

*ADVANCED PLACEMENT  
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
COURSE SYLLABUS*

Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics is a course designed to prepare the student to take The College Board/Educational Testing Service AP Examination in May. For students who achieve a score of 3, 4, or 5 (depending on the university) institutions grant either credit, advanced placement, or both, for taking a one-semester introductory college course in US Government.

The main purpose of this course is to help students gain and display sophisticated understanding of American politics, and the processes of government that help shape public policies. Students should begin to learn about the methods of studying political behavior and institutions. Each student should develop insights regarding the concepts of majority rule democracy, constitutionalism, limited government, civil liberties and responsibilities, and other distinguishing characteristics of the American political ethos.

Throughout this course we will seek to understand and examine our institutions of government, those that run these institutions, the public policies made by them, and the influence of various electorates on policy. A political science course will not provide comfortable answers to society's problems. It will shake and reform the attitudes and perspectives of the students involved and will assist them in the development of the skills necessary to participate in, and perhaps lead, our political process in the years to come.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

It must be understood at the outset, that there is extensive reading, and that it must be completed in advance of the material being covered in class. Students are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of all topics treated in the text, supplemental readings and the classroom. Examinations will test for understanding of both the readings and classroom discussions. Because this is a college level course, understanding of all the issues covered in the readings cannot be covered in class. In fact, class discussions are intended to embellish the readings, not repeat the material. The readings, lectures and class discussions are all means of carrying on an inquiry into

the topic at hand and are meant to supplement rather than duplicate each other-- although some repetition and reinforcement is intended and desirable. A more detailed syllabus of the timing of topics and grading procedures will be provided during the first week of the school year. We will engage in a simulated congress exercise, focusing on a particular issue, before a specific set of committees to further enhance the understanding of how “the system” works. Members of the class will fill roles ranging from members of Congress through lobbyists. A considerable amount of time will be devoted to specific test preparations for this unique course's testing format with a tremendous amount of test practice activities in April and May.

#### WE THE PEOPLE PROGRAM:

The AP US Government classes will be participating in the “We the People” (WTP) Competition in the state of Virginia. As part of that, the curriculum will incorporate lessons from that program’s basic text. Each student will be issued a copy of that text and it will form the primary source material for the summer assignment.

The WTP is held in all 50 states and includes the curriculum referred to above and then a competition between schools to see who can best answer three comprehensive questions for each unit. Each question must be answered collectively by a team of 3-4 students by oral presentation within a four minute time limit before a panel of three expert judges AND then answer questions from them for an additional six minutes. Students will complete the basic text work for the first TWO units over the course of the summer; we’ll review them during the first two weeks of the school year. Over the course of the next six weeks we’ll incorporate the remaining four units into the corresponding AP curriculum. At the start of the second quarter each class will be divided into the six units and they will begin to prepare their basic responses to each of the Unit’s three state-level competition questions, including any additional background research. The final drafts will be completed prior to the holiday break in December. In the weeks leading up to Midyear exams we’ll focus on presentation skills and dealing with the Q&A section of the competition. The class Exam will be a full practice session of 2 of the 3 questions (chosen at random on exam day) before a panel of volunteer judges. The competition takes place the second Saturday in February in Charlottesville and is a course requirement for all class members.

Further information can be found at this website:

[http://www.montpelier.org/c4c/we\\_the\\_people/program.cfm](http://www.montpelier.org/c4c/we_the_people/program.cfm)

## MATERIALS:

### PRIMARY TEXTBOOK:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

In a college class, students will buy their textbooks. They will write in and highlight those texts. Chapters average 40 pages and the supplemental readings can range from a few pages to entire books; a lot of reading and learning. While the course is college level, this school is public and you cannot write in the text unless you buy the book. That calculation is one that you and your parents should make; I can only confirm that if you write in them you'll be charged in the spring.

### SUPPLEMENTALS:

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Center for Civic Education (1995). We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. Calabasas, CA.:Center for Civic Education.

### CURRENT ISSUES:

In addition to the written materials provided, the society we live in provides you with a cheap tutorial in government and politics each day, the newspaper! I strongly urge you to get in the habit of reading it. Merely by osmosis you'll begin to pick up the names, phrases and issues that dominate our current political culture. In addition, while TV may contain a considerable number of "junk" news shows, there are many excellent programs that review and explore, in depth, our system and the policy issues of the day. Our close proximity to the capital city of this nation should be an advantage you use and not take for granted.

