitution protects individual rights and limits government authority.
- 6.1.12.CivicsHR.14.a: Evaluate how landmark legislation and court decisions have expanded civil rights in the U.S.
- 6.1.12.CivicsHR.14.a Evaluate the role of individual and collective actions in shaping civic policies (e.g., the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Suffrage).
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.c: Analyze how social and political movements have advanced civil rights and liberties.
- 6.1.12.HistorySE.14.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of government policies and court decisions in promoting civil liberties.

  6.1.12.CivicsDP.14.a: Assess how democratic ideals have shaped civil rights legislation.

6.1.12.HistoryCC.14.a: Analyze how events and ideologies have influenced constitutional interpretations over time.

- 6.1.12.CivicsPD.14.a: Examine how civic participation and activism have contributed to expanding rights for underrepresented groups.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.4.a: Evaluate the effectiveness of the separation of powers and checks and balances in protecting against governmental abuse.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPD.4.a: Evaluate the role of the executive branch in shaping public policy and enforcing laws.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.3.b: Analyze the impact of landmark Supreme Court decisions (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Miranda v. Arizona*) on the development of the American legal, political, and economic systems.

Advanced Placement: US Government and Politics Standards:

- LO 3.1.A: Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
  LO 3.2.A: Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- LO 3.3.A: Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- LO 3.4.A: Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
- LO 3.5.A: Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
- LO 3.6.A: Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
- LO 3.7.A: Explain the implications of selective incorporation.
- LO 3.8.A: Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- LO 3.9.A: Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- LO 3.10.A: Explain how the Supreme Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.

- LO 3.11.A: Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
- LO 3.12.A: Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
- LO 3.13.A: Explain how the Court has interpreted the Equal Protection Clause.
- Skill 3.1.S: Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
- Skill 3.2.S: Analyze how the Supreme Court interprets the First and Fourteenth Amendments in protecting individual liberty.
- Skill 3.3.S: Analyze how the Supreme Court interprets the First and Fourteenth Amendments in protecting freedom of speech.
- Skill 3.4.S: Evaluate how the Supreme Court balances individual freedom with public order and safety.
- Skill 3.5.S: Evaluate how the Supreme Court balances individual freedom with laws regarding the Second Amendment.
- Skill 3.6.S: Analyze the balance between individual rights and public safety in court rulings.
- Skill 3.7.S: Explain the significance of selective incorporation of the Bill of Rights to the states.
- Skill 3.8.S: Analyze the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause and its protection of individual liberty.
- Skill 3.9.S: Analyze the Supreme Court's interpretation of privacy rights under the Due Process Clause.
- Skill 3.10.S: Evaluate how the Supreme Court has both restricted and protected civil rights of minority groups.
- Skill 3.11.S: Analyze how government has responded to social movements.
- Skill 3.12.S: Evaluate the balance between minority rights and majority rule.
- Skill 3.13.S: Analyze how the Court interprets the Equal Protection Clause.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes

- 9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*):

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.
- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- RI.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.5: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasoning and relevant evidence.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis and research.
- SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot, and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope and intercept of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12prof.Re7b: Evaluate how interpretations of a presentation or artwork reflect historical and social context.
- 1.4.12acc.Re8a: Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 1.4.12prof.Cn11a: Describe how media artworks influence and are influenced by societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

Learning Targets	
Unit Essential Questions:	**Unit Enduring Understandings:** • The protections of individual liberties from government actions are central to the Constitution and have been expanded over time by judicial

• How does the Constitution protect civil liberties and civil rights? • What are the major Supreme Court cases that have shaped the interpretation of civil liberties and civil rights? • How have interpretations of the Bill of Rights changed over time through judicial review? • How do the rights of individuals balance with the need for government order and security? • In what ways has the government addressed discrimination and promoted equality? • How do political institutions and processes influence the protection and expansion of civil rights? • What role does public opinion play in shaping civil liberties and civil rights policies?	interpretation, especially through the incorporation of the Bill of Rights to the states. • The Supreme Court plays a key role in interpreting civil liberties, balancing individual freedoms against the interests of the broader society. • Civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, religion, and privacy, are fundamental to the American political system but are not absolute and can be restricted under certain conditions. • The Constitution has been interpreted to promote equality and prohibit discrimination, but the extension of civil rights has often required legislative action and judicial enforcement beyond the text of the Constitution. • The expansion of civil rights reflects changing societal values and the ongoing effort to achieve political and social equality for all citizens. • Political institutions and processes, including courts, legislatures, and the executive branch, influence the scope and enforcement of civil rights protections.

Vocabulary:
Civil liberties, civil rights, Bill of Rights, First Amendment, Establishment Clause, Free Exercise Clause, symbolic speech, hate speech, obscenity, prior restraint, due process clause, selective incorporation, Fourteenth Amendment, Second Amendment, right to privacy, Roe v. Wade, Griswold v. Connecticut, Gideon v. Wainwright, Miranda rights, Miranda v. Arizona, exclusionary rule, Mapp v. Ohio, Equal Protection Clause, Brown v. Board of Education, Plessy v. Ferguson, de jure segregation, de facto segregation, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Voting Rights Act of 1965, affirmative action, Title IX, Americans with Disabilities Act, Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, social movements, Civil Rights Movement, Women's Rights Movement, NAACP, NOW (National Organization for Women), public safety exception, judicial activism, judicial restraint, court precedent, incorporation doctrine, rational scrutiny, intermediate scrutiny, strict scrutiny, *Letter From a Birmingham Jail*, *Engel v. Vitale (1962)*, *Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)*, *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)*, *New York Times Co. v. United States (1971)*, *Schenck v. United States (1919)*, *Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)*, *McDonald v. Chicago (2010)*, *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)*

