

AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics

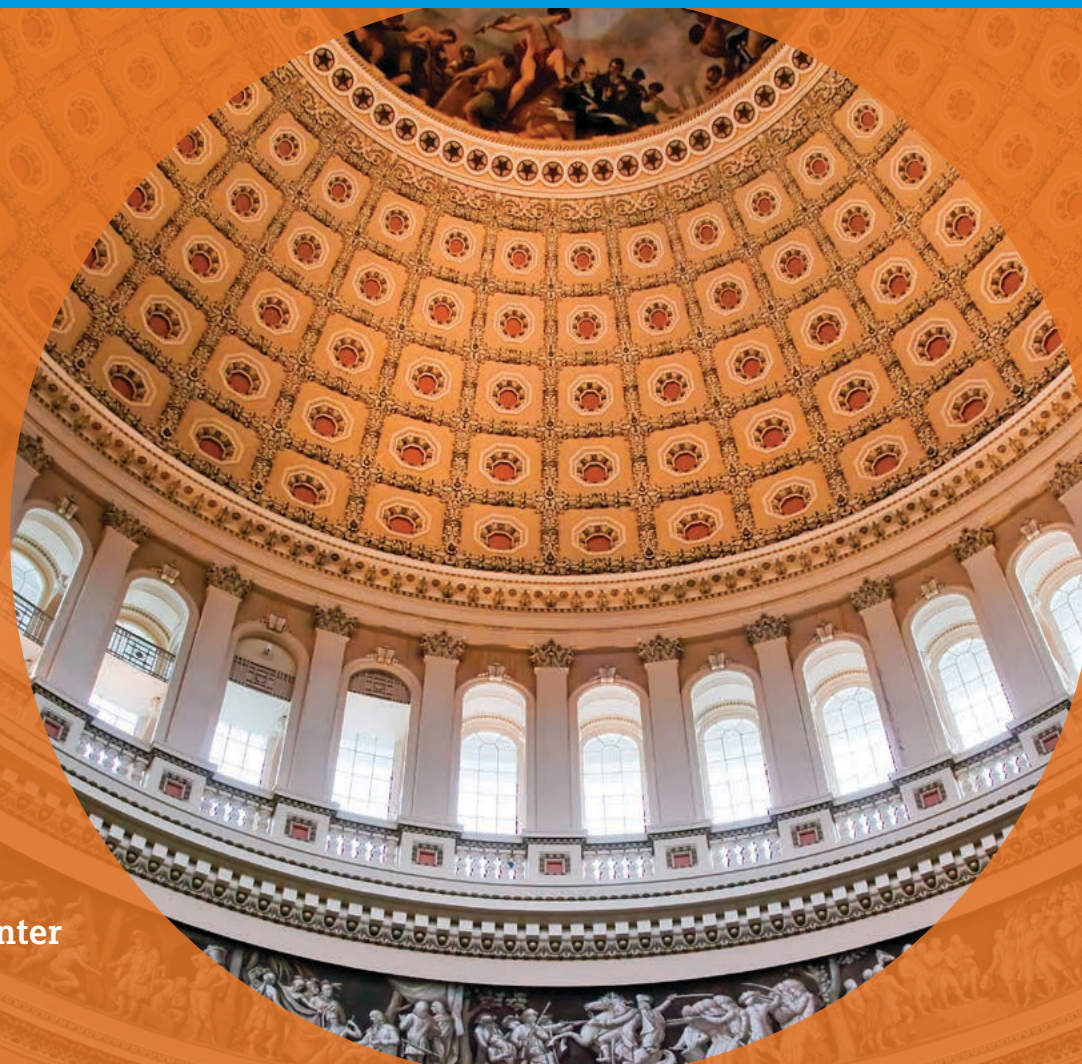
Effective
Fall 2018

INCLUDING:

- ✓ Course framework with contextual information
- ✓ Instructional section
- ✓ A practice exam

COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

Endorsed by the
National Constitution Center



AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description

Effective Fall 2018

Endorsement by the National Constitution Center

The course framework within this course and exam description is a model of political and ideological balance. It will not only help students understand the U.S. Constitution and the U.S. political system, but will also help them become informed citizens who are willing to preserve, protect, and defend the rights and liberties at the core of our nation's charter. That is why we are delighted to partner with the College Board on a series of classroom lessons and materials that support instruction in AP U.S. Government and Politics and help bring balanced constitutional content to students across America.

AP COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTIONS ARE UPDATED PERIODICALLY.

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

About the College Board

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

AP® Equity and Access Policy

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

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About AP

The College Board’s Advanced Placement Program® (AP) enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Through more than 30 courses, each culminating in a rigorous exam, AP provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit and/or advanced placement. Taking AP courses also demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought out the most rigorous course work available to them.

Each AP course is modeled upon a comparable college course, and college and university faculty play a vital role in ensuring that AP courses align with college-level standards. Talented and dedicated AP teachers help AP students in classrooms around the world develop and apply the content knowledge and skills they will need later in college.

Each AP course concludes with a college-level assessment developed and scored by college and university faculty, as well as experienced AP teachers. AP Exams are an essential part of the AP experience, enabling students to demonstrate their mastery of college-level course work. Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States and universities in more than 60 countries recognize AP in the admission process and grant students credit, placement, or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores. Visit www.collegeboard.org/apcreditpolicy to view AP credit and placement policies at more than 1,000 colleges and universities.

Performing well on an AP Exam means more than just the successful completion of a course; it is a gateway to success in college. Research consistently shows that students who receive a score of 3 or higher on AP Exams typically experience greater academic success in college and have higher graduation rates than their non-AP peers.¹ Additional AP studies are available at www.collegeboard.org/research.

Offering AP Courses and Enrolling Students

This AP course and exam description details the essential information required to understand the objectives and expectations of an AP course. The AP Program unequivocally supports the principle that each school implements its own curriculum that will enable students to develop the content knowledge and skills described here.

Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit, a process through which AP teachers’ syllabi are reviewed by college faculty. The AP Course Audit was created to provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements for AP courses and to help colleges and universities validate courses marked “AP” on students’ transcripts. This process ensures that AP teachers’ syllabi meet or exceed the curricular and resource expectations that college and secondary school faculty have established for college-level courses. For more information on the AP Course Audit, visit www.collegeboard.org/apcourseaudit.

¹See the following research studies for more details:

Linda Hargrove, Donn Godin, and Barbara Dodd, *College Outcomes Comparisons by AP and Non-AP High School Experiences* (New York: The College Board, 2008).

Chrys Dougherty, Lynn Mellor, and Shuling Jian, *The Relationship Between Advanced Placement and College Graduation* (Austin, Texas: National Center for Educational Accountability, 2006).

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

How AP Courses and Exams Are Developed

AP courses and exams are designed by committees of college faculty and expert AP teachers who ensure that each AP subject reflects and assesses college-level expectations. A list of each subject's current AP Development Committee members is available on apcentral.collegeboard.org. AP Development Committees define the scope and expectations of the course, articulating through a course framework what students should know and be able to do upon completion of the AP course. Their work is informed by data collected from a range of colleges and universities to ensure that AP coursework reflects current scholarship and advances in the discipline.

The AP Development Committees are also responsible for drawing clear and well-articulated connections between the AP course and AP Exam—work that includes designing and approving exam specifications and exam questions. The AP Exam development process is a multiyear endeavor; all AP Exams undergo extensive review, revision, piloting, and analysis to ensure that questions are high quality and fair and that there is an appropriate spread of difficulty across the questions.

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

How AP Exams Are Scored

The exam scoring process, like the course and exam development process, relies on the expertise of both AP teachers and college faculty. While multiple-choice questions are scored by machine, the free-response questions and through-course performance assessments, as applicable, are scored by thousands of college faculty and expert AP teachers. Most are scored at the annual AP Reading, while a small portion are scored online. AP Exam Readers are thoroughly trained, and their work is monitored throughout the Reading for fairness and consistency. In each subject, a highly respected college faculty member serves as Chief Reader, and with the help of AP readers in leadership positions, maintains the accuracy of the scoring standards. Scores on the free-response questions and performance assessments are weighted and combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions, and this raw score is converted into a composite AP score of 5, 4, 3, 2, or 1.

The score-setting process is both precise and labor intensive, involving numerous psychometric analyses of specific AP Exam results from a particular group of students who took that exam. Additionally, to ensure alignment with college-level standards, part of the score setting process involves comparing the performance of AP students with the performance of students enrolled in comparable college courses throughout the United States. In general, the AP composite score points are set so that the lowest raw score needed to earn an AP score of 5 is equivalent to the average score among college students earning grades of A in the college course. Similarly, AP Exam scores of 4 are equivalent to college grades of A-, B+, and B. AP Exam scores of 3 are equivalent to college grades of B-, C+, and C.

Using and Interpreting AP Scores

The extensive work done by college faculty and AP teachers in the development of the course and the exam and throughout the scoring process ensures that AP Exam scores accurately represent students' achievement in the equivalent college course. While colleges and universities are responsible for setting their own credit and placement policies, AP scores signify how qualified students are to receive college credit or placement:

AP Score	Recommendation
5	Extremely well qualified
4	Well qualified
3	Qualified
2	Possibly qualified
1	No recommendation

Additional Resources

Visit apcentral.collegeboard.org for more information about the AP Program.

About the AP U.S. Government and Politics Course

AP U.S. Government and Politics provides a college-level, nonpartisan introduction to key political concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the constitutional system and political culture of the United States. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behaviors. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments. In addition, they will complete a political science research or applied civics project.

College Course Equivalent

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

Prerequisites

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

The Project Requirement

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

Participating in the AP Course Audit

Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit. Participation in the AP Course Audit requires the online submission of two documents: the AP Course Audit form and the teacher's syllabus. The AP Course Audit form is submitted by the AP teacher and the school principal (or designated administrator) to confirm awareness and understanding of the curricular and resource requirements. The syllabus, detailing how course requirements are met, is submitted by the AP teacher for review by college faculty.

Please visit http://www.collegeboard.com/html/apcourseaudit/courses/us_government.html for more information to support syllabus development including:

- **Annotated Sample Syllabi** — Provide examples of how the curricular requirements can be demonstrated within the context of actual syllabi.
- **Curricular and Resource Requirements** — Identifies the set of curricular and resource expectations that college faculty nationwide have established for a college-level course.
- **Example Textbook List** — Includes a sample of AP college-level textbooks that meet the content requirements of the AP course.
- **Syllabus Development Guide** — Includes the guidelines reviewers use to evaluate syllabi along with three samples of evidence for each requirement. This guide also specifies the level of detail required in the syllabus to receive course authorization.
- **Syllabus Self Evaluation Checklist** — Includes a list of items that teachers should verify prior to submitting the syllabus for review.

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AP U.S. Government and Politics Course Framework

Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

National Constitution Center and the College Board

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

Overview

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

Although the course framework is designed to provide a clear and detailed description of the curriculum and course content required for students to qualify for college placement and/or credit in U.S. government and politics, it is not a complete curriculum. Teachers will need to choose the specific historical and contemporary contexts for their students to explore as they develop the concepts and skills described in the framework, while creating their own curriculum by selecting, for each concept in the framework, content that meets state or local requirements.

The course framework is composed of three sections:

I. AP U.S. Government and Politics Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

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

II. Big Ideas in AP U.S. Government and Politics

The big ideas are themes that are aligned with multiple enduring understandings or practices in the course.

III. Content Outline

The content outline, organized into five course units, details key content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master in order to qualify for college credit and/or placement.

I. AP U.S. Government and Politics Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

This section presents the disciplinary practices and reasoning processes that students should develop during the AP U.S. Government and Politics course. The tables that follow describe what students should be able to do with each disciplinary practice or reasoning process.

Every AP Exam question will assess one or more of these practices and reasoning processes.

The table of disciplinary practices describes the tasks students will apply to the course content. The course framework does not tie specific practices to specific content learning objectives. Instead, you should help students develop these practices throughout the course, using your professional judgment to sequence and scaffold them appropriately for your students.