**Materials: Daily Issues (1 per student) of the Washington Post, Weekly review of student selected articles from *The Economist*, Video clips from appropriate sources, ABC-CLIO website access**

**TESTING:**

- AP style, five-option multiple choice questions
  - o Chapter based quizzes
  - o Unit-based tests
  - o Several full, timed 60 question pre-exam practice tests
- AP style point based free response-questions
  - o Previous AP exam question/rubric de-construction
  - o Test question/rubric development project
- AP style point based free response timed writings
  - o Unit based and timed pre-exam AP exam questions

**SCHEDULE:**

Unit 1-September-October

“We...do ordain...”

Constitutional Foundations

Key Conceptual Question:

Evaluate how the founders incorporated prior experiences, ancient and immediate, in creating an instrument of government politically acceptable at the time and flexible enough for future growth.

Features:

- WTP Units 1-4
- Document analysis-Federalist v. Anti-Federalist Debates

**Data Analysis:**

**Students will review and be tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) from text and supplemental sources, as well as part of chapter, unit and full AP style tests.**

**Requirement 7:** The course provides students with practice in analyzing and interpreting data and other information relevant to U.S. government and politics.

**From Sample 1**

**Using Graphs, Maps, and Charts**

Students are tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) at regular intervals in weekly or semiweekly quiz assignments.

Readings:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Chapters 1-4

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Rakove, Jack N. *A Tradition Born of Strife*
- Roche, John P. *The Founding Fathers: A reform Caucus in Action*
- Derthick, Martha *American Federalism: Half-full or Half-empty?*

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Storing, Herbert *What the Antifederalists were for.*
- O'M. Bowman, Ann *American Federalism on the Horizon*
- De Tocqueville, Alexis *Democracy in America*

**AP Free Response Practice Questions:**

**-2000 question 1, 2001-question 1, 2006-question 4**

Unit 2- October-December

“Connections”

Agents (media, Parties, interest groups) linking (campaigns and elections) political beliefs and desires of the Public to their government

Key Conceptual Question:

Evaluate the performance of each agent in effectively and accurately communicating public expressions of policy choices to their government. Furthermore explain how

focused or unfocused those expressions may be on the part of citizens inhabiting this compound and extended republic.

Features:

- WTP Units 5-6 w/ competition question preparations
- 2006 Congressional Campaign analysis (**statistical analysis**)
- **2008 Presidential Election-with campaign statistical analysis**

**Data Analysis:**

**Students will review and be tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) from text and supplemental sources, as well as part of chapter, unit and full AP style tests.**

**Requirement 7:** The course provides students with practice in analyzing and interpreting data and other information relevant to U.S. government and politics.

**From Sample 1**

**Using Graphs, Maps, and Charts**

Students are tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) at regular intervals in weekly or semiweekly quiz assignments.

Readings:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Chapters 5-10

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Ginsberg, Benjamin *Polling and the Transformation of Public Opinion*
- Milbank, Dana *I Hear America Ringing*
- Sifry, Micah L. *Finding the Lost Voters*
- Schudson, Michael *Voting Rules: Why we need a new concept of citizenship*
- Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*

- Lawson, Kay *Why We Still Need real Political Parties*
- Dreyfuss, Robert *Raising the democratic Base*
- Patterson, Thomas E. *Bad News, Bad Governance*
- Birnbaum, Jeffery H. *Lobbyist-Why the Bad Rap?*
- Skocpol, Theda *Associations Without Members*

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Brooks, David *One Nation, Slightly Divided*
- Cigler and Loomis *Always Involved, Rarely Central: Organized Interests in American Politics*
- Goldberg, Bernard *Bias*

**AP Free Response Practice Questions:**

**-1999-question 1, 1999 question 2, 2000-question 3, 2002-question 4, 2003- Question 2, 2004 questions 2-4, 2006-question 1**

**Requirement 4:** The course provides instruction in institutions of national government.

**Evaluation Guidelines:**  
Syllabus must specifically mention the executive, legislative, **and** judicial branches of the government.



Unit 3: December-March

“Separation of Powers”

Institutions of Government: **Congress, the Presidency, and the Judiciary**

Key Conceptual Question:

Analyze the evolution that has occurred over the past two hundred years in the relationships among our three branches and evaluate the current relationship as it affects the ability of government to respond to the demands of a fickle public.

Features:

WTP Competition

- Simulated Congress Exercise 2007

### **Data Analysis:**

**Students will review and be tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) from text and supplemental sources, as well as part of chapter, unit and full AP style tests.**

Readings:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Chapters 11-14

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Sheplse, Kenneth A. *The Changing Textbook Congress*
- Hamilton, Lee H *Ten Things I Wish Political Scientists Would Teach About Congress*
- Cohen, Richard E. *Crackup of Committees*
- Neustadt, Richard E. *The Power to Persuade*
- Dhal, Robert A. *Myth of the Presidential Mandate*
- Posner, Richard A. *What Am I? A Potted Plant*

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Hibbing and Smith *What the American Public Wants Congress to Be*
- Greenstein, Fred I *The Changing Leadership of George W. Bush*
- Greenhouse, Linda *Beyond Bush v. Gore*
- Kaplan, Davis A. *The "Accidental President"*

### **AP Free Response Practice Questions:**

**-1999 question 3, 2000-question 2, 2001 question 2, 2002 question 1, 2003 questions 1 and 4, 2004 question 1, 2006 question 3**

Unit 4 March-April

"Citizenship"

Civil Liberties and Rights in America: An Evolutionary Tale

Key Conceptual Question:

Evaluate the role of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the Supreme Courts evolving interpretation of it in altering our concepts of civil liberties and rights for citizens (and non-citizens).