Students will be able to:

- Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
- Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
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- Explain the implications of selective incorporation.
- Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

- Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
- Explain how the Supreme Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.
- Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
- Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
- Explain how the Court has interpreted the Equal Protection Clause.
- Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
- Analyze how the Supreme Court interprets the First and Fourteenth Amendments in protecting individual liberty.
- Analyze how the Supreme Court interprets the First and Fourteenth Amendments in protecting freedom of speech.
- Evaluate how the Supreme Court balances individual freedom with public order and safety.
- Evaluate how the Supreme Court balances individual freedom with laws regarding the Second Amendment.
- Analyze the balance between individual rights and public safety in court rulings.
- Explain the significance of selective incorporation of the Bill of Rights to the states.
- Analyze the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Due Process Clause and its protection of individual liberty.
- Analyze the Supreme Court's interpretation of privacy rights under the Due Process Clause.
- Evaluate how the Supreme Court has both restricted and protected civil rights of minority groups.
- Analyze how government has responded to social movements.
- Evaluate the balance between minority rights and majority rule.
- Analyze how the Court interprets the Equal Protection Clause.

Learning Activities & Differentiation: *(LGBTQ and People with Disabilities,)*

- Create a graphic organizer of civil rights vs civil liberties
- Compare SCOTUS cases where selective incorporation was granted vs not granted (eg. Barron v Baltimore to Gitlow v NY)
- Analyze the *Letter From a Birmingham Jail* for democratic ideals.

- Case study comparison of required SCOTUS cases with similar SCOTUS cases
- Class simulation of judging required court cases (6 required cases)
- Analyze scenarios to classify civil liberties,civil rights or both.
- Analyze scenarios to classify if rational, intermediate, or strict scrutiny applies
- Civil Rights Timeline - Create a timeline that traces key events, legislation, and court cases in civil rights history including *Obergefell v Hodges*, including milestones for LGBTQ+ rights (like the *Don't Ask*, *Don't Tell* repeal) and disability rights (like the Americans with Disabilities Act).
- Multimedia Presentations on Social Movements - Create multimedia presentations on various social movements including the Disability Rights Movement and LGBTQ+ rights movement, highlighting constitutional and legislative changes.
- Art and Political Cartoon Analysis - Analyze political cartoons or artwork related to civil liberties and rights, including LGBTQ+ and disability themes, to interpret symbolism and historical context.
- Current examples of civil liberties and civil rights cases in the current SCOTUS session.

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork
- Content Quizzes
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Civil Liberties Test
- Civil Rights Test

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Unit 3 Progress Check
- Qualitative FRQs
- SCOTUS case analysis

Alternative Assessments:

- Landmark Case Scrapbook: Students create a visual and written portfolio documenting major Supreme Court cases involving civil liberties and rights, including case summaries, impact analysis, and personal reflection.
- Debate or Socratic Seminar: Organize a structured class debate or seminar on the balance between individual liberties and public order (e.g., gun control, hate speech, surveillance).
- Rights in Action Current Events Presentation: Students research and present a recent civil rights or liberties issue in the news, connecting it to constitutional principles and Supreme Court precedent.
- Amicus Curiae Brief Writing: Students write an "amicus brief" arguing one side of a constitutional case, demonstrating their understanding of precedent, legal reasoning, and societal impact.
  Simulation of the Incorporation Process: Students role-play state and federal officials to understand how the Bill of Rights has been applied to the states via selective incorporation.
- Political Cartoon Analysis Portfolio: Students analyze political cartoons related to civil rights movements and constitutional freedoms, explaining symbolism, bias, and historical context.

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- Essential knowledge and Terms
- Unit Study Guide
- AP Classroom videos and practice questions
- *U.S. Constitution* (including Preamble and amendments)
- *Letter From a Birmingham Jail*

- *Engel v. Vitale (1962)*
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)*
- *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)*
- *New York Times Co. v. United States (1971)*
- *Schenck v. United States (1919)*
- *Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)*
- *McDonald v. Chicago (2010)*
- *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)*
- Khan Academy - AP US Government videos and practice questions

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Strategies for Supporting Gifted & Talented (G&T) Students

- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry or research
- Use extended or enriched FRQ prompts for deeper analysis
- Allow for peer teaching or leadership roles during class activities
- Invite participation in competitions or outside enrichment programs
- Allow independent research on constitutional debates and Supreme Court cases
- Encourage synthesis across units (e.g., civil liberties and rights to the Judiciary Branch & Constitution)
- Offer extension activities like simulated constitutional convention or judicial review

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Incorporate labeled diagrams and charts to explain core concepts Rational vs Strict Scrutiny by the court
- Offer sentence frames and structured writing supports for FRQ responses
- Use visual aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing
- Provide oral instructions along with written directions
- Use closed-captioned videos and simplified audio resources for content review
- Scaffold readings with summaries, highlighted text, and guiding questions
- Use visuals and real-life examples to contextualize governmental ideas
- Provide extended time for reading-heavy or writing-intensive tasks

Unit 4

Desired Results

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

Unit Summary:

Unit 4 explores how American political beliefs are formed, how they influence public opinion, and how they affect political behavior and policy outcomes. Students examine the foundational factors that shape political attitudes—such as family, education, peers, media, and social environments—and assess how these beliefs manifest through different ideologies. The unit emphasizes understanding how political culture and core values like individualism, rule of law, limited government, free enterprise, and equality of opportunity influence the U.S. political system. Students will evaluate the role of political ideologies in shaping public policy, the influence of major political parties, and how polling and survey methods can reflect or distort public opinion. By the end of this unit, students should be able to analyze how political ideologies connect to citizen behavior and institutional policy preferences.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.a – Use data and evidence to evaluate the impact of public policies and political ideologies on decisions made by governments and individuals in a variety of contexts.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.b – Evaluate the effectiveness of major political parties and interest groups in promoting their platforms and shaping public policy.
  6.1.12.CivicsDP.14.a – Analyze how public opinion, the media, and interest groups influence government policy and decision-making.
- 6.1.12.HistoryCC.16.a – Examine the origins, influence, and evolution of American political ideologies from the late 20th century through the present.

- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.16.a – Investigate how political socialization, demographics, and media environments influence political attitudes and voting behaviors.
- 6.1.12.EconNE.14.a – Analyze the impact of ideologies on the creation and implementation of economic policy in the United States.
- 6.3.12.CivicsPD.1 – Use evidence and research to evaluate and defend a position on a public policy issue, including the use of polling and data interpretation
- 6.1.12.CivicsHR.14.a Evaluate the role of individual and collective actions in shaping civic policies (e.g., the Civil Rights Movement, Women's Suffrage).
- 6.3.12.CivicsPI.1: Evaluate the effectiveness of political institutions in the United States and other nations in addressing social and environmental challenges.
- 6.3.12.CivicsPR.4: Assess the effectiveness of various strategies and tactics used in political campaigns and elections.

Advanced Placement: US Government and Politics:

- LO 4.1.A: Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government.
- LO 4.2.A: Identify the agents of political socialization and describe their impact on political beliefs.
  LO 4.2.B: Describe how different political ideologies affect the policy preferences of citizens and political parties.
  LO 4.3.A: Describe generational and lifecycle effects on political attitudes.
- LO 4.4.A: Explain how major political events shape political attitudes and ideology over time.
- LO 4.5.A: Describe the elements of a scientific poll.
  LO 4.5.B: Explain the importance of public opinion data in understanding and evaluating political behavior.
- LO 4.6.A: Explain how the reliability and veracity of polling results can be affected by the polling methodology, including question wording, sample size, and margin of error.
  LO 4.7.A: Compare major political parties in the U.S. and how their platforms reflect ideological beliefs.
- LO 4.8.A: Explain how political ideologies influence policy on individual liberty and social order.
- LO 4.9.A: Explain how different ideologies impact fiscal and monetary policy debates and decisions.
- LO 4.10.A: Explain how political ideologies influence policy debates over social issues (e.g., education, healthcare, civil rights).

- Skill 1.A: Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- Skill 1.B: Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- Skill 2.A: Describe the author's claim and point of view.
- Skill 2.B: Describe the reasoning, line of reasoning, and evidence used to support an author's argument.
- Skill 3.A: Identify and describe a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior represented in a visual or quantitative data source.
- Skill 3.B: Describe patterns and trends in quantitative data.
- Skill 3.C: Explain how a visual or quantitative data source relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior.
- Skill 4.A: Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- Skill 5.A: Develop an argument in essay format using evidence from required foundational documents and course content.
- Skill 5.B: Support an argument using relevant and specific evidence.
- Skill 5.C: Respond to opposing perspectives.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.4.12.CT.1 – Identify problem-solving strategies used in different careers and explain how the problem-solving process differs across career pathways.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes
- 9.1.12.EG.6 – Analyze the relationship between government programs and services and a nation's economy.
- 9.1.12.EG.5 – Evaluate how changes in economic conditions influence personal and societal financial decisions.
- 9.1.12.FP.6 – Evaluate the relationship of cultural traditions and historical influences on financial practice…
- 9.4.12.IML.7 – Analyze the perspectives of multiple sources to determine the credibility of information.
- 9.4.12.IML.8 – Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias, and motivations.
  9.4.12.TL.3 – Analyze the effectiveness of the process and quality of collaborative environments.

- 9.4.12.GCA.1 – Collaborate with individuals of diverse perspectives, talents, and backgrounds to address complex issues.
- 9.4.12.GCA.2 – Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
- 9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT*):

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.
- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- RI.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text and how they interact to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
- RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.5: Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
- RI.11-12.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.
- W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasoning and relevant evidence.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- W.11-12.9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis and research.
- SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.11-12.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot, and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope and intercept of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12prof.Re7b: Evaluate how interpretations of a presentation or artwork reflect historical and social context.
- 1.4.12acc.Re8a: Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 1.4.12prof.Cn11a: Describe how media artworks influence and are influenced by societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

Climate Change:

- **6.1.12.GeoSV.4**: Analyze how environmental factors and human activity influence political and economic decisions, including discussions on climate change and sustainability.
- **6.1.12.EconNE.6**: Evaluate the role of government and policy in managing natural resources and addressing environmental challenges, including climate change

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
- How do political ideologies influence the policy agenda?
- How does public opinion influence political behavior and policy making?
- How do polling and public opinion data inform political decisions?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Citizens' beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of core values and the changing demographics of American society.
- Political socialization—the process by which people acquire political beliefs—interacts with an individual's demographic characteristics, political environment, and generation to shape political attitudes.
- Political ideologies can change over time due to generational effects and changes in political events, issues, and conditions.
- Political events can influence an individual's political attitudes and beliefs, especially when experienced early in life.
- Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.