The table of reasoning processes describes the cognitive operations students will draw upon and apply when doing the disciplinary practices. The column headings in the reasoning processes table relate back to the verbs in the disciplinary practices table.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Disciplinary Practices

Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Practice 4	Practice 5
Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context	Apply Supreme Court decisions	Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics	Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources	Develop an argument in essay format
<i>Concept Application</i>	<i>SCOTUS Application</i>	<i>Data Analysis</i>	<i>Source Analysis</i>	<i>Argumentation</i>
<p>1.a. Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>1.b. Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>1.c. Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>1.d. Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context</p> <p>1.e. Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context</p>	<p>2.a. Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases</p> <p>2.b. Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources</p> <p>2.c. Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case</p> <p>2.d. Explain how required Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context</p>	<p>3.a. Describe the data presented</p> <p>3.b. Describe patterns and trends in data</p> <p>3.c. Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions</p> <p>3.d. Explain what the data imply or illustrate about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>3.e. Explain possible limitations of the data provided</p> <p>3.f. Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided</p>	<p>4.a. Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning</p> <p>4.b. Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>4.c. Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p> <p>4.d. Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p>	<p>5.a. Articulate a defensible claim/thesis</p> <p>5.b. Support the argument using relevant evidence</p> <p>5.c. Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis</p> <p>5.d. Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives</p>

AP U.S. Government and Politics Reasoning Processes

Reasoning Process 1: Definition/Classification

When demonstrating their knowledge of course concepts, students should:

- ♦ Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts
- ♦ Classify concepts
- ♦ Describe structures and functions
- ♦ Describe patterns and/or trends
- ♦ Describe the perspective of a source or author
- ♦ Describe assumptions and/or reasoning of a source or author

Reasoning Process 2: Process

When explaining political processes, students should:

- ♦ Identify steps and/or stages in a process
- ♦ Explain how the steps or stages in a process relate to each other
- ♦ Explain challenges with processes and/or interactions
- ♦ Explain the relevance or significance of processes and/or interactions

Reasoning Process 3: Causation

When explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors, students should:

- ♦ Identify causes and/or effects
- ♦ Explain the reasons for causes and/or effects
- ♦ Explain change over time
- ♦ Explain the significance of causes and/or effects
- ♦ Explain the implications of change over time

Reasoning Process 4: Comparison

When explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors, students should:

- ♦ Identify relevant categories of comparison
- ♦ Identify similarities and/or differences
- ♦ Explain the reasons for similarities and/or differences
- ♦ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of similarities and differences

II. Big Ideas in AP U.S. Government and Politics

The big ideas described below are intended to illustrate distinctive features and processes in U.S. government and politics as well as how political scientists study political behavior.

Constitutionalism (CON)

The U.S. Constitution establishes a system of checks and balances among branches of government and allocates power between federal and state governments. This system is based on the rule of law and the balance majority rule and minority rights.

Liberty and Order (LOR)

Governmental laws and policies balancing order and liberty are based on the U.S. Constitution and have been interpreted differently over time.

Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD)

Popular sovereignty, individualism, and republicanism are important considerations of U.S. laws and policy making and assume citizens will engage and participate.

Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI)

Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies.

Methods of Political Analysis (MPA)

Using various types of analyses, political scientists measure how U.S. political behavior, attitudes, ideologies, and institutions are shaped by a number of factors over time.

Linking Big Ideas and Enduring Understandings

Big Ideas	Enduring Understandings				
	Unit 1:	Unit 2:	Unit 3:	Unit 4:	Unit 5:
	Foundations of American Democracy	Interactions Among Branches of Government	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	Political Participation
Constitutionalism	<p>CON-1: The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.</p> <p>CON-2: Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.</p>	<p>CON-3: The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.</p> <p>CON-4: The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.</p> <p>CON-5: The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.</p>	<p>CON-6: The Supreme Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen-state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them.</p>		
Liberty and Order	<p>LOR-1: A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.</p>		<p>LOR-2: Provisions of the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals.</p> <p>LOR-3: Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties.</p>		

Big Ideas	Enduring Understandings				
	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy			PRD-1: The Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.		PRD-2: The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum. PRD-3: The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.
Competing Policy-Making Interests	PMI-1: The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved.	PMI-2: The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability.	PMI-3: Public policy promoting civil rights is influenced by citizen–state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time.	PMI-4: Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.	PMI-5: Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.
Methods of Political Analysis [NOTE: Methods of political analysis applies across the course to all enduring understandings by virtue of its relationship to the disciplinary practices.]				MPA-1: Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change. MPA-2: Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.	MPA-3: Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.

III. Content Outline

Overview

AP U.S. Government and Politics has been designed as a nonpartisan course and has been endorsed by the National Constitution Center as well as a range of conservative and liberal scholars for its political balance. The required readings are the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Articles of Confederation, representative Federalist Papers, Brutus No. 1, and Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail.” In addition, there are 15 required Supreme Court cases. Additional readings and assignments that teachers select to supplement the course must, as a whole, maintain a political balance. It is expected and required that all AP-authorized courses maintain political balance through a nonpartisan curriculum.

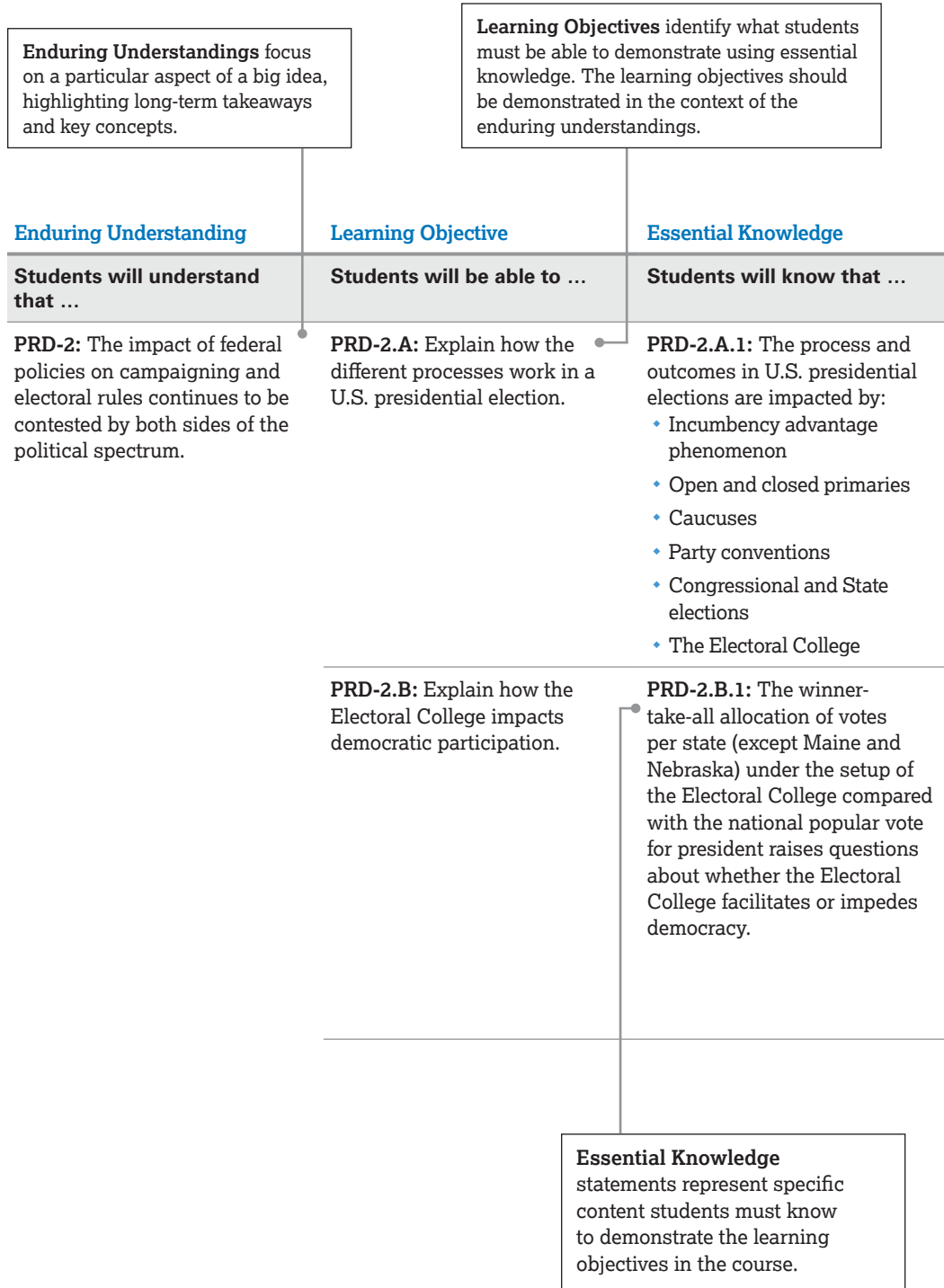
The course is designed to be a half-year course, although some high schools teach it as a full-year course. The content outline is divided into five separate units that comprise major course topics. Each unit begins with a short narrative providing background and context, followed by two or more essential questions that will help you connect the unit’s content to the big ideas in the course. Within each unit, a number of enduring understandings focus on specific aspects of the unit and delineate the level of conceptual understanding required of successful AP students.

The course content for each unit is presented in a tabular format. The components are as follows:

- **Enduring understandings (EUs):** The first column of the table lists the enduring understandings. These understandings specify what students will come to understand about the key concepts in each unit. EUs are labeled according to the big idea to which they relate, not the unit in which they appear (e.g., the first EU in unit 3 is designated **LOR-2** because it is the second enduring understanding relating to the big idea Liberty and Order).
- **Learning objectives (LOs):** Aligned to the left of essential knowledge statements are the corresponding learning objectives. These learning objectives convey what a student needs to be able to do with content knowledge in order to develop the enduring understandings, and serve as **targets of assessment for each course**. Learning objectives are labeled to correspond with the enduring understanding to which they relate (e.g., in unit 3 the LO designated **LOR-2.A** is the first LO aligned to the EU **LOR-2**).
- **Essential knowledge statements (EKs):** These statements describe the facts and basic concepts that a student should know and be able to recall in order to demonstrate mastery of each learning objective. Essential knowledge statements are labeled to correspond with the enduring understanding and learning objective to which they relate (e.g., in unit 3 the EK designated **LOR-2.A.2** is the second EK aligned to the LO **LOR-2.A**).
- **Foundational documents and Supreme Court cases:** These sources are necessary for students to understand the philosophical underpinnings, significant legal precedents, and political values of the U.S. political system and may serve as the focus of AP Exam questions. For greater visibility the required foundational documents and Supreme Court cases are indicated in bold. They are also listed in Appendixes A and B, respectively.

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

Sample Content Outline



Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

The U.S. Constitution arose out of important historical and philosophical ideas and preferences regarding popular sovereignty and limited government. Compromises were made during the Constitutional Convention and ratification debates, and these compromises have frequently been the source of conflict in U.S. politics over the proper balance between individual freedom, social order, and equality of opportunity.

The first semblance of a national government created after independence was a state-centered, decentralized system that reflected a fear of a powerful central government. Yet, the lack of powers held by the weak national Congress, coupled with each state's independent and often conflicting actions, raised concerns with such key actors as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton as to whether the Articles of Confederation were able to protect the new nation. The weaknesses led to a call for change and a decision to host a convention to revise the Articles. The convention itself was a triumph of negotiation, collaboration, and compromise, extending beyond the delegates' original mandate. It led to the creation of a new constitution that granted more centralized authority, while dispersing powers among three branches in the national government, and reserving powers and authority to the states to govern within their borders.

The group that favored the new federal Constitution, the Federalists, argued that the constitutional separation of powers and checks and balances would protect people from governmental tyranny and unify the nation. The Federalists also argued that although the Constitution lacked a specific listing of rights, it protected civil liberties in general by limiting the national government to powers that were enumerated. By contrast, the Anti-Federalists argued against the new federal system, claiming that the new Constitution would erode the sovereignty of the states, the prominence of local self-government, and their inherited liberties, as it lacked a specific listing of rights needed to protect the people from the national government. The Federalists, after James Madison's eventual concurrence, promised the Anti-Federalists that they would support the addition of a bill of rights once the Constitution was ratified. The Constitution was ratified in 1788 although the last state, Rhode Island, did not ratify it until 1790. The Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, was ratified in 1791.

