

# AP U.S. Government & Politics

Mrs. Elizabeth Tompkins, M.Ed Perry High School

e-mail: [tompkins.elizabeth@cusd80.com](mailto:tompkins.elizabeth@cusd80.com)

phone: (480) 224-2877

website: <https://www.cusd80.com/Domain/3422>

classroom: C-207

---

## Texts & Sources:

**Government in America: People, Politics, & Policy**, by George C. Edwards, Martin P. Wattenburg, and Robert L. Lineberry, 17th edition. {CR16}

**Foundational Essential Documents** (Instructor provided) {CR10}

**National Constitution Center** <https://constitutioncenter.org/>

### Download the following apps:

1. Interactive Constitution
2. SCOTUSblog
3. Two news apps of your choosing— liberal & conservative.
4. Twitter

## Required Supplies:

- + Blue **OR** black **AND** red ballpoint pens
- + Number 2 pencils
- + College-ruled paper
- + 3x5 white, lined note cards (one pack)
- + Spiral notebook or Composition notebook

## Course Overview:

**We the people ....are going Constitutional.** This college-level course provides a non-partisan introduction to key political concepts, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the systemic and political culture of the United States. Through studying founding documents and Supreme Court decisions students will understand our unique political institutions and behaviors. Students will interpret data, make comparisons, and develop evidence-based arguments. The content covered in this course will help prepare students for the AP exam. It all fits in 5 Big Ideas:

**Big Idea #1:** Constitutionalism (CON)

**Big Idea #2:** Liberty and Order (LOR)

**Big Idea #3:** Civic Participation in Representative Democracy (PRD)

**Big Idea #4:** Completing Policy-Making Interests (PMI)

**Big Idea #5:** Methods of Political Analysis (MPA)

## Curriculum Requirements, per CollegeBoard:

**CR1** The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

- CR2** The course includes the Interactions among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR3** The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR4** The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR5** The course includes the Political Participation Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR6** The course integrates public policy within each unit.
- CR7** The course addresses the big ideas by connecting enduring understandings across one or more units.
- CR8** The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts.
- CR9** The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret quantitative data to explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors.
- CR10** The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary & secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.
- CR11** The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret visual information to explain how the elements of the visual illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors.
- CR12** The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios.
- CR13** The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework*.
- CR14** Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* that culminates in a presentation of findings.
- CR15** Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* and connect them to other non-required landmark cases.
- CR16** Students and teachers have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook.

### Major Assignments & Activities:

In this course, expect that you will read a lot, write a lot, study terms & SCOTUS cases, and participation in discussions... a lot. The class success and your personal success hinges on it. Individual and group projects can amount to the same as a test score. Some class time will be allotted to making these creative, thought-provoking, and successful connection to our studies {CR 11.12. 15}.

**Writing-** In addition to feverish note-taking, KBATs, and annotations, you'll become disciplined writers in:

- 1) *Free Response & Argument Essays*. Since it comprises 50% of the AP Government exam, some unit tests include free-response questions. We will practice this in class throughout the year, and graded according to the AP scoring guide. {CR7 & 11 & 13}
- 2) *Analytical papers*. These 3-4 page research papers, organized around a thesis statement, help students develop analytical writing skills. {CR7 & 12}

+ *Being diligent students in your English class will be an asset in this class.*

**Tests & Quizzes.** You will have chapter quizzes, unit tests, Supreme Court quizzes, all using vocabulary terms. It isn't designed to torture you, but learn in segments along the way. Study well as we go along so you won't be freaking out before the semester Final and AP Exam.

### **Current Events:**

Students, individually or as a pair, will prepare a current events presentation that they will share with the class at the start of their assigned week. The presentation must include at least one story that links one or more of the Big Ideas. Presentation also must include at least one relevant visual source (photo, political cartoon, infographic) for each story with a caption that explains its connection to the big idea and/or unit that story covers. {CR7 & 11}

### **Debates:**

Students, in teams of three, will compete in a debate about a current public policy or issue in American government and politics. Each team will get a five-minute opening statement, a five-minute cross examination period, and a five-minute closing statement. Students must also have a visual that helps support their main arguments. This visual can be a chart, graph, table, political cartoon, or infographic. Students will analyze the visuals presented by other teams as part of the debate. Finally, each team is responsible for providing an annotated works cited page of the resources used to develop their arguments and questions. [CR11]

### **Controversial Topics:**

All government systems are laden with the righteous & the sleazeballs; the mundane & the tantalizing; persecutions & liberties; politics & religion. The content of this class deals with current real world, controversial issues.