	• The reliability and veracity of public opinion data depend on a variety of factors, including the method of polling and the phrasing of questions. • Political parties reflect different ideologies, which influence their policy agendas and how they seek to address societal issues. • Political ideologies influence public policy through the choices made by elected and appointed officials, interest groups, and the public. • Different ideological perspectives on economic policy influence debates on issues like taxation, government spending, and the role of government in regulating the economy. • Political ideologies shape policy debates and implementation on social issues such as education, health care, and civil rights.
Vocabulary: Political culture, individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, limited government, political socialization, family influence, media influence, educational influence, lifecycle effects, generational effects, political ideology, liberalism, conservatism, libertarianism, Keynesian economics, supply-side economics, monetary policy, fiscal policy, party platforms, public opinion, benchmark poll, tracking poll, entrance poll, exit poll, sampling techniques, random sample, margin of error, question wording, polling reliability, political efficacy, policy agenda,	

social policy, economic policy, ideological consistency, public policy, polarization, political typology.
Students will be able to: • Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government. • Identify the agents of political socialization and describe their impact on political beliefs. • Describe how different political ideologies affect the policy preferences of citizens and political parties. • Describe generational and lifecycle effects on political attitudes. • Explain how major political events shape political attitudes and ideology over time. • Describe the elements of a scientific poll. • Explain the importance of public opinion data in understanding and evaluating political behavior. • Explain how the reliability and veracity of polling results can be affected by the polling methodology, including question wording, sample size, and margin of error. • Compare major political parties in the U.S. and how their platforms reflect ideological beliefs. Explain how political ideologies influence policy on individual liberty and social order. • Explain how different ideologies impact fiscal and monetary policy debates and decisions. • Explain how political ideologies influence policy debates over social issues (e.g., education, healthcare, civil rights). • Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. • Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. • Describe the author's claim and point of view. • Describe the reasoning, line of reasoning, and evidence used to support an author's argument. • Identify and describe a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior represented in a visual or quantitative data source. • Describe patterns and trends in quantitative data. • Explain how a visual or quantitative data source relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior. • Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

- Develop an argument in essay format using evidence from required foundational documents and course content.
- Support an argument using relevant and specific evidence.
- Respond to opposing perspectives.

Learning Activities & Differentiation:

- Core Values Gallery Walk
- Political Socialization Influence Map
- Generations in American Politics Timeline (In small groups, they analyze how major events during formative years shaped political attitudes.)
- Analyze polling data and question structure.
- Design a mock political opinion poll, including a sample size, margin of error, and question phrasing. They "administer" it to classmates.
- Political Party Comparison Chart (classify if position if Democrat or Republican ideology)
- Policy Analysis Case Study (e.g., minimum wage, reproductive rights, climate policy) and analyze how liberals, conservatives, and libertarians differ in their proposed solutions.)
- Media Bias Tracker (Students monitor multiple news outlets for coverage of a single political event. They evaluate tone, language, source reliability, and ideological bias, then write a comparative analysis.)
- Quantitative FRQ writing
- Civic Identity Journal (students write weekly journal entries reflecting on how their values, background, and experiences shape their own political beliefs and potential civic actions.)

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork

- Content Quizzes
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Unit 4 Test

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Unit 4 Progress Check
- Quantitative FRQs
- SCOTUS case analysis

Alternative Assessments:

- Political Ideology Profile - Students research and create a multimedia presentation or digital poster that profiles a major U.S. political ideology (e.g., liberalism, conservatism, libertarianism). The project should include core beliefs, policy preferences, key historical figures, and real-world examples of each ideology in action.
- Design a Public Opinion Poll - Design a short scientific poll about a current political or social issue, including clearly written questions, sampling plan, and method of data collection. They simulate administering the poll and create a reflection analyzing sample bias, question design, and margin of error.
- Media Bias and Political Messaging - Collect and compare news articles from ideologically diverse sources on the same policy issue. They analyze point of view, word choice, framing, and the intended audience. A written reflection summarizes how the media impacts public opinion and ideological perception.
- Ideology & Policy Debate - Assign ideological roles (e.g., fiscal conservative, social liberal) and debate a contemporary policy issue (e.g., student loan forgiveness, minimum wage). They must use evidence and stay in character, and then reflect on how ideologies shape public policy.