More than 200 years later, the compromises that were necessary for the Constitution's ratification, and in some instances led to ambiguity, continue to fuel debate and sometimes even conflict over how best to protect liberty, equality, order, and private property.

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 the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.?

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>LOR-1: A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Liberty and Order</p>	<p>LOR-1.A: Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.</p>	<p>LOR-1.A.1: The U.S. government is based on ideas of limited government, including natural rights, popular sovereignty, republicanism, and social contract.</p> <p>LOR-1.A.2: The Declaration of Independence, drafted by Jefferson with help from Adams and Franklin, provides a foundation for popular sovereignty, while the U.S. Constitution drafted at the Philadelphia convention led by George Washington, with important contributions from Madison, Hamilton, and members of the “grand committee,” provides the blueprint for a unique form of political democracy in the U.S.</p>
	<p>LOR-1.B: Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the U.S.</p>	<p>LOR-1.B.1: Representative democracies can take several forms along this scale:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Participatory democracy</i>, which emphasizes broad participation in politics and civil society ♦ <i>Pluralist democracy</i>, which recognizes group-based activism by nongovernmental interests striving for impact on political decision making ♦ <i>Elite democracy</i>, which emphasizes limited participation in politics and civil society <p>LOR-1.B.2: Different aspects of the U.S. Constitution, as well as the debate between the Federalist No. 10 and Brutus No. 1, reflect the tension between the broad participatory model and the more filtered participation of the pluralist and elite models.</p> <p>LOR-1.B.3: The three models of representative democracy continue to be reflected in contemporary institutions and political behavior.</p>
<p>CON-1: The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-1.A: Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents.</p>	<p>CON-1.A.1: Madison’s arguments in Federalist No. 10 focused on the superiority of a large republic in controlling the “mischiefs of faction,” delegating authority to elected representatives and dispersing power between the states and national government.</p> <p>CON-1.A.2: Anti-Federalist writings, including Brutus No. 1, adhered to popular democratic theory that emphasized the benefits of a small decentralized republic while warning of the dangers to personal liberty from a large, centralized government.</p>
	<p>CON-1.B: Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.</p>	<p>CON-1.B.1: Specific incidents and legal challenges that highlighted key weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation are represented by the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Lack of centralized military power to address Shays’ Rebellion ♦ Lack of tax-law enforcement power

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p> <p>CON-1: The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism (continued)</p>	<p>CON-1.C: Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p> <p>CON-1.C.1: Compromises deemed necessary for adoption and ratification of the Constitution are represented by the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Great (Connecticut) Compromise ♦ Electoral College ♦ Three-Fifths Compromise ♦ Compromise on the importation of slaves <p>CON-1.C.2: Debates about self-government during the drafting of the Constitution necessitated the drafting of an amendment process in Article V that entailed either a two-thirds vote in both houses or a proposal from two-thirds of the state legislatures, with final ratification determined by three-fourths of the states.</p> <p>CON-1.C.3: The compromises necessary to secure ratification of the Constitution left some matters unresolved that continue to generate discussion and debate today.</p> <p>CON-1.C.4: The debate over the role of the central government, the powers of state governments, and the rights of individuals remains at the heart of present-day constitutional issues about democracy and governmental power, as represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Debates about government surveillance resulting from the federal government's response to the 9/11 attacks ♦ The debate about the role of the federal government in public school education
<p>PMI-1: The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people's will is represented and that freedom is preserved.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests</p>	<p>PMI-1.A: Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances.</p> <hr/> <p>PMI-1.B: Explain the implications of separation of powers and checks and balances for the U.S. political system.</p>	<p>PMI-1.A.1: The powers allocated to Congress, the president, and the courts demonstrate the separation of powers and checks and balances features of the U.S. Constitution.</p> <p>PMI-1.A.2: Federalist No. 51 explains how constitutional provisions of separation of powers and checks and balances control abuses by majorities.</p> <hr/> <p>PMI-1.B.1: Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the separation of powers and checks and balances.</p> <p>PMI-1.B.2: Impeachment, removal, and other legal actions taken against public officials deemed to have abused their power reflect the purpose of checks and balances.</p>
<p>CON-2: Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-2.A: Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.</p>	<p>CON-2.A.1: The exclusive and concurrent powers of the national and state governments help explain the negotiations over the balance of power between the two levels.</p> <p>CON-2.A.2: The distribution of power between federal and state governments to meet the needs of society changes, as reflected by grants, incentives, and aid programs, including federal revenue sharing, mandates, categorical grants, and block grants.</p>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p> <p>CON-2: Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism (continued)</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p> <p>CON-2.B: Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.</p> <hr/> <p>CON-2.C: Explain how the distribution of powers among three federal branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p> <p>CON-2.B.1: The interpretation of the Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments, the commerce clause, the necessary and proper clause, and other enumerated and implied powers is at the heart of the debate over the balance of power between the national and state governments.</p> <p>CON-2.B.2: The balance of power between the national and state governments has changed over time based on U.S. Supreme Court interpretation of such cases as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819), which declared that Congress has implied powers necessary to implement its enumerated powers and established supremacy of the U.S. Constitution and federal laws over state laws ♦ <i>United States v. Lopez</i> (1995), which ruled that Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime, introducing a new phase of federalism that recognized the importance of state sovereignty and local control <hr/> <p>CON-2.C.1: Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the allocation of powers between national and state governments.</p> <p>CON-2.C.2: National policymaking is constrained by the sharing of power between and among the three branches and state governments.</p>

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government

Because power is widely distributed and checks prevent one branch from usurping powers from the others, institutional actors are in the position where they must both compete and cooperate in order to govern.

The three key institutions of the federal government are Congress, the presidency, and the courts. The bureaucracy, which implements policy, is seen by some as an extension of the executive branch and by others as, in effect, a fourth branch of government because of the discretion it can exercise in carrying out policy directives. The Constitution grants specific powers to Congress, the president, and the courts, and in addition, each branch exercises informal powers (developed through political practice, tradition, and legislation). Because checks and balances are designed to prevent one branch from becoming too powerful, Congress and the president, for example, will sometimes cooperate and sometimes compete in governance.

The powers of Congress are set forth in Article I of the Constitution. Congress is bicameral, with the Senate representing states and the House of Representatives reflecting each state's population. Congress passes laws that cover a wide range of policy areas, and each chamber has different responsibilities and rules. The federal budget is a good example of how the president and Congress must cooperate and compromise. While Congress is empowered to develop and pass a budget, in the modern era the president typically proposes one, which may lead to ideological debate. There are several reasons it is difficult for Congress to pass legislation, including ideological differences. Much of the work of Congress is done in committees, and congressional committees also exercise oversight to ensure that the bureaucracy is carrying out policies as intended.

The expressed powers of the president are set forth in Article II of the Constitution. The president has a significant degree of informal power, which has grown over time. Under the Constitution, Congress checks the power of the president, and this leads to tension between the two branches over both foreign and domestic affairs. The president and Congress have several interrelated powers. For example, while Congress passes legislation, the president must sign it into law. The president appoints judges and members of the cabinet, who must be confirmed by the Senate. The president also oversees most of the bureaucracy. Technology has impacted the president's use of the "bully pulpit" to influence public opinion. In addition to reaching out to the public through televised press conferences and the State of the Union message, the president is increasingly making use of social media to communicate views to a vast audience.

The federal judiciary, including the Supreme Court, established under Article III, is designed to be an independent branch of government. The Court's most far-reaching power, judicial review, was justified in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), where the Court declared that it had the constitutional authority to overturn acts of Congress, state laws, or executive action deemed to be unconstitutional. Thus, judicial review serves as an important check on other branches of government. Appointed for life, justices are somewhat insulated from public opinion. It is not surprising that over the years the Court has handed down decisions that have been unpopular and controversial. Congress and the president may influence the Court through the appointment process, by refusing to implement a Court decision, or by passing legislation that changes the Court's jurisdiction.

Using a merit-based civil service system for all staff except top-level political appointees, the federal bureaucracy carries out laws to regulate a wide range of individual and commercial activities. Bureaucrats implement policy using their discretionary and rule-making authority. Both Congress and the president can hold the bureaucracy accountable in policy implementation, and the two branches will sometimes be in conflict over whether or not administrative agencies are carrying out the letter and spirit of the law.

Essential Questions

- How do the branches of the national government compete and 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 21st century?

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>CON-3: The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-3.A: Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.</p>	<p>CON-3.A.1: The Senate is designed to represent states equally, while the House is designed to represent the population.</p> <p>CON-3.A.2: Different chamber sizes and constituencies influence formality of debate.</p> <p>CON-3.A.3: Coalitions in Congress are affected by term-length differences.</p> <p>CON-3.A.4: The enumerated and implied powers in the Constitution allow the creation of public policy by Congress, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Passing a federal budget, raising revenue, and coining money ♦ Declaring war and maintaining the armed forces ♦ Enacting legislation that addresses a wide range of economic, environmental, and social issues based on the Necessary and Proper Clause
	<p>CON-3.B: Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.</p>	<p>CON-3.B.1: By design, the different structures, powers, and functions of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives affect the policy-making process.</p> <p>CON-3.B.2: Though both chambers rely on committees to conduct hearings and debate bills under consideration, different constitutional responsibilities of the House and Senate affect the policy-making process.</p> <p>CON-3.B.3: Chamber-specific procedures, rules, and roles that impact the policy-making process include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Number of chamber and debate rules that set the bar high for building majority support ♦ Roles of Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, party leadership, and committee leadership in both chambers ♦ Filibuster and cloture ♦ Holds and unanimous consent in the Senate ♦ Role of Rules Committee, Committee of the Whole, and discharge petitions in the House ♦ Treaty ratification and confirmation role of the Senate <p>CON-3.B.4: Congress must generate a budget that addresses both discretionary and mandatory spending, and as entitlement costs grow, discretionary spending opportunities will decrease unless tax revenues increase or the budget deficit increases.</p> <p>CON-3.B.5: Pork barrel legislation and logrolling affect lawmaking in both chambers.</p>