Features:

- Moot Court-Case TBA each year

### **Data Analysis:**

**Students will review and be tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) from text and supplemental sources, as well as part of chapter, unit and full AP style tests.**

Readings:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Chapters 18-19

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Rosen, Jeffery *Why Privacy Matters*

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Kaminer, Wendy *Second Thoughts on the Second Amendment*
- Glennon, Michael J. *Terrorism and the Limits of Law*
- Shuck, Peter H. *Affirmative Action-Don't Mend or End It-Bend It*

### **AP Free Response Practice Questions:**

**-2001 question 3, 2002 question 3, 2005 question 3**

### Unit 5-April-May

“Government at Work”

Economic, Social, and Global Policy-Historical and Present day analysis

Key Conceptual Question:

Analyze the role of all players in our complex system of government in each policy area.

Features:

- Study Groups draft 'White Paper' review of current issue-TBA

**Data Analysis:**

**Students will review and be tested on their understanding of quantitative and visually-presented information (maps and graphs) from text and supplemental sources, as well as part of chapter, unit and full AP style tests.**

Readings:

Wilson, J. Q. & Dilulio Jr. J. J. (2004) American Government: Ninth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Chapters 15-17, 20-21

Cigler, A.J. & Loomis, B.A. (Eds.). (2002). American Politics-Classic and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Wilson, James Q. *Constraints on Public Managers*
- Georges, Christopher *Sign It, The Mend It*
- Nivola, Pietro S. *Regulation: The New Pork Barrel*

Lasser, William. (Ed). (2004). Perspectives on American Politics Fourth Edition. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

- Wilson, James Q. *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*.

**AP Free Response Practice Questions:**

**-1999 question 4, 2000 question 4, 2001 question 4, 2002 question 2, 2003 question 3, 2005 question 2, 2006 question 2**

**APPENDIX: Textbook based thought questions**

Thought Questions Chapter 1

1. What may be meant by the word democracy? What sort of democracy is the government of the United States supposed to be?
2. What is the difference between power in general and political power? Give examples of both.
3. Discuss the Framers' view of the "will of the people," and why they favored representative government.
4. What are the various answers that have been given to the question, "Who governs?" How do we go about determining which is correct?

#### Chapter 2 Thought Questions

1. Discuss the "colonial mind's" approach to political issues, and demonstrate how this kind of thinking was bound to come into conflict with continued British rule in America.
2. Show how historical experience with problems created by the Articles of Confederation led to the creation of a stronger form of government under the Constitution.
3. Review Madison's argument that liberty could be protected better in an "extended republic" than in a series of small democracies. State whether you find his argument persuasive and why.
4. Do you agree or disagree with those proponents of constitutional reforms who argue that this country suffers from an excess of democracy? Defend your answer.

#### Chapter 3 Thought Questions

1. How do the objectives of the Founders in writing the Constitution (see Chapter 2) relate to the institution of federalism in theory, that is, in the thinking and political values of the Founders?
2. Given the changes that have occurred in federalism in practice in the past two centuries, does federalism today still serve the purposes for which it was designed?
3. What might be some of the consequences if, on the two-hundredth anniversary of the Constitutional Convention, a new constitutional convention were held at which it was decided to dispense with the two-layer system of government and move to a unitary state? What might be some of the advantages and disadvantages?

#### Chapter 4 Thought Questions

1. Evaluate the author's contention that mistrust of government in the United States isn't really as severe as it is sometimes thought to be.

2. Explain what is meant by the different sorts of political efficacy and relate these to your own feelings as a citizen.

#### Chapter 5 Thought Questions

1. Discuss the comparative roles played by the family, religion, gender, and education in forming Americans' political outlook. Of the four, which would you say have been gaining in importance recently, and why?
2. Explain what the words *liberal* and *conservative* mean in the United States today, compared with their earlier meanings. Discuss to what extent these terms are useful in characterizing the political attitudes of the average American.
3. Discuss the notion of gender gap and why it is more accurate to say that men rather than women have "deserted" Democratic candidates for Republican ones. Also, discuss some of the issues that divide men and women.
4. Compare and contrast the "new class" and the traditional middle class, or "old class," as to their makeup and their political beliefs and allegiances. What effect on American politics is growth of the "new class" likely to have?