It is vital that everyone is respectful of each other's opinions, backgrounds, beliefs, and world views. There will be a lot of agreement and disagreement on topics. Listening is essential to communicating. Everyone is to be valued and respected.

### **Grading Scale, Attendance & Make-up Work:**

Consistent attendance is vital for success in APGov. Your semester grade consists of class assignments, projects, homework, quizzes, and tests. Per the Social Studies Dept policy grades are quantified and scaled:

**Semester grade = 40% (Quarter 1) + 40% (Quarter 2) + 20% (Final Exam)**

**100%-90%=A    89%-80%= B    79%-70% = C    69%-60%= D    Below 60% =F**

*Grades are rounded up only if they meet the 9.5 or higher threshold. Do NOT ask to have your grade rounded up for anything less than this. Do NOT come to me on bended knee on or near Finals week to ask for extra credit. The answer will be no and you will have created an awkward situation.*

**Excused absences.** You will have the same amount of days as your absence to complete assignments. It is 1000% your responsibility to check the website and/or ask classmates what you missed.

**Late policy.** Assignments submitted 1-day late, can earn 50%. After that, it zeros out in the

gradebook. If you are absent from a quiz or test, you are responsible for arranging a make-up *within one week* of the assessment. If not, it will zero out in the gradebook.

**Field trips and sports.** Plan around them. I know your coaches, and I know you know your game schedules. Field trips are also planned weeks in advance. Assignments are due beforehand.

**Life gets difficult.** Seriously. Please tell me in advance when you cannot get computer access at home, are struggling in classes, incur health problems, or become overly stressed out. We will find solutions *before* things get unmanageable. There's a difference between excuses and legitimate difficulties. I'm on your side.

## The College Board Exam Format:

### The AP Government & Politics\_May 6, 2019

The AP Government Exam is 1 hour and 20 minutes and includes both a multiple-choice section and a free-response section. Each accounts for half of the exam score. Both sections will test student knowledge and ability to interpret the nine required foundational documents and 15 required Supreme Court cases.

#### Section 1: Multiple-Choice Questions

We will practice the kinds of multiple-choice questions that appear on the AP Government Exam. Additional sample questions can be found at AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.org](http://apcentral.collegeboard.org)). Multiple-choice scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly only. So answer all multiple-choice questions. Eliminate as many choices as possible, then select the best answer among the remaining choices.

The multiple-choice section is:

+55 questions      + 1 hour, 20 minutes      + 50% of exam score

On the multiple-choice section expect to:

- + analyze and compare political concepts.
- + interpret and analyze qualitative and quantitative, text-based, and visual sources.
- + apply course concepts, foundational documents and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of real-world contexts.

#### Section 2: Free-Response Questions

In the free-response section, students have 100 minutes to answer 4 constructed-response questions. The score on each response accounts for one-fourth of the student's total FRQ score. It requires student to connect big idea topics across curriculum and make connections. Expect to identify an opposing or alternative perspective in an understanding way and refute (or concede) it. Students are expected to use their analytical and organizational skills to formulate responses in a succinct, narrative form; bulleted lists are not acceptable as a response.

The FRQ section is:

+ 1 hour, 40 minutes + 4 questions + 50% of exam score

FRQ section format and suggest times:

- + **Apply political concepts** in real-world scenarios (20 min)
- + **Analyze quantitative data** (20 min)
- + **SCOTUS comparisons**- non-required cases with any of the 15 required (20 min)
- + **Argument essay** develop an argument using foundational documents as evidence (40 min)

### Exam prep and study sessions:

In April we will start study sessions in class and after school. Students taking the College Board test on **May 6** will receive a letter grade bump on the class final exam.