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<p>Students will understand that ...</p> <p>CON-3: The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism (continued)</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p> <p>CON-3.C: Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p> <p>CON-3.C.1: Congressional behavior and governing effectiveness are influenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Ideological divisions within Congress that can lead to gridlock or create the need for negotiation and compromise ♦ Gerrymandering, redistricting, and unequal representation of constituencies have been partially addressed by such Court decisions as <i>Baker v. Carr</i> (1961), which opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and stated the “one person, one vote” doctrine, and the no-racial-gerrymandering decision in <i>Shaw v. Reno</i> (1993) ♦ Elections that have led to a divided government, including partisan votes against presidential initiatives and congressional refusal to confirm appointments of “lame-duck” presidents of the opposite party ♦ Different role conceptions of “trustee,” “delegate,” and “politico” as related to constituent accountability in each chamber
<p>CON-4: The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-4.A: Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.</p>	<p>CON-4.A.1: Presidents use powers and perform functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda.</p> <p>CON-4.A.2: Formal and informal powers of the president include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Vetoes and pocket vetoes – formal powers that enable the president to check Congress ♦ Foreign policy – both formal (Commander-in-Chief and treaties) and informal (executive agreements) powers that influence relations with foreign nations ♦ Bargaining and persuasion – informal power that enables the president to secure congressional action ♦ Executive orders – implied from the president’s vested executive power, or from power delegated by Congress, executive orders are used by the president to manage the federal government ♦ Signing statements – informal power that informs Congress and the public of the president’s interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by the president
	<p>CON-4.B: Explain how the president’s agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.</p>	<p>CON-4.B.1: The potential for conflict with the Senate depends upon the type of executive branch appointments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Cabinet members ♦ Ambassadors ♦ White House staff <p>CON-4.B.2: Senate confirmation is an important check on appointment powers, but the president’s longest lasting influence lies in life-tenured judicial appointments.</p> <p>CON-4.B.3: Policy initiatives and executive orders promoted by the president often lead to conflict with the congressional agenda.</p>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>CON-4: The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism (continued)</p>	<p>CON-4.C: Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.</p>	<p>CON-4.C.1: Justifications for a single executive are set forth in Federalist No. 70.</p> <p>CON-4.C.2: Term-of-office and constitutional-power restrictions, including the passage of the Twenty-second Amendment, demonstrate changing presidential roles.</p> <p>CON-4.C.3: Different perspectives on the presidential role, ranging from a limited to a more expansive interpretation and use of power, continue to be debated in the context of contemporary events.</p>
	<p>CON-4.D: Explain how communication technology has changed the president's relationship with the national constituency and the other branches.</p>	<p>CON-4.D.1: The communication impact of the presidency can be demonstrated through such factors as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Modern technology, social media, and rapid response to political issues ♦ Nationally broadcast State of the Union messages and the president's bully pulpit used as tools for agenda setting
<p>CON-5: The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-5.A: Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.</p>	<p>CON-5.A.1: The foundation for powers of the judicial branch and how its independence checks the power of other institutions and state governments are set forth in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Article III of the Constitution ♦ Federalist No. 78 ♦ Marbury v. Madison (1803)
	<p>CON-5.B: Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.</p>	<p>CON-5.B.1: Precedents and <i>stare decisis</i> play an important role in judicial decision making.</p> <p>CON-5.B.2: Ideological changes in the composition of the Supreme Court due to presidential appointments have led to the Court's establishing new or rejecting existing precedents.</p> <p>CON-5.B.3: Controversial or unpopular Supreme Court decisions can lead to challenges of the Court's legitimacy and power which Congress and the president can address only through future appointments, legislation changing the Court's jurisdiction, or refusing to implement decisions.</p> <p>CON-5.B.4: Political discussion about the Supreme Court's power is illustrated by the ongoing debate over judicial activism versus judicial restraint.</p>
	<p>CON-5.C: Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.</p>	<p>CON-5.C.1: Restrictions on the Supreme Court are represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Congressional legislation to modify the impact of prior Supreme Court decisions ♦ Constitutional amendments ♦ Judicial appointments and confirmations ♦ The president and states evading or ignoring Supreme Court decisions ♦ Legislation impacting court jurisdiction

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>PMI-2: The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests</p>	<p>PMI-2.A: Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.</p>	<p>PMI-2.A.1: Tasks performed by departments, agencies, commissions, and government corporations are represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Writing and enforcing regulations ♦ Issuing fines ♦ Testifying before Congress ♦ Issue networks and “iron triangles” <p>PMI-2.A.2: Political patronage, civil service, and merit system reforms all impact the effectiveness of the bureaucracy by promoting professionalism, specialization, and neutrality.</p>
	<p>PMI-2.B: Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.</p>	<p>PMI-2.B.1: Discretionary and rule-making authority to implement policy are given to bureaucratic departments, agencies, and commissions, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Department of Homeland Security ♦ Department of Transportation ♦ Department of Veterans Affairs ♦ Department of Education ♦ Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ♦ Federal Elections Commission (FEC) ♦ Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)
	<p>PMI-2.C: Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.</p>	<p>PMI-2.C.1: Oversight and methods used by Congress to ensure that legislation is implemented as intended are represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Committee hearings ♦ Power of the purse <p>PMI-2.C.2: As a means to curtail the use of presidential power, congressional oversight serves as a check of executive authorization and appropriation.</p>
	<p>PMI-2.D: Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration.</p>	<p>PMI-2.D.1: Presidential ideology, authority, and influence affect how executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration.</p> <p>PMI-2.D.2: Compliance monitoring can pose a challenge to policy implementation.</p>
	<p>PMI-2.E: Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.</p>	<p>PMI-2.E.1: Formal and informal powers of Congress, the president, and the courts over the bureaucracy are used to maintain its accountability.</p>

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Through the U.S. Constitution, but primarily through the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment, citizens and groups have attempted to restrict national and state governments from unduly infringing upon individual rights essential to ordered liberty and from denying equal protection under the law. Likewise, it has sometimes been argued that these legal protections have been used to block reforms and restrict freedoms of others in the name of social order.

The Constitution, but especially the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment, are used to assert the rights of citizens and protect groups from discrimination. As such, the government must respect the dignity of the person and assure equal treatment, with its power constrained in the process of protecting individual freedoms. The Fourteenth Amendment includes two clauses that affirm and protect civil rights and liberties—the due process clause and the equal protection clause. The courts must balance the desire for social order with the protection of individual rights and freedoms when considering due process and equal protection challenges.

In a process known as selective incorporation, the Supreme Court has used the power of judicial review to interpret the due process clause in such a way as to prevent states from unduly restricting fundamental freedoms. The Court has been called upon to interpret protections for freedom of political expression and religious exercise, the right to bear arms, the right of privacy, and the rights necessary to ensure that those accused of crimes receive a fair trial.

The equal protection clause provides that states may not deprive persons of equal protection under the law. African Americans, Hispanics, women, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) people, and other groups have used the clause to lead social movements on behalf of their concerns. The Supreme Court has rendered several landmark decisions that expand civil rights, and Congress has passed legislation that expands equality. At times Congress and the courts are asked to determine the legitimacy of equal protection claims by various groups, as well as weigh the majority's concerns that they will be harmed by the changes sought.

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 U.S. Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>LOR-2: Provisions of the U.S. Constitution’s Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Liberty and Order</p>	<p>LOR-2.A: Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.</p> <hr/> <p>LOR-2.B: Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.</p> <hr/> <p>LOR-2.C: Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court’s interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.</p>	<p>LOR-2.A.1: The U.S. Constitution includes a Bill of Rights specifically designed to protect individual liberties and rights.</p> <p>LOR-2.A.2: Civil liberties are constitutionally established guarantees and freedoms that protect citizens, opinions, and property against arbitrary government interference.</p> <p>LOR-2.A.3: The application of the Bill of Rights is continuously interpreted by the courts.</p> <hr/> <p>LOR-2.B.1: The Bill of Rights consists of the first ten Amendments to the Constitution, which enumerate the liberties and rights of individuals.</p> <hr/> <p>LOR-2.C.1: The interpretation and application of the First Amendment’s establishment and free exercise clauses reflect an ongoing debate over balancing majoritarian religions practice and free exercise, as represented by such cases as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Engel v. Vitale</i> (1962), which declared school sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause ♦ <i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i> (1972), which held that compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause <p>LOR-2.C.2: The Supreme Court has held that symbolic speech is protected by the First Amendment, demonstrated by <i>Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District</i> (1969), in which the court ruled that public school students could wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War.</p> <p>LOR-2.C.3: Efforts to balance social order and individual freedom are reflected in interpretations of the First Amendment that limit speech, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Time, place, and manner regulations ♦ Defamatory, offensive, and obscene statements and gestures ♦ That which creates a “clear and present danger” based on the ruling in <i>Schenck v. United States</i> (1919) <p>LOR-2.C.4: In <i>New York Times Co. v. United States</i> (1971), the Supreme Court bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a “heavy presumption against prior restraint” even in cases involving national security.</p> <p>LOR-2.C.5: The Supreme Court’s decisions on the Second Amendment rest upon its constitutional interpretation of individual liberty.</p>

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<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>LOR-2: Provisions of the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Liberty and Order <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>LOR-2.D: Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.</p>	<p>LOR-2.D.1: Court decisions defining cruel and unusual punishment involve interpretation of the Eighth Amendment and its application to state death penalty statutes over time.</p> <p>LOR-2.D.2: The debate about the Second and Fourth Amendments involves concerns about public safety and whether or not the government regulation of firearms or collection of digital metadata promotes or interferes with public safety and individual rights.</p>
<p>LOR-3: Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Liberty and Order</p>	<p>LOR-3.A: Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation.</p> <p>LOR-3.B: Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.</p>	<p>LOR-3.A.1: The doctrine of selective incorporation has imposed on state regulation of civil rights and liberties as represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>McDonald v. Chicago</i> (2010), which ruled the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms for self-defense in one's home is applicable to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment <p>LOR-3.B.1: The Supreme Court has on occasion ruled in favor of states' power to restrict individual liberty; for example, when speech can be shown to increase the danger to public safety.</p> <p>LOR-3.B.2: The Miranda rule involves the interpretation and application of accused persons' due process rights as protected by the Fifth and Sixth Amendments, yet the Supreme Court has sanctioned a public safety exception that allows unwarned interrogation to stand as direct evidence in court.</p> <p>LOR-3.B.3: Pretrial rights of the accused and the prohibition of unreasonable searches and seizures are intended to ensure that citizen liberties are not eclipsed by the need for social order and security, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The right to legal counsel, a speedy and public trial, and an impartial jury ♦ Protection against warrantless searches of cell phone data under the Fourth Amendment ♦ Limitations placed on bulk collection of telecommunication metadata (Patriot and USA Freedom Acts) <p>LOR-3.B.4: The due process clause has been applied to guarantee the right to an attorney and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures, as represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> (1963), which guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent in a state felony case ♦ The exclusionary rule, which stipulates that evidence illegally seized by law enforcement officers in violation of the suspect's Fourth Amendment right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures cannot be used against that suspect in criminal prosecution

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>LOR-3: Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Liberty and Order <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>LOR-3.B: Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights. <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>LOR-3.B.5: While a right to privacy is not explicitly named in the Constitution, the Supreme Court has interpreted the due process clause to protect the right of privacy from state infringement. This interpretation of the due process clause has been the subject of controversy, such as has resulted from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Roe v. Wade (1973), which extended the right of privacy to a woman’s decision to have an abortion while recognizing compelling state interests in potential life and maternal health
<p>PRD-1: The Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy</p>	<p>PRD-1.A: Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.</p>	<p>PRD-1.A.1: Civil rights protect individuals from discrimination based on characteristics such as race, national origin, religion, and sex; these rights are guaranteed to all citizens under the due process and equal protection clauses of the U.S. Constitution, as well as acts of Congress.</p> <p>PRD-1.A.2: The leadership and events associated with civil, women’s, and LGBTQ rights are evidence of how the equal protection clause can support and motivate social movements, as represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Dr. Martin Luther King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” and the civil rights movement of the 1960s ♦ The National Organization for Women and the women’s rights movement ♦ The pro-life (anti-abortion) movement
<p>PMI-3: Public policy promoting civil rights is influenced by citizen–state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests</p>	<p>PMI-3.A: Explain how the government has responded to social movements.</p>	<p>PMI-3.A.1: The government can respond to social movements through court rulings and/or policies, as in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Brown v. Board of Education (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause ♦ The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ♦ Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 ♦ The Voting Rights Act of 1965
<p>CON-6: The Supreme Court’s interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen–state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism</p>	<p>CON-6.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.</p>	<p>CON-6.A.1: Decisions demonstrating that minority rights have been restricted at times and protected at other times include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State laws and Supreme Court holdings restricting African American access to the same restaurants, hotels, schools, etc., as the majority white population based on the “separate but equal” doctrine ♦ Brown v. Board of Education (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause ♦ The Supreme Court upholding the rights of the majority in cases that limit and prohibit majority-minority districting <p>CON-6.A.2: The debate on affirmative action includes justices who insist that the Constitution is colorblind and those who maintain that it forbids only racial classifications designed to harm minorities, not help them.</p>

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

American political beliefs are shaped by founding ideals, core values, linkage institutions (e.g., elections, political parties, interest groups, and the media in all its forms), and the changing demographics of citizens. These beliefs about government, politics, and the individual's role in the political system influence the creation of public policies.

American political culture is comprised of citizens' beliefs about government, including their perceptions, relationships, and interactions relative to one another and to their government. Core beliefs about government center around different interpretations and applications of political values, such as individualism (the focus on individual rights and responsibilities), the rule of law (the notion that the law is supreme over all persons), limited government (the idea that the government's power is enumerated and constrained by constitutional rules), and equality of opportunity.

Citizens learn of and develop attitudes about government through political socialization. Several factors contribute to political socialization including family, schools, peers, and social environments. How much influence these factors have on a person's political beliefs relates in turn to lifecycle effects, dispositions that change with age or membership in a group experiencing the same events at the same time, and generational effects, which involve exposure across ages and groups to the same political information. Both lifecycle and generational effects are fueled by past and present political events.