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- BTWs, *American Government*, *Stories of a Nation for the AP Course*, by Abernathy and Waples
- AP Course Exam Description Unit breakdown
- Essential knowledge and Terms
- Unit Study Guide
- AP Classroom videos and practice questions*Laptop access to polling websites (eg. Gallop, Pew, monmouth University)*
- Khan Academy - AP US Government videos and practice questions

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

❖ ***Follow the College Board Accommodations for students when needed.***

Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Offer scaffolded and fill-in-the-blank guided notes
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Use chunking and step-by-step instructions for complex tasks
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable parts with clear steps
- Provide exemplars and models for all major assignments
- Use structured sentence frames and prompts for FRQs
- Reduce reading complexity with simplified texts and visuals
- Give frequent and specific feedback during practice activities

Strategies for Supporting Students with 504 Plans

- Provide preferential seating near instruction or away from distractions
- Allow frequent breaks during lessons or assessments
- Allow typing instead of handwriting for notes and assessments
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Provide a second set of textbooks/materials for home
- Ensure access to quiet testing environments
- Offer visual aids and diagrams alongside written material
- Provide copies of class notes or guided outlines
- Use frequent check-ins and chunk assignments with deadlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Struggling Learners

- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts using visuals
- Use sentence starters and frames for argumentative writing
- Implement peer tutoring or small group reteaching
- Incorporate frequent low-stakes formative checks
- Use real-world scenarios to anchor abstract concepts (e.g., polling in current events)
- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Incorporate short, captioned instructional videos and audio reviews for core concepts
- Provide guided notes with sentence starters and cloze-style vocabulary activities
- Offer structured graphic templates for graph-based questions
- Break tasks into smaller chunks with step-by-step instructions
- Use visual prompts such as icons, charts, and anchor posters to reinforce vocabulary
- Simplify government scenarios with relatable real-life examples and reduced reading complexity

- Provide extended time on classwork, quizzes, and assessments
- Offer read-aloud and clarification of test directions during assessments
- Use frequent checks for understanding with quick-response tools (e.g., thumbs up/down, mini-whiteboards

Strategies for Supporting Gifted & Talented (G&T) Students

- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry or research
- Use extended or enriched FRQ prompts for deeper analysis
- Allow for peer teaching or leadership roles during class activities
- Invite participation in competitions or outside enrichment programs
- Allow independent research on constitutional debates and Supreme Court cases
- Encourage synthesis across units (e.g., comparing branches and political ideology and policy)
- Offer extension activities like simulated constitutional convention or judicial review

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Incorporate labeled diagrams and charts to explain core concepts of political socialization and polling data
- Offer sentence frames and structured writing supports for FRQ responses
- Use visual aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing
- Provide oral instructions along with written directions
- Use closed-captioned videos and simplified audio resources for content review
- Scaffold readings with summaries, highlighted text, and guiding questions
- Use visuals and real-life examples to contextualize governmental ideas
- Provide extended time for reading-heavy or writing-intensive tasks

Unit 5

Desired Results

Unit 5: Political Participation

Unit Summary:

Unit 5 explores how citizens participate in the political process and how that participation influences government policy and institutions. Students examine the role of political parties, interest groups, elections, and the media in shaping policy outcomes and public opinion. The unit investigates how linkage institutions connect individuals with policymakers and how demographic factors and structural barriers affect political participation. Students also study the impact of campaign finance, voter behavior, and the evolution of political ideology in the United States.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.a: Use data and other evidence to determine the impact of public opinion on policy decisions.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.b: Evaluate the effectiveness of political parties and interest groups in impacting public policy.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.c: Analyze the influence of media on public perception and policy.
- 6.1.12.CivicsPI.14.d: Analyze the development and impact of landmark Supreme Court decisions affecting campaign finance and political participation (e.g., Buckley v. Valeo, Citizens United v. FEC).
- 6.1.12.CivicsDP.14.a: Analyze how demographic changes and migration affected U.S. political culture and voter behavior in the 20th and 21st centuries.
- 6.1.12.HistoryUP.13.c: Examine the strategies used by interest groups and political action committees (PACs) to influence government policy and elections.
- 6.3.12.CivicsPR.4: Assess the effectiveness of various strategies and tactics used in political campaigns and elections.
- 6.3.12.CivicsPI.1: Evaluate the effectiveness of political institutions in the United States and other nations in addressing social and environmental challenges.

Advanced Placement: US Government and Politics Standards:

- LO 5.1.B Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.

- LO 5.1.C Explain the models of voting behavior.
- LO 5.2.A Explain how structural barriers, political efficacy, and demographic characteristics impact voter turnout.
- LO 5.3.A Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.
- LO 5.4.A Explain how political parties have changed over time.
- LO 5.4.B Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.
- LO 5.5.A Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidates.
- LO 5.6.A Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest group influence on elections and policy making.
- LO 5.7.A Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.
- LO 5.8.A Describe the function and impact of the news media on the electorate and government.
- LO 5.9.A Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.
- LO 5.10.A Explain how the structure, function, and impact of money in campaigns affects the election process.
- LO 5.11.A Explain how campaigns affect election outcomes.
- LO 5.12.A Explain the significance of incumbency in congressional elections.
- LO 5.13.A Explain how the Electoral College affects presidential campaigns and election outcomes.
- Skill 1.A Describe and explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- Skill 1.B Explain how political institutions, processes, and behavior operate.
- Skill 1.C Explain how political institutions and behaviors influence policies.
- Skill 2.A Analyze visual or graphic sources.
- Skill 2.B Explain how political behavior is influenced by demographic and structural factors.
- Skill 3.A Compare political systems and behaviors.
- Skill 3.B Compare political developments across time.
- Skill 3.C Analyze political trends over time.
- Skill 4.A Develop an argument supported by evidence.
- Skill 4.B Construct a claim and support it with reasoning and evidence.
- Skill 5.A Explain the implications of court decisions on policy.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.2.12.CAP.10 Evaluate how media, bias, purpose, and validity affect public perception and influence behavior.
- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes
- 9.1.12.EG.6 Evaluate the relationship of cultural traditions and historical influences on financial practice.
- 9.1.12.FP.6 Evaluate the effectiveness of different types of media in shaping financial and civic decision-making.
- 9.4.12.IML.1 Evaluate media sources for point of view, bias, and accuracy, and for identifying types of propaganda and persuasion.
- 9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
- 9.4.12.IML.5 Evaluate, synthesize, and apply information on civic and social issues to influence decision-making.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.
- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- RI.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