You are *strongly encouraged* to purchase, by January, any of the following test prep guides:

- + *Barron's AP U.S. Government & Politics* (Barron Education Series)
- + *5 Steps to 5: AP U.S. Government & Politics* (McGraw-Hill)
- + *AP U.S. Government & Politics Crash Course* by Larry S. Krieger

### Scoring 3-5 on College Board and earning an A-B in class:

It is realistic for you to pass the AP Exam and earn the weighted A or B in APGov. How? Plan to spend, on average, 30-45 minutes outside of class every day on APGov. Attend the study sessions. Buy an exam prep book. Enjoy every class like we are in a political arena. Have fun learning. Your world view is about to expand.

### Copyright, Academic Honesty & Plagiarism:

Students expected to cite material where appropriate. Your homework and/or projects must be COMPLETELY original. Plagiarism will result in a "0" on the assignment, losing all participation/citizenship points for the quarter, parent contact, and administrative discipline. A second offense will result in being dropped from the class with an F. Academic dishonesty can be described as, but not limited to:

- Copying another's work with or without permission.
- Giving your work to someone else to pass as her/his own.
- Working in a group unless explicitly told to do so.
- Using "crib notes" on tests, quizzes or other assessments.
- Securing answers for tests from others who have already taken a test. This includes passing information along to a future test-taker.
- Using notes or a book when they have not been permitted.
- Passing off another's work as your own to any capacity

### Course Schedule:

#### **Unit #1: Foundations of American Democracy** (18 days)

##### **Essential Questions:**

- 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 development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact U.S. Citizens?

**Key Terms:**

Natural rights  
 Popular sovereignty  
 Republicanism  
 Social contract  
 Declaration of Independence  
 Philadelphia Convention  
 Participatory democracy  
 Pluralist democracy  
 Elite democracy  
 Shays's Rebellion  
 Great (Connecticut) Compromise  
 Electoral College

Three-Fifths Compromise  
 Importation (slavery) compromise  
 Separation of powers  
 Checks and balances  
 Federalism  
 Exclusive powers  
 Implied powers  
 Concurrent powers  
 Categorical grants  
 Block grants  
 Mandates (unfunded)  
 Commerce clause

**Readings:**

Chapters 1-3 in Edwards textbook	The Declaration of Independence
<i>Federalist No. 10</i>	<i>Brutus No. 1</i>
<i>Federalist No. 51</i>	The Articles of Confederation
The Constitution of the United States	<i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i>
<i>Lopez v. United States</i>	Rauch, Jonathan "How American Parties Went Insane" <i>The Atlantic</i> July/August 2016
Toobin, Jeffrey "Our Broken Constitution" <i>The New Yorker</i> December 2013	

**Unit #2: Interactions among Branches of Government (Institutions) (25 days)**

**Essential Questions:**

- How do the 3 branches of federal government compete & cooperate in order to govern?
- To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?

**Key Terms:**

Enumerated powers  
 Implied powers  
 Necessary and proper clause  
 Checks and balances  
 Bicameralism  
 Speaker of the House

President of the Senate  
 Senate Majority Leader  
 Filibuster  
 Cloture  
 Holds  
 Rules Committee  
 Committee of the Whole

Discharge petitions  
 Discretionary spending  
 Mandatory spending  
 Pork barrel legislation  
 Logrolling  
 Partisanship  
 Gridlock  
 Gerrymandering  
 Divided government  
 Trustee  
 Delegate  
 Politico  
 Veto (including pocket veto)

Commander in Chief  
 Executive order  
 Signing statements  
 Nomination and confirmation  
 Treaty negotiation and ratification  
 22nd Amendment  
 Bully pulpit  
 Judicial review  
 Precedent/stare decisis  
 Judicial activism  
 Judicial restraint  
 Patronage

**Readings:**

Chapters 11-15 in Edwards textbook	The Constitution of the United States
<i>Baker v. Carr</i>	<i>Shaw v. Reno</i>
<i>Federalist No. 70</i>	<i>Federalist No. 78</i>
<i>Marbury v. Madison</i>	Moe, Terry M. and William G. Howell "Unilateral Action and Presidential Power: A Theory" Presidential Studies Quarterly 29, no. 4 (December 1999) 850-73