American political culture, through expressed citizen opinions, influences governmental institutions in the formation, implementation, and evaluation of public policy. For example, how people view the principles of freedom and individualism shape opinions about domestic and economic policy, including the appropriate range and types of such policies. The tension behind citizen beliefs about the appropriate role of government is revealed through policy debates and legislation. Some argue that government should take an active role in promoting social equality and ensuring economic opportunity, while others warn that excessive regulation violates individual freedoms.

Major public policy programs are rooted in ideological trends that span decades. For example, ideology impacts the nature and extent to which the federal government shares powers with state governments and how it regulates the marketplace over time, as evidenced by debates about monetary and fiscal policies. Globalization has had an impact on U.S. political beliefs and public policy. How the government determines the nature and direction of social policy, such as that involving immigration or health-care reform, is also impacted by ideological pressure from the right and left, and foreign policy is influenced by citizens' beliefs about the U.S. government's role on the world stage.

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?

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>MPA-1: Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Methods of Political Analysis</p>	<p>MPA-1.A: Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government.</p> <p>MPA-1.B: Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.</p>	<p>MPA-1.A.1: Different interpretations of core values, including individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, and limited government, affect the relationship between citizens and the federal government and the relationships citizens have with one another.</p> <p>MPA-1.B.1: Family, schools, peers, media, and social environments (including civic and religious organizations) contribute to the development of an individual's political attitudes and values through the process of political socialization.</p> <p>MPA-1.B.2: As a result of globalization, U.S. political culture has both influenced and been influenced by the values of other countries.</p> <p>MPA-1.B.3: Generational and lifecycle effects also contribute to the political socialization that influences an individual's political attitudes.</p> <p>MPA-1.B.4: The relative importance of major political events to the development of individual political attitudes is an example of political socialization.</p>
<p>MPA-2: Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Methods of Political Analysis</p>	<p>MPA-2.A: Describe the elements of a scientific poll.</p> <p>MPA-2.B: Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.</p>	<p>MPA-2.A.1: Public opinion data that can impact elections and policy debates is affected by such scientific polling types and methods as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Type of poll (opinion polls, benchmark or tracking polls, entrance and exit polls) ♦ Sampling techniques, identification of respondents, mass survey or focus group, sampling error ♦ Type and format of questions <p>MPA-2.B.1: The relationship between scientific polling and elections and policy debates is affected by the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Importance of public opinion as a source of political influence in a given election or policy debate ♦ Reliability and veracity of public opinion data
<p>PMI-4: Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests</p>	<p>PMI-4.A: Explain how the ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.</p> <p>PMI-4.B: Explain how U.S. political culture (e.g., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.</p> <p>PMI-4.C: Describe different political ideologies regarding the role of government in regulating the marketplace.</p>	<p>PMI-4.A.1: The Democratic Party (D or DEM) platforms generally align more closely to liberal ideological positions, and the Republican Party (R or GOP) platforms generally align more closely to conservative ideological positions.</p> <p>PMI-4.B.1: Because the U.S. is a democracy with a diverse society, public policies generated at any given time reflect the attitudes and beliefs of citizens who choose to participate in politics at that time.</p> <p>PMI-4.B.2: The balancing dynamic of individual liberty and government efforts to promote stability and order has been reflected in policy debates and their outcomes over time.</p> <p>PMI-4.C.1: Liberal ideologies favor more governmental regulation of the marketplace, conservative ideologies favor fewer regulations, and libertarian ideologies favor little or no regulation of the marketplace beyond the protection of property rights and voluntary trade.</p>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>PMI-4: Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.</p>	<p>PMI-4.D: Explain how political ideologies vary on the government’s role in regulating the marketplace.</p>	<p>PMI-4.D.1: Ideological differences on marketplace regulation are based on different theoretical support, including Keynesian and supply-side positions on monetary and fiscal policies promoted by the president, Congress, and the Federal Reserve.</p>
<p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests <i>(continued)</i></p>	<p>PMI-4.E: Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of the government in addressing social issues.</p>	<p>PMI-4.E.1: Liberal ideologies tend to think that personal privacy—areas of behavior where government should not intrude—extends further than conservative ideologies do (except in arenas involving religious and educational freedom); conservative ideologies favor less government involvement to ensure social and economic equality; and libertarian ideologies disfavor any governmental intervention beyond the protection of private property and individual liberty.</p>
	<p>PMI-4.F: Explain how different ideologies impact policy on social issues.</p>	<p>PMI-4.F.1: Policy trends concerning the level of government involvement in social issues reflect the success of conservative or liberal perspectives in political parties.</p>

Unit 5: Political Participation

Governing is achieved directly through citizen participation and indirectly through institutions (e.g., political parties, interest groups, and mass media) that inform, organize, and mobilize support to influence government and politics, resulting in many venues for citizen influence on policy making.

The principle of self-government is dependent on both citizen participation and the operation of the various linkage institutions that help citizens connect with the government. These institutions help people become a part of the policy-making process.

Playing an important role in this process, the media report public opinion data and can sometimes influence the formation of that opinion as well. The accuracy of public opinion data is dependent upon the scientific polling methods that are used, and the results of these opinion polls are often used as a means of political influence. The role the media play in this process is at times criticized for the bias demonstrated in the format, context, and content of information distributed as well as the manner in which that bias impacts public understanding of political information. Social media poses both opportunities and challenges for democratic participation.

Social movements, political parties, and interest groups also serve to connect the electorate with the government by influencing the manner in which people relate to and participate in its composition, functions, and policy-making agenda. Various social movements develop in response to conditions perceived as negatively impacting specific groups of people; their political strategies are aimed at changing public policy in a way that benefits the adversely impacted group. Political parties run campaigns in an attempt to win office and make policy consistent with their platform and goals. Over time political parties respond to election results, campaign laws, and changes in the way information is disseminated to the public. Even though political parties are designed to connect the people with government, there are various barriers that interfere with this connection, even to the extent of preventing candidates who represent interests outside the two major parties from being elected. Finally, interest groups exist as a form of political participation for people with particular policy concerns. While these groups exist for different causes, they are sometimes criticized for wielding a disproportionate impact on the policy-making process based on their organized pressure tactics and allocation of money for campaigns and lobbying.

Like political parties and interest groups, elections connect citizens with government. The number of eligible voters has expanded over time based on various constitutional provisions, court rulings on voter access and campaign finance, and legislation. The Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments, each a response to a specific social/political concern, serve to eliminate political discrimination against people due to a citizen's race, sex, age, and ability to pay a poll tax. Voter turnout is impacted by the various provisions that states implement regarding voter requirements and qualifications that involve issues not addressed in those amendments. Voter turnout varies widely from election to election, and political candidates have taken advantage of technology and campaign finance laws to communicate their platforms more effectively to the voting public. The data regarding voter turnout in the United States provides a foundation for interesting analysis when compared to voter turnout in other democracies, and political scientists periodically study why voter turnout in the U.S. falls below that in other similar republics.

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?

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>MPA-3: Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Methods of Political Analysis</p>	<p>MPA-3.A: Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation.</p> <p>MPA-3.B: Describe different models of voting behavior.</p> <p>MPA-3.C: Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.</p>	<p>MPA-3.A.1: Legal protections found in federal legislation and the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments relate to the expansion of opportunities for political participation.</p> <p>MPA-3.B.1: Examples of political models explaining voting behavior include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Rational-choice voting—Voting based on what is perceived to be in the citizen’s individual interest ♦ Retrospective voting—Voting to decide whether the party or candidate in power should be re-elected based on the recent past ♦ Prospective voting—Voting based on predictions of how a party or candidate will perform in the future ♦ Party-line voting—Supporting a party by voting for candidates from one political party for all public offices across the ballot <p>MPA-3.C.1: In addition to the impact that demographics and political efficacy can have on voter choice and turnout, structural barriers and type of election also affect voter turnout in the U.S., as represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ State voter registration laws ♦ Procedures on how, when, and where to vote ♦ Mid-term (congressional) or general presidential elections <p>MPA-3.C.2: Demographic characteristics and political efficacy or engagement are used to predict the likelihood of whether an individual will vote.</p> <p>MPA-3.C.3: Factors influencing voter choice include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Party identification and ideological orientation ♦ Candidate characteristics ♦ Contemporary political issues ♦ Religious beliefs or affiliation, gender, race and ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics
<p>PMI-5: Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests</p>	<p>PMI-5.A: Describe linkage institutions.</p> <p>PMI-5.B: Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.</p>	<p>PMI-5.A.1: Linkage institutions are channels, such as the following, that allow individuals to communicate their preferences to policy-makers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Parties ♦ Interest Groups ♦ Elections ♦ Media <p>PMI-5.B.1: The functions and impact of political parties on the electorate and government are represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Mobilization and education of voters ♦ Party platforms ♦ Candidate recruitment ♦ Campaign management, including fundraising and media strategy ♦ The committee and party leadership systems in legislatures

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>PMI-5: Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Competing Policy-Making Interests (continued)</p>	<p>PMI-5.C: Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.</p>	<p>PMI-5.C.1: Parties have adapted to candidate-centered campaigns, and their role in nominating candidates has been weakened.</p> <p>PMI-5.C.2: Parties modify their policies and messaging to appeal to various demographic coalitions.</p> <p>PMI-5.C.3: The structure of parties has been influenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Critical elections and regional realignments ♦ Campaign finance law ♦ Changes in communication and data-management technology <p>PMI-5.C.4: Parties use communication technology and voter-data management to disseminate, control, and clarify political messages and enhance outreach and mobilization efforts.</p>
	<p>PMI-5.D: Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent-candidate success.</p>	<p>PMI-5.D.1: In comparison to proportional systems, winner-take-all voting districts serve as a structural barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.</p> <p>PMI-5.D.2: The incorporation of third-party agendas into platforms of major political parties serves as a barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.</p>
	<p>PMI-5.E: Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.</p>	<p>PMI-5.E.1: Interest groups may represent very specific or more general interests, and can educate voters and office holders, draft legislation, and mobilize membership to apply pressure on and work with legislators and government agencies.</p> <p>PMI-5.E.2: In addition to working within party coalitions, interest groups exert influence through long-standing relationships with bureaucratic agencies, congressional committees, and other interest groups; such relationships are described as “iron triangles” and issue networks and they help interest groups exert influence across political party coalitions.</p>
	<p>PMI-5.F: Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.</p>	<p>PMI-5.F.1: Interest group influence may be impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Inequality of political and economic resources ♦ Unequal access to decision makers ♦ “Free rider” problem
	<p>PMI-5.G: Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.</p>	<p>PMI-5.G.1: Single-issue groups, ideological/social movements, and protest movements form with the goal of impacting society and policy making.</p> <p>PMI-5.G.2: Competing actors such as interest groups, professional organizations, social movements, the military, and bureaucratic agencies influence policy making, such as the federal budget process, at key stages and to varying degrees.</p> <p>PMI-5.G.3: Elections and political parties are related to major policy shifts or initiatives, occasionally leading to political realignments of voting constituencies.</p>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>PRD-2: The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy</p>	<p>PRD-2.A: Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential election.</p>	<p>PRD-2.A.1: The process and outcomes in U.S. presidential elections are impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Incumbency advantage phenomenon ♦ Open and closed primaries ♦ Caucuses ♦ Party conventions ♦ Congressional and State elections ♦ The Electoral College
	<p>PRD-2.B: Explain how the Electoral College impacts democratic participation.</p>	<p>PRD-2.B.1: The winner-take-all allocation of votes per state (except Maine and Nebraska) under the setup of the Electoral College compared with the national popular vote for president raises questions about whether the Electoral College facilitates or impedes democracy.</p>
	<p>PRD-2.C: Explain how the different processes work in U.S. congressional elections.</p>	<p>PRD-2.C.1: The process and outcomes in U.S. Congressional elections are impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Incumbency advantage phenomenon ♦ Open and closed primaries ♦ Caucuses ♦ General (presidential and mid-term) elections
	<p>PRD-2.D: Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.</p>	<p>PRD-2.D.1: The benefits and drawbacks of modern campaigns are represented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Dependence on professional consultants ♦ Rising campaign costs and intensive fundraising efforts ♦ Duration of election cycles ♦ Impact of and reliance on social media for campaign communication and fundraising
	<p>PRD-2.E: Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.</p>	<p>PRD-2.E.1: Federal legislation and case law pertaining to campaign finance demonstrate the ongoing debate over the role of money in political and free speech, as set forth in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, which was an effort to ban soft money and reduce attack ads with “Stand by Your Ad” provision: “I’m [candidate’s name] and I approve this message” ♦ <i>Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission</i> (2010), which ruled that political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment <p>PRD-2.E.2: Debates have increased over free speech and competitive and fair elections related to money and campaign funding (including contributions from individuals, political action committees, and political parties).</p> <p>PRD-2.E.3: Different types of political action committees (PACs) influence elections and policy making through fundraising and spending.</p>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
<p>Students will understand that ...</p>	<p>Students will be able to ...</p>	<p>Students will know that ...</p>
<p>PRD-3: The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy</p>	<p>PRD-3.A: Explain the media’s role as a linkage institution.</p> <p>PRD-3.B: Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.</p>	<p>PRD-3.A.1: Traditional news media, new communication technologies, and advances in social media have profoundly influenced how citizens routinely acquire political information, including new events, investigative journalism, election coverage, and political commentary.</p> <p>PRD-3.A.2: The media’s use of polling results to convey popular levels of trust and confidence in government can impact elections by turning such events into “horse races” based more on popularity and factors other than qualifications and platforms of candidates.</p> <p>PRD-3.B.1: Political participation is influenced by a variety of media coverage, analysis, and commentary on political events.</p> <p>PRD-3.B.2: The rapidly increasing demand for media and political communications outlets from an ideologically diverse audience have led to debates over media bias and the impact of media ownership and partisan news sites.</p> <p>PRD-3.B.3: The nature of democratic debate and the level of political knowledge among citizens is impacted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Increased media choices ♦ Ideologically oriented programming ♦ Consumer-driven media outlets and emerging technologies that reinforce existing beliefs ♦ Uncertainty over the credibility of news sources and information