- RI.11-12.2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text.
- RI.11-12.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective.
- W.11-12.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- W.11-12.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly.
- W.11-12.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners.
- SL.11-12.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot, and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope and intercept of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12acc.Re8a: Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 1.4.12prof.Cn11a: Describe how media artworks influence and are influenced by societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
- How do political parties and interest groups function as linkage institutions?
- How do structural barriers impact voter turnout?
- What roles do elections play in the American political system?
- How do different ideologies impact policy debates and decisions?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Citizens' engagement through voting, campaigning, and civic action embodies the principle that the government derives its power from the people.
- A person's political participation is shaped by their ideology, sense of political efficacy, structural obstacles, and demographic characteristics.
- Political parties, interest groups, and the media provide pathways for people to engage with government and influence policy.
- Linkage institutions—such as parties, interest groups, and media—play a critical role in connecting citizens with their government and shaping public policy.
- The various ways citizens participate in politics have a tangible impact on policy outcomes and the overall health of American democracy.

Vocabulary:

Political efficacy, political socialization, retrospective voting, prospective voting, party-line voting, rational-choice voting, voter turnout, demographics, franchise, suffrage, 15th Amendment, 17th Amendment, 19th Amendment, 24th Amendment, 26th Amendment, Voting Rights Act of 1965, National Voter Registration Act of 1993, voter ID laws, political

parties, realignment, dealignment, critical election, third parties, interest groups, lobbying, iron triangle, issue network, political action committees (PACs), Super PACs, Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA), Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), Citizens United v. FEC, linkage institutions, news media, gatekeeping, scorekeeping, watchdog journalism, horse-race journalism, fake news, social media, media bias, public opinion polls, sampling error, Electoral College, incumbency advantage, campaign finance, independent expenditures, soft money, hard money.
Students will be able to: • Explain the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation. • Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections. • Explain the models of voting behavior. • Explain how structural barriers, political efficacy, and demographic characteristics impact voter turnout. • Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government. • Explain how political parties have changed over time. • Explain why and how political parties change and adapt. • Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidates. • Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest group influence on elections and policy making. • Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes. • Describe the function and impact of the news media on the electorate and government. • Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets in**fluence political institutions** and behavior. • Explain how the structure, function, and impact of money in campaigns affects the election process. • Explain how campaigns affect election outcomes. • Explain the significance of incumbency in congressional elections. • Explain how the Electoral College affects presidential campaigns and election outcomes. • Describe and explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. • Explain how political institutions, processes, and behavior operate. • Explain how political institutions and behaviors influence policies. Analyze visual or graphic sources.

- Explain how political behavior is influenced by demographic and structural factors.
- Compare political systems and behaviors.
  Compare political developments across time.
- Analyze political trends over time.
- Develop an argument supported by evidence.
  Construct a claim and support it with reasoning and evidence.
- Explain the implications of court decisions on policy.

Learning Activities & Differentiation:

- Create a Political Participation Infographic: Students design an infographic that visually explains voter turnout trends, demographic influences, and ideological voting patterns using actual data.
- Debate or Socratic Seminar: Host a structured discussion or debate on the merits and drawbacks of the Electoral College, campaign finance reform, or the influence of interest groups on policy-making.
- Media Analysis Portfolio: Students collect examples of political news coverage from diverse sources and evaluate for bias, framing, and impact on public opinion.
- Citizens United v. FEC Case Brief: Students write a simplified but analytical case brief explaining the background, ruling, and impact of the Citizens United decision on campaign finance and democracy.
- Interest Group Advocacy Project: Students research a real interest group and design a persuasive campaign (e.g., poster, speech, social media ad) to advocate for their cause, highlighting strategies used in policy influence
- Argumentative Essay: Is the Electoral College an effective and fair way to elect the U.S. president? or Should the United States implement automatic voter registration nationwide?

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork
- Content Quizzes

- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Political Parties & Campaigns/Elections Test
- Media and Interest Groups Test

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Unit 5 Progress Check
- Qualitative FRQs
- SCOTUS case analysis

Alternative Assessments:

- Argumentative Essay - To what extent do campaign finance laws strengthen or weaken democratic participation in the United States?
- Interest Group Simulation - Students role-play as interest groups lobbying Congress. Each group prepares a 1-minute pitch and visual aid to present their policy stance. The class votes on which proposal would most likely pass.
- Voter Turnout Infographic Project - Students create an infographic using real voter turnout data by demographics (age, race, education, income) across two or more elections. They must interpret trends and explain barriers to participation.