**Unit #3: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights** (12 days)

**Essential Questions:**

- To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination?
- How have Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

**Key Terms:**

Civil liberties  
 Civil rights  
 Bill of Rights  
 Judicial review  
 Selective incorporation  
 Establishment clause  
 Free exercise clause  
 Symbolic speech  
 "Clear and present danger"  
 Due process clause

Patriot Act  
 Exclusionary rule  
 Equal protection clause  
 National Organization for Women  
 Civil Rights Act 1964  
 Voting Rights Act 1965  
 Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972  
 "Separate but equal"  
 Miranda Rights



**Readings:**

Chapters 4 & 5 in Edwards textbook	The Bill of Rights
14 <sup>th</sup> Amendment due process and equal protection clauses	<i>Engel v. Vitale</i>
<i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i>	<i>Tinker v. Des Moines</i>
<i>Schenck v. United States</i>	<i>New York Times Co. v. United States</i>
<i>McDonald v. Chicago</i>	<i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i>
<i>Roe v. Wade</i>	<i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>
"Letter from Birmingham Jail" (Martin Luther King, Jr.)	Bentley, Keith G. and Erin E. O'Brien "Jim Crow 2.0? Why States Consider and Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies" <i>Perspectives on Politics</i> 11, no. 4 (December 2013): 1088-1116

**Unit #4: American Political Ideologies & Beliefs** (12 days)**Essential Questions:**

- How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
- How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?

**Key Terms:**

Political ideology  
Demographics  
Political culture  
Political socialization

Scientific polling  
Party platform  
Liberal ideology  
Conservative ideology

**Readings:**

Chapter 6 in Edwards textbook	The Monkey Cage series on political polarization in America – <i>The Washington Post</i>
"Political Polarization in the American Public" – <i>Pew Research Center</i> , June 12, 2014	Abramowitz, Alan I., and Morris P. Fiorina. "Polarized or Sorted? Just What's Wrong with Our Politics, Anyway?" <i>The American Interest</i> , March 11, 2013
Fiorina, Morris P. "America's Missing Moderates: Hiding in Plain Sight" – <i>The American Interest</i> 8, no. 4, February 12, 2013	Sanger-Katz, Margot. "Your Surgeon is Probably a Republican, Your Psychiatrist Probably a Democrat", <i>The New York Times</i> , October 6, 2016



**Unit #5: Political Participation** (18 days)**Essential Questions:**

- How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
- Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary?
- How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policies?

**Key Terms:**

Rational choice theory	Elite democracy
Retrospective voting	Primaries (open v. closed)
Prospective voting	Caucuses
Party-line voting	Party convention
Political efficacy	General election
Midterm election	Electoral College
Demographics	Incumbency advantage
Linkage institution	Federal Election Commission
Political party	Federal Elections Campaign Act
Interest group	McCain-Feingold
Critical election	Citizens United v. FEC (2010)
Political realignment	PACs
Proportional electoral system	SuperPACs
Winner-take-all electoral system	Independent expenditures
Iron triangles	Media & Social media
Free rider problem	Watchdog
Single issue groups	Gatekeeper
Participatory democracy	Horse race journalism
Pluralist democracy	"Fake news"

**Readings:**

Chapters 7-10 in Edwards textbook	<i>Federalist No. 10</i>
Desilver, Drew, "U.S. trails most developed countries in voter turnout." <i>Pew Research Center</i> , May 15, 2017	<i>Citizens United v. FEC</i>
Gaslowitz, Lea. "How to Spot a Misleading Graph – Lea Gaslowitz." TED-Ed video, 4:09	Barthel, Michael and Amy Mitchell. "Americans' Attitudes About the News Media Deeply Divided Along Partisan Lines." <i>Pew Research Center</i> , May 10, 2017.
Kiely, Eugene and Lori Robertson. "How to Spot Fake News." <i>FactCheck.org</i> , November 18, 2016.	Neale, Thomas H., "The Electoral College: How it Works in Contemporary Presidential Elections." <i>The Congressional Research Service</i> , 5/15/17