Appendix A: Required Foundational Documents

The following listing represents the required readings for the course as they relate to the enduring understandings. Teachers are encouraged to also use both classic and contemporary scholarly writings in political science to promote the comparison of political ideas and their application to recent events. Information about many constitutional issues can also be found on the National Constitution Center's website: <http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>. This same information is also available for download for e-readers, tablets, and other mobile devices through the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution App available at <http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/about#download-app>.

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

Federalist No. 10

The Same Subject Continued – The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-10/>

Brutus No. 1

To the Citizens of the State of New-York

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/brutus-i/>

The Declaration of Independence

http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html

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

The Articles of Confederation

<http://www.ushistory.org/documents/confederation.htm>

The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and subsequent Amendments)

<http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>

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

The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and subsequent Amendments)

<http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>

Federalist No. 51

The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-51/>

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

The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and subsequent Amendments)

<http://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>

PRD-1: The Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.

Letter from a Birmingham Jail (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

http://web.cn.edu/kwheeler/documents/Letter_Birmingham_Jail.pdf

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

Federalist No. 70

The Executive Department Further Considered

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-70/>

CON-5: The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court's independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.

Federalist No. 78

The Judiciary Department

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/federalist-no-78/>

Appendix B: Required Supreme Court Cases

The following listing represents required Supreme Court cases and their holdings as related to the enduring understandings in the content outline.

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

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

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

Established supremacy of the U.S. Constitution and federal laws over state laws

United States v. Lopez (1995)

Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime

LOR-2: Provisions of the U.S. Constitution’s Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals.

Engel v. Vitale (1962)

School sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause

Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)

Compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)

Public school students have the right to wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War

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

Bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a “heavy presumption against prior restraint” even in cases involving national security

Schenck v. United States (1919)

Speech creating a “clear and present danger” is not protected by the First Amendment

LOR-3: Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties.

Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

Guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent in a state felony case

Roe v. Wade (1973)

Extended the right of privacy to a woman’s decision to have an abortion

McDonald v. Chicago (2010)

The Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms for self-defense is applicable to the states

PRD-1: The 14th Amendment’s equal protection clause as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Race-based school segregation violates the equal protection clause

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

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010)

Political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment

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

Baker v. Carr (1961)

Opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and the development of the “one person, one vote” doctrine by ruling that challenges to redistricting did not raise “political questions” that would keep federal courts from reviewing such challenges

Shaw v. Reno (1993)

Majority minority districts, created under the Voting Rights Act of 1965, may be constitutionally challenged by voters if race is the only factor used in creating the district

CON-5: The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court’s independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

Established the principle of judicial review empowering the Supreme Court to nullify an act of the legislative or executive branch that violates the Constitution

AP U.S. Government and Politics Instructional Approaches

This section provides recommendations and examples of how to integrate, in practical ways, political science disciplinary practices with conceptual understandings when implementing the AP U.S. Government and Politics course framework.

This section provides guidance on:

- Organizing the course
- Selecting and using course materials
- Developing the disciplinary practices and reasoning skills
- Developing strategies for instruction

Organizing the Course

The U.S. Government and Politics course framework presents content in five units and organizes the content in a logical sequence. You have the flexibility to organize the course in the way best suited to meet the instructional needs of your students and state and local requirements. Below are two models to consider as you develop this course.

Unit based model: Following the unit-based model established in the course framework allows students to develop enduring understandings by spiraling the big ideas and scaffolding the disciplinary practices over the course.

Project-based learning (PBL) model: Making projects the central element, or spine, of the course, provides a meaningful context for learning and applying critical course content. Using learning cycles (dubbed *looping* by teachers that implement this model), students revisit key concepts and questions in each successive project, applying their knowledge again and again—cyclically—in new circumstances, so that they can achieve greater depth of understanding and be able to transfer that understanding to novel scenarios.

Alternative Sequencing

This course has been designed with an intentional sequence. Some of the units could be presented in an alternative order, but it is important that unit 4 be taught prior to unit 5, as learning about American political ideologies and beliefs (unit 4) leads to a better understanding of political participation, covered in unit 5. For example, in an election year, you might want to move units 4 and 5 to the beginning of the course.

Selecting and Using Course Materials

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

Textbooks

The textbook is an important tool that you can use to help students understand the complexity of the United States government and the politics that surrounds it. Most importantly, the textbook should be written at a college level. Additionally, since the disciplinary practices are now fundamental to the course, a textbook that focuses on skill instruction is useful.

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

On the AP Central course audit page for this course you'll find an [example textbook list](#) of college-level textbooks that meet the resource requirements.

Supreme Court Cases

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

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

The course framework requires the analysis of 15 cases, which are listed in Appendix B, starting on page 41.

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

Text-Based Qualitative Sources (Primary and Secondary Sources)

Political science writing differs from writing in other fields. It focuses on what influences political behavior and attitudes (e.g., voting, party identification, candidate support) and how political ideas and policies are developed and implemented. Political scientists apply scientific methodology to an investigation by collecting survey data or conducting an experiment.

A typical argument in political science would include an introduction, a statement of the problem or issue being researched, a discussion of the research methods used, a review of the literature, a discussion of research findings, and a summary of research findings.

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

Foundational Documents

The AP U.S. Government and Politics course features nine required foundational documents to help students understand the philosophies of the founders and their critics.

These documents are:

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

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

Secondary Sources

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

Quantitative Sources

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

Visual Sources

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

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

Additional resources include:

- The [Political Maps](#) website
- [The Week](#) news magazine (U.S. edition) website
- The cartoons section of the [U.S. News & World Report](#) magazine website

Developing the Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

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

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

Instructional Strategies

Classroom discussion and collaborative learning activities will help students develop the reasoning processes and disciplinary practices and their ability to apply content knowledge. The following table describes various strategies you can employ:

Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Critique Reasoning	Through collaborative discussion, students critique the arguments of others, questioning the author's perspective, evidence presented, and reasoning behind the argument.	Helps students learn from others as they make connections between concepts and learn to support their arguments with evidence and reasoning that make sense to peers.	Using Federalist No. 70, have students critique Hamilton's argument for a strong executive. Have students examine Hamilton's perspective and the evidence and reasoning he uses to support his position.
Socratic Seminar	A focused discussion tied to a topic, essential question, or selected text in which students ask questions of one another. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.	Helps students arrive at a new understanding by asking questions that clarify; challenging assumptions; probing perspective and point of view; questioning facts, reasons, and evidence; or examining implications and outcomes.	Use the essential questions, such as <i>How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?</i> , to initiate discussion where students can illustrate their understanding of the learning objectives and essential knowledge statements.

Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Debate	The presentation of an informal or formal argumentation that defends a claim with reasons, while others defend different claims about the same topic or issue. The goal is to debate ideas without attacking the people who defend those ideas.	Gives students an opportunity to collect and orally present evidence supporting the affirmative and negative arguments of a proposition or issue.	Have students debate which branch of government is the most powerful, using evidence and reasoning to support their claims.
Look for a Pattern	Students evaluate data or create visual representations to find a trend.	Helps to identify patterns that may be used to draw conclusions.	Using a complex graph (with at least two data sets), have students compare the data to find a trend and draw a conclusion.
Discussion Group	Students engage in an interactive, small group discussion.	Helps students gain information and understanding about a concept, idea or problem.	Use the learning objectives, such as <i>Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization</i> , to help students gain information and show their understanding.
Debriefing	A facilitated discussion that leads to consensus understanding.	Helps students solidify and deepen understanding of content.	For complex issues such as the bureaucracy, lead students in a debrief to ensure understanding.
Fishbowl	Discussing specific topics within groups: some students form an inner circle and model appropriate discussion techniques, while an outer circle of students listen, respond and evaluate.	Provides students with an opportunity to engage in a formal discussion and to experience roles both as participant and active listener; students also have the responsibility of supporting their opinions and responses using specific textual evidence.	Use this strategy to discuss the arguments presented in the required documents and how they relate to our current government.
Create Representations	Students create tables, graphs, or other infographics to interpret text or data.	Helps students organize information using multiple ways to present data.	Give students a set of data, such as voting patterns by gender and ethnicity, and have them create a graph that best shows the data and the trends.

Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
Jigsaw	Each student in a group reads a different text or different passage from a single text, taking on the role of “expert” on what was read. Students share the information from that reading with students from other groups and then return to their original groups to share their new knowledge.	Helps students summarize and present information to others in a way that facilitates an understanding of a text (or multiple texts) or issue without having each student read the text in its entirety; by teaching others, they become experts.	Use this strategy to facilitate understanding of high-level readings, such as the Federalist Papers and other founding documents.
Quickwrite	Students write for a short, specific amount of time about a designated topic.	Helps generate ideas in a short time.	As preparation for the free-response question where students write an argument, have students write claims and explain evidence that supports their claims for various topics, such as the structure of the government or political participation.
Think-Pair-Share	Students think through a question or issue alone, pair with a partner to share ideas, and then share results with the class.	Enables the development of initial ideas that are then tested with a partner in preparation for revising ideas and sharing them with a larger group.	To practice comparing required Supreme Court cases to other related cases, give students a pair of cases and have them use Think-Pair-Share to come up with similarities, differences, and relevance to political institutions or processes.
Close Reading	Reading, rereading and analyzing small chunks of text word for word, sentence by sentence, and line by line.	Develops comprehensive understanding of text.	When students are reading the required founding documents, have them highlight relevant words and passages that support the author’s claim.
Self/Peer Revision	Working alone or with a partner to examine a piece of writing for accuracy and clarity.	Provides students an opportunity for editing a written text to ensure correctness of identified components.	Have students perform self and peer revisions of their practice argument essays.
Graphic Organizer	Representing ideas and information visually (e.g., Venn diagrams, flowcharts, cluster maps).	Provides students a visual system for organizing multiple ideas, details and/or textual support to be included in a piece of writing.	Graphic organizers can be helpful when comparing political beliefs, ideologies, principles, and models. Make sure students use any organizer thoughtfully and are not simply “filling in the blanks.”