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- BTWs, *American Government*, *Stories of a Nation for the AP Course*, by Abernathy and Waples
- AP Course Exam Description Unit breakdown
- Essential knowledge and Terms
- Unit Study Guide

- AP Classroom videos and practice questions
- *U.S. Constitution* (including Preamble and amendments)
- *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission (2010)*
- Khan Academy - AP US Government videos and practice questions

Accommodations and Modifications: Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Students at Risk of Failure, Students with 504s, Gifted & Talented Students

❖ ***Follow the College Board Accommodations for students when needed.***

Strategies for Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Offer scaffolded and fill-in-the-blank guided notes
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Use chunking and step-by-step instructions for complex tasks
- Break tasks into smaller, manageable parts with clear steps
- Provide exemplars and models for all major assignments
- Use structured sentence frames and prompts for FRQs
- Reduce reading complexity with simplified texts and visuals
- Give frequent and specific feedback during practice activities

Strategies for Supporting Students with 504 Plans

- Provide preferential seating near instruction or away from distractions

- Allow frequent breaks during lessons or assessments
- Allow typing instead of handwriting for notes and assessments
- Provide extended time on FRQs and assessments
- Provide a second set of textbooks/materials for home
- Ensure access to quiet testing environments
- Offer visual aids and diagrams alongside written material
- Provide copies of class notes or guided outlines
- Use frequent check-ins and chunk assignments with deadlines

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support Struggling Learners

- Pre-teach key vocabulary and concepts using visuals
- Use sentence starters and frames for argumentative writing
- Implement peer tutoring or small group reteaching
- Incorporate frequent low-stakes formative checks
- Use real-world scenarios to anchor abstract concepts (e.g., political parties in current events)
- Use graphic organizers and scaffolds for document analysis and SCOTUS case comparisons.
- Offer audio / video versions of primary source texts and unit content.
- Incorporate short, captioned instructional videos and audio reviews for core concepts
- Provide guided notes with sentence starters and cloze-style vocabulary activities
- Offer structured graphic templates for graph-based questions
- Break tasks into smaller chunks with step-by-step instructions
- Use visual prompts such as icons, charts, and anchor posters to reinforce vocabulary
- Simplify government scenarios with relatable real-life examples and reduced reading complexity
- Provide extended time on classwork, quizzes, and assessments
- Offer read-aloud and clarification of test directions during assessments

- Use frequent checks for understanding with quick-response tools (e.g., thumbs up/down, mini-whiteboards

Strategies for Supporting Gifted & Talented (G&T) Students

- Provide opportunities for independent inquiry or research
- Use extended or enriched FRQ prompts for deeper analysis
- Allow for peer teaching or leadership roles during class activities
- Invite participation in competitions or outside enrichment programs
- Allow independent research on constitutional debates and Supreme Court cases
- Encourage synthesis across units (e.g., comparing Federalist No. 10 to modern interest groups)
- Offer extension activities like simulated constitutional convention or judicial review

Specific Strategies and Practices that Support English Language Learners:

- Incorporate labeled diagrams and charts to explain core concepts election cycle and electoral college
- Offer sentence frames and structured writing supports for FRQ responses
- Use visual aids and graphic organizers for note-taking and summarizing
- Provide oral instructions along with written directions
- Use closed-captioned videos and simplified audio resources for content review
- Scaffold readings with summaries, highlighted text, and guiding questions
- Use visuals and real-life examples to contextualize governmental ideas
- Provide extended time for reading-heavy or writing-intensive tasks

Unit 6

Desired Results

Unit 6: AP Exam Review and Post Exam

Unit Summary:

In the final unit of the course, students will engage in a comprehensive review of key concepts, foundational documents, landmark Supreme Court cases, and essential skills in preparation for the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam. Following the exam, students will apply their understanding of the course by analyzing current events and political films. Through guided research and discussion, students will explore how these real-world examples reflect core principles, institutions, and behaviors studied throughout the year. Students will synthesize their learning in a reflective written analysis that connects contemporary issues and media portrayals to AP Gov concepts and political theories.

Learning Standards

NJSLS:

6.3.12.CivicsPI.1: Evaluate the effectiveness of political institutions in the United States and other nations in addressing social and environmental challenges.

6.3.12.CivicsPI.2: Analyze the relationship between the state and federal judicial systems and how judicial decisions influence public policy and society.

6.3.12.CivicsPI.3: Evaluate the influence of public opinion, political parties, interest groups, media, and elections on the political process and policymaking.

6.3.12.CivicsDP.1: Evaluate how political compromise and cooperation among political actors can result in the creation and implementation of public policy.

6.3.12.CivicsDP.2: Analyze how rules, laws, and court decisions shape public policy and the rights of individuals.

6.3.12.CivicsPR.1: Evaluate the roles of citizens in influencing public policy and advances in digital civic engagement.

6.3.12.CivicsPR.2: Use primary and secondary sources to form evidence-based arguments on civic issues.

Interdisciplinary Connections

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, & Key Skills *(CLKS)*:

- 9.4.12.CT.1: Identify problem-solving strategies used in the development of an innovative product or practice.
- 9.4.12.CT.2: Explain the potential benefits of collaborating to enhance critical thinking and problem-solving.
- 9.4.12.CT.5: Participate in online strategy and planning sessions for course-based, school-based, or other projects and determine the strategies that contribute to effective outcomes
- 9.4.12.IML.2: Evaluate digital sources for timeliness, accuracy, perspective, credibility of the source, and relevance of information, in media, data, or other resources.
- 9.1.12.EG.5 Evaluate business practices and career opportunities related to government and public administration.
- 9.1.12.RM.1 Analyze the benefits and risks of various forms of political participation and civic engagement.
- 9.1.12.FP.6 Compare and contrast the influence of economic and political systems on government policy.