#### Chapter 6 Thought Questions

1. Discuss those aspects of elections that can be said to make American politics more democratic than the politics of most other countries, as well as those aspects of elections that can be said to make American politics less democratic.
2. What are the major factors that appear to hold down the level of voter turnout in the United States? What sort of program might you design if you wanted to overcome some of these problems and thus increase voter turnout?
3. Outline the history of the growth of the franchise in this country. Discuss where we are likely to go from here: broadening the franchise to include more groups of people, keeping it about the same, or constricting it.
4. What, if any, reforms of the voter registration system in this country would you advocate? What might be the consequences, intended and/or unintended, of such reforms?

#### Chapter 7 Thought Questions

1. Define the term political party and contrast the structures of the European and American parties, paying particular attention to the federal structure of the United States system and the concept of party identification.
2. Trace the development of the United States party system through its four periods. Explain why parties have been in decline since the New Deal.
3. Describe the structure of a major party. Distinguish powerful from powerless party units.
4. Indicate whether there are major differences between the parties. Describe some of the issue differences between delegates at Democratic and Republican conventions, and compare these differences with those of the party rank and file.

#### Chapter 8 Thought Questions

1. Explain how each of the major parties must put together a successful coalition to win national elections. Design a strategy for the Democrats or the Republicans to win the next presidential election.
2. Discuss several popular ideas for reforming campaign finance laws and the problems that each creates.
3. List the major regulations on campaign financing imposed by recent legislation and the effects that these regulations are likely to have on candidates, donors, parties, and American politics generally.

#### Chapter 9 Thought Questions

1. List and comment on the various reasons commonly given for the unusually large variety of interest groups found in the United States.
2. List and analyze the various periods of American history that have witnessed rapid growth in interest groups. Discuss whether any of the requisite conditions are present today.
3. Explain the difference between organizational and membership-type interest groups, and discuss how you might expect their conduct in the political system to vary.
4. Do you believe that the system of interest groups active in American politics today has an upper-class bias? Defend your answer, and discuss whether the system as you see it is a desirable or an undesirable one.
5. Discuss 1946 and 1995 congressional efforts to regulate lobbying.

## Chapter 10 Thought Questions

1. Compare and contrast the party press of the Federalist-Republican era with today's mass media, listing some major changes in technology and society that have brought about this evolution.
2. Discuss the major ways in which the focus on electronic media rather than print media has changed the conduct of American politics.
3. Compare government regulation of the print media with that of radio and TV, noting also recent trends in the latter.
4. Discuss the relationship between the economics of journalism and the rise of sensationalism in the media.

## Chapter 13 thought questions

1. Which criteria would you want to consider if you were trying to convince someone that the federal bureaucracy is an important policy-making institution?
2. Discuss four factors that help to explain the behavior of appointed officials. Which one do you think is the most important?
3. What does the text mean by the term *bureaucratic pathologies*? What are some examples of such "pathologies"? Why does each of them exist? Can they be corrected? Why or why not?
- 4.

## Chapter 14 Thought Question

1. Identify and explain difference between how the Supreme Court and Congress make public policy.
2. Do you think that the Founders expected the Supreme Court to play the role that it has played in recent years? Why or why not?
3. What were the important constitutional and judicial issues raised in *Marbury v. Madison*? What two roles did John Marshall play in the case? What was his ruling? What were the results of the ruling?

- Print out summary of case and decision

Hylton vs. US

Marbury v. Madison

McCulloch v. Maryland

Gibbons v. Ogden

Baron v. Baltimore

Scott v. Sanford

Civil Rights cases

Slaughterhouse Cases

Plessy v. Ferguson

Schenck v. US

Gitlow v NY  
Near v. Minnesota  
Cantwell v. CT  
Palko v. Connecticut  
United States v. Carolene Products Co.  
Brown v. Board I  
Brown v. Board II  
Dennis v. US  
Yates v. US  
Heart of Atlanta Motel v. US  
Katzenbach v. McClung  
Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools v. Swann  
Bakke v. Board of Regents  
Adarand v. Pena  
Gratz v. Bollinger  
Grutter v. Bollinger

Lynch v. Donnelly  
Lemon v. Kurtzman  
Engel v. Vitale  
Brandenburg v. Ohio  
Weeks v. US  
Wolf v. Colorado  
Mapp v Ohio  
Leon v. US  
California v. Acevedo  
Wyoming v. Houghton  
Betts v. Brady  
Gideon v. Wainwright  
Furman v. Georgia  
Gregg v. Georgia  
Trop v. Dulles  
Kent v. Dulles