Reasoning Processes

While engaging in the disciplinary practices, students will apply the reasoning processes also articulated in the course framework. The most common ways in which political scientists reason involve: explaining and analyzing data and processes, explaining and applying causes and effects, and identifying and explaining similarities and/or differences.

Political scientists employ these types of reasoning to analyze the writings of others and construct explanations about the causes and significance of political events, policies, and decisions, using evidence to support their claims. Political scientists also must take disparate and sometimes contradictory evidence into account in making their arguments, considering possible alternative explanations and the underlying complexity of the processes they examine.

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

Reasoning Processes	Key Tasks	Examples
<p>Definition/Classification Students will need to demonstrate their knowledge of course concepts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts ♦ Classify concepts ♦ Describe structures and functions ♦ Describe patterns and/or trends ♦ Describe the perspective of a source or author ♦ Describe assumptions and/or reasoning of a source or author 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Describe characteristics of federalism ♦ Classify policy positions based on ideology ♦ Describe the role of the majority leader ♦ Describe the trend from multiple sets of voting data over several years ♦ Describe Madison’s perspective in Federalist No. 51 ♦ Describe Dr. King’s reasoning in “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
<p>Process Students will need to explain political processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify steps and/or stages in a process ♦ Explain how the steps or stages in a process relate to each other ♦ Explain challenges with processes and/or interactions ♦ Explain implications of processes and/or interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify how a bill moves through the committee process ♦ Explain how political parties use primaries and caucuses to choose presidential candidates ♦ Explain challenges with our current system of elections ♦ Explain how Congress can use the budget process to control the bureaucracy

Reasoning Processes	Key Tasks	Examples
<p>Causation Students will need to explain causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify causes and/or effects ♦ Explain the reasons for causes and/or effects ♦ Explain change over time ♦ Explain the significance of causes and/or effects ♦ Explain implications of change over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify some effects of the expanded powers of the president ♦ Explain the reasons why successive presidents have expanded their powers ♦ Explain how civil rights have expanded over time ♦ Explain how the expanded power of the president has affected the concept of checks and balances ♦ Explain how the makeup of the Supreme Court and public opinion has led to the expansion and contraction of civil rights over time
<p>Comparison Students will need to explain similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify relevant categories of comparison ♦ Identify similarities and/or differences ♦ Explain the reasons for similarities and/or differences ♦ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of similarities and differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Compare two linkage institutions using the ways they can affect policy decisions ♦ Identify relevant differences between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution ♦ Explain reasons why the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution differ, using relevant categories of comparison ♦ Explain how two similar Supreme Court cases can have different outcomes, and the significance of that difference

Analyzing and Interpreting Qualitative Sources

Text-Based Sources

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

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

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

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

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

Disciplinary Practice	Key Questions	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
4.a. Describe the author’s claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Who is the author? ♦ What is the author’s perspective? ♦ What is the author’s argument? ♦ What evidence does the author use to support the argument? ♦ What reasoning does the author use to justify the argument? 	Lead students on a guided reading of Federalist No. 10. Ask them to identify the author, his perspective, and his argument. Then ask students to identify what evidence and reasoning Madison provides in support of his argument.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Critique Reasoning ♦ Jigsaw
4.b. Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Connect the source to a political principle, institution, process, or behavior. How are they related? 	Have students connect Madison’s historical argument to the way our government is run today.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Socratic Seminar ♦ Discussion Groups ♦ Self/Peer Revision
4.c. Explain how the implications of the author’s argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ How does the author’s position affect an American political principle, process, institution, or behavior? 	Challenge students to determine how Madison’s argument in Federalist No. 10 affected our political processes and institutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Discussion Group ♦ Socratic Seminar

Visual Sources

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

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

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

Disciplinary Practice	Type of Visual	Key Questions	Instructional Strategies
4.a. Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning	Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is being shown in the map? What perspective is being shown in the map? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern Create Representations
	Infographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is being presented through this infographic? Who created the infographic? What perspective can you identify? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern
	Political Cartoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the characters, objects, and actions in the cartoon. How does the text help convey the message? What is the cartoon about? What perspective is the cartoonist trying to convey? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jigsaw Think-Pair-Share
4.c. Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors	Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the implications of the author's perspective? Relate that to a political principle, institution, process, or behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critique Reasoning Debate Quickwrite
	Infographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the implications of the details from the infographic? What argument is the creator making? How does the visual representation affect that argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debate Discussion Group Quickwrite
	Political Cartoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which perspective is the cartoonist supporting? What alternative perspectives exist? What is the implication of the cartoonist's argument? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critique Reasoning Debate Quickwrite

Disciplinary Practice	Type of Visual	Key Questions	Instructional Strategies
4.d. Explain how the visual elements of a cartoon, map, or infographic illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors	Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does what you see relate to a political principle, institution, process, or behavior? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think-Pair-Share Graphic Organizer
	Infographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the elements in the infographic saying about a political principle, institution, process, or behavior? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critique Reasoning Think-Pair-Share
	Political Cartoon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relate the cartoonist's message to a political principle, institution, process, or behavior. What is the cartoonist saying about this issue? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critique Reasoning Think-Pair-Share

Analyzing and Interpreting Quantitative Data

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

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

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

Disciplinary Practice	Key Questions	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
3.a. Describe the data presented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does the data show? 	Have students analyze a bar graph showing the percentage of voters in presidential elections by age range, and have them determine what the data shows.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern
3.b. Describe patterns and trends in data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What trends and patterns can you identify from the data? 	Ask students to describe the patterns and trends, such as the voting percentage increases as people age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debriefing
3.c. Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What conclusions can you draw by comparing the trends you found in the data? What is the reasoning behind your conclusion? 	Challenge students to compare the trends and draw a conclusion about the data. They should also explain their reasoning. For example, a graph may show that less than 40% of people under the age of 24 vote, but over 70% of people aged 65–74 vote. Students could conclude that candidates are unlikely to champion issues favored mostly by the young because young people are not as likely to vote as older people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debriefing
3.d. Explain what the data imply or illustrate about political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does this data relate to a political process? What could political parties learn from this data that would affect how they operate? 	Have students apply this information to a political principle, institution, process, or behavior. Students could use this data to explain how political parties choose candidates and party platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think-Pair-Share

Disciplinary Practice	Key Questions	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
3.e. Explain possible limitations of the data provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does this data not tell you? 	Lead students to analyze possible limitations of what data is represented, such as, it shows only age and no other demographics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern Create Representations
3.f. Explain possible limitations of the visual representation of the data provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the way the data is presented limit its value? 	Lead students to analyze possible limitations in how the data is represented visually. One limitation could be that a bar graph shows voting percentage by age range as one data point but does not represent the fluctuation within those age ranges that a line graph would show.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern Create Representations

Develop an Argument Essay

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

A strong argument also accounts for how some evidence might seem to refute or rebut the claim, addressing alternate perspectives. You should help students learn how to create persuasive and meaningful arguments by improving their proficiency with each of these practices in turn.

Applying Reasoning

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

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

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

Disciplinary Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Disciplinary Practice	Key Questions	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
5.a. Articulate a defensible claim/thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ What possible positions could you take based on the question and the evidence? ♦ What position do you want to take? What claim will you make? ♦ What is your purpose (to define, show causality, compare, or explain a process)? ♦ What reasons justify your claim and achieve your purpose? ♦ What evidence supports your claim and reasoning? ♦ What evidence runs counter to your claim and reasoning? ♦ Write a defensible claim or thesis statement that reflects your reasoning and evidence. 	<p>Give students a question, such as “Which of the following is most responsible for the expansion of civil rights and liberties: social movements, an activist Supreme Court, or a motivated legislative branch? Use either “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” or one of the required Supreme Court cases in addition to your knowledge of the U.S. government as evidence to support your position.”</p> <p>Students should analyze all possibilities and the evidence for and against each position. Have students choose a position and write a defensible claim or thesis that reflects their reasoning and evidence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Debate ♦ Quickwrite
5.b. Support the argument using relevant evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ What evidence supports your claim? ♦ How does the evidence support your claim? 	<p>Have students identify and explain the evidence that supports their position, with an emphasis on <i>how</i> the evidence supports the claim.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Critique Reasoning
5.c. Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim or thesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Explain why your evidence supports your claim, using a transition such as <i>because</i> or <i>therefore</i>. ♦ Question your reasoning. Does it make sense? Have you provided a solid explanation of your reasoning? 	<p>Ask students to “close the loop” and explain <i>why</i> the evidence supports their claim by using reasoning processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Critique Reasoning
5.d. Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ What evidence goes against your claim? ♦ What could someone with an opposing view say about your claim, based on the evidence? ♦ Taking the rebuttal evidence into account, why is your claim still the best? 	<p>Challenge students to identify and explain evidence that refutes or rebuts their claim. A strong essay acknowledges contrary positions and uses other evidence to show why the author’s position is the best choice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Critique Reasoning ♦ Debate ♦ Self/Peer Revision

Applying Political Concepts, Documents, and Supreme Court Decisions

Apply Political Concepts

Students should be given ample practice to apply their content knowledge. One way is to describe, explain, and compare this information, including the required Supreme Court cases to other, related decisions.

The following tables provide examples of questions and instructional strategies for teaching students to successfully apply political concepts in the course:

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

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>1.a. Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe characteristics and traits of the House of Representatives, including how members are elected and the length of their terms. 	<p>Before students can apply their knowledge, they need to demonstrate understanding by describing and explaining. Before beginning a deeper discussion on gerrymandering and congressional elections, have students describe how members of the House of Representative are elected and the length of their terms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern
<p>1.b. Explain political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and explain the process for how the government determines how many representatives each state has? Explain how and why that process changes. Explain who draws the congressional districts for the states. Explain the significance of this process. 	<p>Ask students to explain the process of congressional apportionment and the principles and processes involved in drawing congressional districts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion Group Graphic Organizer

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>1.c. Compare political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Identify the relevant, specific categories for comparing similarities and differences. ♦ Explain the reasons for the relevant similarities and differences. ♦ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of the similarities and differences. 	<p>Make sure students understand that they need to identify relevant and specific similarities and differences. They should compare like factors. Ask students to identify and then explain relevant, specific similarities and differences among liberal, conservative, and libertarian ideologies. Have them compare like categories, such as fiscal policy or social policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Look for a Pattern ♦ Graphic Organizer ♦ Think-Pair-Share

Apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in different scenarios in context

Political scientists practice their discipline through the application of knowledge to different contexts and scenarios and the current political environment. Student in the AP U.S. Government and Politics course have this same opportunity through this disciplinary practice. This practical application helps students understand the implications of the required Supreme Court decisions, making the concepts relevant to their lives today.

The tables that follow provide examples of questions and instructional strategies for teaching students to successfully apply course concepts and Supreme Court cases in the course.