Computer Science & Design Thinking (*CS & DT***):**

- 8.2.12.EC.2: Assess the positive and negative impacts of emerging technologies on developing countries and evaluate how individuals, non-profit organizations, and governments have responded.
- 8.2.12.EC.3: Synthesize data, analyze trends, and draw conclusions regarding the effect of a technology on the individual, culture, society, and environment and share this information with the appropriate audience.
- 8.2.12.ETW.4: Research historical tensions between environmental and economic considerations as driven by human needs and wants in the development of a technological product and present the competing viewpoints

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- RI.11-12.1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- RI.11-12.2: Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis.
- RI.11-12.3: Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop.
- RI.11-12.6: Evaluate authors' point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

- W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately.
- W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- W.11-12.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
- W.11-12.7: Conduct short and sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem.
- W.11-12.8: Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative sources, assessing the strengths and limitations of each source.
- SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- SL.11-12.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically, with appropriate content, organization, and style.
- SL.11-12.5: Make strategic use of digital media to enhance presentations.
- SL.11-12.6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when appropriate.

Math

- N-Q.A.1: Use units as a way to understand problems and to guide the solution of multi-step problems; choose and interpret units consistently in formulas; choose and interpret the scale and origin in graphs and data displays.
- S-ID.B.6: Represent data on two quantitative variables on a scatter plot, and describe how the variables are related.
- S-ID.C.7: Interpret the slope and intercept of a linear model in the context of the data.

VPA

- 1.4.12prof.Re7b: Evaluate how interpretations of a presentation or artwork reflect historical and social context.
- 1.4.12acc.Re8a: Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media artworks based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.
- 1.4.12prof.Cn11a: Describe how media artworks influence and are influenced by societal, cultural, and historical contexts.

Learning Targets

Unit Essential Questions:

- How does the Constitution establish and limit the powers of the federal government?
- What are the key principles of federalism, and how do they shape the relationship between state and national governments?
- How do the three branches of government check and balance each other?
- In what ways do political parties and interest groups influence government policy and elections?
- How are civil liberties and civil rights protected and challenged in the United States?
- What roles do citizens play in a representative democracy, and how does political participation affect government?
- How does the policymaking process work at the federal level?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Understanding the structures, functions, and principles of the American government enables students to critically analyze real-world events and media portrayals.

- Media and film are powerful tools that can shape public perception of government, civic duty, and constitutional rights—sometimes reinforcing and other times distorting reality.

- Civic engagement is strengthened by the ability to recognize how political institutions, public policy, and civil liberties operate in everyday life and are represented across various forms of media.

• How does the media function as a linkage institution between the government and the public? • How do current events and media portray the principles and institutions of the American government? • In what ways do films and real-world events reflect, reinforce, or challenge constitutional values and civil liberties? • How can an informed understanding of government processes and political theory help citizens critically evaluate what they see in the news and entertainment?	
Vocabulary: *Use all vocabulary for the AP course.*	
Students will be able to: • *Students will explain how foundational principles of U.S. government (e.g., separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism) are reflected or challenged in current events and films.* • *Students will analyze how media and film portray civil liberties and civil rights, and evaluate the accuracy of these portrayals in the context of constitutional protections.* • *Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and interpret political ideologies, party dynamics, or interest group influence as depicted in real-world news coverage or fictional narratives.* • *Students will apply their understanding of public policy processes to assess the role of government actors and institutions in responding to contemporary political issues.* • *Students will evaluate the role of the media as a linkage institution and its impact on public opinion, civic participation, and democratic accountability.*	

- *Students will create and present a comparative analysis showing how one or more course concepts (e.g., judicial review, executive power, congressional oversight) appear in both a current event and a film.*

Learning Activities & Differentiation:

- AP practice MC Test
- AP practice FRQs (Essay, SCOTUS Comparison, Qualitative, Quantitative)
- Unit Practice Sheets
- Student Grading FRQs using CB Rubrics
- Current Events Analysis and Presentations
- Film Analysis of economic concepts and theories

Current Events/Movie/TV Options:

- Students will write a reflection paper on each current event/film addressing economic theories and concepts
  - Hacking Democracy
  - The Basis of Sex
  - The Pelican Brief
  - Runaway Jury
  - Snowden

Assessment Evidence

Formative Assessments:

- Homework & Classwork
- Content Quizzes
- Vocabulary Quizzes
- FRQs
- Teacher Observations

Summative Assessments:

- Cumulative Practice Exam with 4 FRQs

Common Benchmark Assessments:

- AP Classroom Practice Exams (3)
- Qualitative FRQs
- SCOTUS Comparison FRQs

Alternative Assessments:

- Multimedia Presentation - Students create a multimedia presentation (using tools like PowerPoint, Canva, or video editing software) that connects course concepts to both a recent current event and a government-themed film. Presentations should include visuals, explanations of concepts, and a critical assessment of how well the media represents government processes or issues.
- Debate or Panel Discussion - Organize a structured debate or panel where students take on different roles (e.g., government officials, media analysts, citizens) to discuss a current event and a film's depiction of government. Students must use course concepts and evidence from the media to support their positions and respond to opposing views

Core Instructional & Supplemental Materials

- BTW's, *Economics for the AP Course*, 4th edition, by Anderson and Ray
- AP Course Exam Description Unit breakdowns
- Key Understanding and Terms
- Unit Study Guides
- CEE Unit Final Exam Practice Test
- AP Classroom videos and practice questions
- Khan Academy - AP Macroeconomics videos and practice questions

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