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>1.d. Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Describe how political behaviors, policies, institutions, or constitutional interpretations have changed over time ♦ Describe the reasons for causes and effects ♦ Describe the concepts using real-world scenarios 	<p>Ask students to explain how a political process, such as a presidential election, has changed over time.</p> <p>Have students explain reasons why presidential elections have changed, such as the influence of special interest groups on campaign finance.</p> <p>Ask students to describe how presidential elections have changed based on real-world scenarios, such as the ruling in the <i>Citizens United</i> case, or in a scenario, such as if the Supreme Court were to overturn <i>Citizens United</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Think-Pair-Share ♦ Discussion Groups

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>1.e. Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how political behaviors, policies, institutions, or constitutional interpretations have changed over time. Explain the implication of this change over time. Identify and explain the reasons for causes and effects, such as how political parties have used ideology to affect the bureaucracy. 	<p>Have students examine a political institution, such as the bureaucracy, and explain how that institution has changed over time.</p> <p>Ask students to explain the implications of the growing bureaucracy.</p> <p>Students could point to expansions in the bureaucracy due to events such as 9/11 or the current administrations plans to reduce or eliminate some bureaucratic agencies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for a Pattern Think-Pair-Share Debate Discussion Groups

Disciplinary Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>2.a. Describe the facts, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe characteristics, attributes, traits, and elements in defining terms and concepts 	<p>Have students develop a case brief or a set of case notes for each required Supreme Court case.</p> <p>Each set of notes should include the basic facts of the case, the decision, and the reasoning behind the majority opinion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graphic organizer Close reading
<p>2.b. Explain how a required Supreme Court case relates to a foundational document or to other primary or secondary sources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of similarities and differences 	<p>In a pairing/comparison exercise, have students relate the reasoning, decision, and opinion in <i>Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)</i> (2010) to Madison’s argument in <i>Federalist No. 10</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think-Pair-Share Graphic organizer Fishbowl

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>2.c. Compare the reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of a required Supreme Court case to a non-required Supreme Court case</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find relevant, specific categories to compare two Supreme Court cases. • Using those categories, explain the similarities and differences between the details of the cases and the decisions of the Supreme Court. • Identify the Constitutional principle on which the decisions were based. • Identify the majority opinions in the cases. • Identify the reasoning behind the majority opinions. • Compare the reasoning behind the majority opinions of the two cases. 	<p>Ask students to compare a required Supreme Court case, such as <i>Engel v. Vitale</i>, and a non-required but similar case, such as <i>Town of Greece, NY vs. Galloway</i>. Have students identify and describe in detail the similarities and differences in these cases. Students should recognize that both cases were based on the establishment clause from the First Amendment, but that the Supreme Court's decisions were different. They should also be able to explain why the Court found differently in <i>Greece v. Galloway</i>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for a Pattern • Debate • Graphic Organizer

Disciplinary Practice	Key Reasoning Tasks	Sample Instructional Activities	Instructional Strategies
<p>2.d. Explain how Supreme Court cases apply to scenarios in context</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Describe patterns and trends. Use these to extend and apply Supreme Court cases in different contexts and scenarios. 	<p>Ask students to describe the underlying constitutional principle in <i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i>.</p> <p>Tell students that California has passed a law requiring parents to vaccinate their children. Have them explain how <i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i> may be used as precedent if this law were to come before the current Supreme Court.</p> <p>Then ask them to explore how the Court might rule on this case based on precedent and the current makeup of the Court.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Look for a Pattern ♦ Debate ♦ Discussion Groups

Evaluating Quality and Credibility of Different Sources and Perspectives

Students have unprecedented access to information, so it is more important than ever to help them determine the credibility of sources. The disciplinary practices require students to evaluate the quality and credibility of different information sources and perspectives and derive supportable conclusions. You might want to provide students with a list of news media websites with different perspectives, such as *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the Huffington Post, Politico, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Real Clear Politics also offers a wide range of articles each day from different sources and on a variety of topics.

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

The chart below explains how you might address credibility and/or reliability of various sources.

Criteria	Considerations	Examples and Illustrations
Credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Credibility requires students to obtain information from sources with knowledge and expertise in political science. Sources can be print, online, or expert interviews. ♦ Because many students are using the Internet or database sources, students should consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The domain name extensions indicate who publishes and owns the domain ♦ The author(s) of the website ♦ The credibility of sources cited in the materials as well as any websites they link to ♦ Commonly used extensions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ .edu (educational organization); ♦ .com (company); ♦ .org (any organization); ♦ .gov (government agency); ♦ .net (network) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Design a lesson to help students identify political perspective by comparing the headlines from different news sources, such as Fox News and MSNBC. ♦ Have students examine the language used in the lead stories, as well as the pictures that accompany them. ♦ Ask students to compare the focus of local news with national and international sources and discuss reasons why certain stories are not covered in the news. ♦ Have students synthesize their findings in a short paper examining the role of the media in providing citizens with political information.

Criteria	Considerations	Examples and Illustrations
Credibility <i>(continued)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Read past the first slash / in the domain name to see if the page might be someone's personal page. A personal page might be less credible or include a bias that distorts the facts. ♦ Finding out who the authors are, their credentials, and the organization they are associated with will help to determine whether they are qualified to write about the topic. ♦ An article that includes citations of resources is often more credible. 	
Reliability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Students should examine the content of a source (the evidence) to ensure it supports their claims and provides insight and knowledge that relates to the topic. This means that evidence is only relevant when it addresses both the topic in context and the student's argument. ♦ Because we are investigating political processes and institutions that are changing and evolving, it is important to consider if the information being provided is the most recent and current. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ An article about the life of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader-Ginsburg may not be relevant in supporting a claim about a particular Supreme Court decision. ♦ A public opinion poll from 2008 might not be relevant in 2018.

Encouraging a Mindset for Success

You should also consider the noncognitive dimension of teaching and learning when working with AP students. What a teacher or student believes about how success is achieved absolutely affects the learning process. Carol Dweck's research on mindsets (*Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*) lays an important foundation for teachers and students to consider as students encounter new academic challenges. A teacher or student with a growth mindset—a mindset for success—embraces challenges as new opportunities to learn, makes concerted efforts to improve, and believes that a person's ability and potential is not fixed or static but can grow over time. In a growth mindset, success is measured by improvement rather than simply by achievement, and effort is the linchpin of success. This way of thinking counters the self-defeating notions that ability is static and permanent and extra effort is useless because success is determined by innate ability or talent.

The messages that you send to students, along with all classroom practices, should encourage students to take risks, make mistakes, learn, and grow. This culture of a growth mindset is absolutely essential to success in an AP class where frustration and discouragement can short-circuit the learning process. Teachers who can coach students new to AP through such moments, and train them to see academic setbacks and “failure” as stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks, can set students up for success.

Developing Formative Assessments for the Classroom

Formative assessments are important in teaching an AP course because formative assessments provide interim feedback for students before a summative assessment. This information is vital for monitoring progress, deepening understanding, honing skills, and improving achievement. It helps you adapt and tailor pedagogy to meet the needs of each student and produce self-directed students. Formative assessment strategies help students become aware of their strengths and challenges in learning and allow students to plan and implement solutions to overcome difficulties.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Project Guide

Making the Civic Connection

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

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

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

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

Project Guidelines

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

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

The project must:

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

The project may:

- Be undertaken either by individuals or small groups of students
- Be completed before or after the AP Exam or integrated throughout or at a specific point in the course
- Be partisan based, if chosen by the student(s)

You should:

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

You should not:

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

Guiding Students in Selecting Reasonable Political Issues or Fields of Inquiry

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

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

Project Suggestions

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

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

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

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

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
<p>Mock Congress Conduct a mock congress. Student assumes the roles of members of Congress seeking to enact a legislative agenda. They research an issue, write a draft of a bill, and write a floor speech to introduce the proposed legislation. Other students assume the roles of other legislators and engage in a congressional debate.</p> <p>Note: This activity may be part of a larger state-wide or national competition or event.</p> <p>PMI-1: The Constitution created a complex and competitive policymaking process to ensure the people’s will is accurately represented and that freedom is preserved.</p>	<p>Deliver the floor speech proposing the legislation and provide evidence-based answers to questions posed about the bill.</p>	<p>“We the People” mock congress national finals on YouTube</p> <p>My E-Congress User’s Guide from the Youth Leadership Initiative website</p> <p>The YMCA Youth and Government program</p>
<p>Citizen Action Campaign Design a citizen action campaign to increase awareness about a policy issue or to increase civic participation. Investigate the issue and an advocacy group that engages with that issue or action.</p> <p>PMI-4: Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American politics.</p>	<p>Develop a policy memo detailing the issue, the position of the campaign, and strategies for enacting the policy. Include which governmental institutions or bodies would be most likely to create policy change.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Create a blog or public service announcement (e.g., Youtube video, radio commercial, video PSA) to inform or persuade others.</p>	<p>“Policy Memo Writing Tips” from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public & International Affairs</p> <p>How to design an infographic from piktochart.com</p> <p>“How to Create the Perfect Public Service Announcement” from the Center for Digital Education</p> <p>Strategies for civic engagement such as “The Future of Civic Engagement” on the National League of Cities website or from rockthevote.org</p>
<p>Service Learning Design and participate in a community service project that relates to and builds deeper understanding of a course concept.</p> <p>MPA-1: Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.</p>	<p>Write and a publish an article (e.g., newspaper, blog, magazine, school website) that describes the service project and its relevance to a course concept.</p>	<p>“Incorporating Service Learning into AP Courses” on Advances in AP</p> <p>“Introducing AP With WE Service” on we.org</p> <p>“Service-learning toolkit” from the Office of Community Engagement and Partnerships at the University of South Florida</p>

Project Description	Presentation	Resources
<p>Government in My Community Collect and annotate articles from local sources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, websites) about government actions in the community.</p> <p>PMI-1: The Constitution created a competitive policy-making process to ensure the people’s will is represented and that freedom is preserved.</p>	<p>Compile a portfolio of the articles with analyses of the implications and impact of the governmental actions and outcomes.</p>	<p>“Electronic Portfolios in the K-12 Classroom” from educationworld.com</p>

AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam

Exam Overview

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam is three hours long, divided into two sections as shown in the table below.

Section	Number of Questions	Timing	Percentage of Total Exam Score
I: Multiple Choice	55 questions	1 hour and 20 minutes	50%
II: Free Response	4 questions	1 hour and 40 minutes	50%
Concept Application		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
Quantitative Analysis		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
SCOTUS Comparison		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
Argument Essay		40 minutes (suggested)	12.5%

Time Management

Students need to budget their time wisely so that they can complete all parts of the exam. They will be able to move from Section I to Section II only after the one hour and 20 minutes time for Section I is completed and their responses to the multiple-choice questions are collected.

Time management is especially important with regard to Section II, which consists of four essay questions. It is recommended that students spend 20 minutes on each of the first three questions, for a total of one hour, and then an additional 40 minutes to develop and write the argumentative essay in response to question 4. Even though proctors will announce the time remaining in this section, students are not forced to move from one question to another.

Students often benefit from taking a practice exam under timed conditions prior to the actual administration.

How Student Learning Is Assessed on the AP Exam

Student understanding is demonstrated and assessed in multiple ways on the AP Exam. The multiple-choice section as a whole requires successful students to demonstrate understanding of course learning objectives, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes. This is accomplished through questions that:

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

In the free-response section, students must also demonstrate an understanding of course content, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes. This is accomplished through free-response questions that require students to:

- apply concepts in real-world scenarios
- analyze quantitative data
- compare the decisions and implications of different Supreme Court cases
- develop an argument using required foundational documents as evidence

The free-response questions require students to connect topics across the curriculum, and to make connections between specific knowledge and the enduring understandings. Additionally, some of the free-response questions will require students to consider alternate perspectives.

Both sections of the exam will assess student's knowledge and ability to interpret the nine required foundational documents and 15 required Supreme Court cases.

Exam Components

Multiple-Choice Questions

Section I of the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam consists of 55 multiple-choice questions, including:

- Quantitative Analysis: Analysis and application of quantitative-based source material
- Qualitative Analysis: Analysis and application of text-based (primary and secondary) sources
- Visual Analysis: Analysis and application of qualitative visual information
- Concept Application: Explanation of the application of political concepts in context
- Comparison: Explanation of the similarities and differences of political concepts
- Knowledge: Identification and definition of political principles, processes, institutions, policies, and behaviors

Multiple-choice questions will contain four answer options. A student's total score on the multiple-choice section is based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points are not deducted for incorrect answers or unanswered questions.

Free-Response Questions

Section II of the exam consists of four questions that prompt students to:

- Concept Application: Respond to a political scenario, explaining how it relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior
- Quantitative Analysis: Analyze quantitative data, identify a trend or pattern, draw a conclusion from the visual representation, and explain how the data relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior
- SCOTUS Comparison: Compare a nonrequired Supreme Court case with a required Supreme Court case, explaining how information from the required case is relevant to that in the nonrequired one
- Argument Essay: Develop an argument in the form of an essay, using evidence from one or more required foundational documents

All five big ideas as well as the required content presented in all five units of instruction are subject to being assessed in Section II as a whole. At least one free-response question will assess one or more learning objectives that pertain to public policy. All four free-response questions are weighted equally; however it is recommended that students spend 20 minutes of exam time on each of the first three questions, and 40 minutes on the argumentative essay.

In the argumentative essay question, students are given a prompt that can have more than one possible response. They will be asked to write a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question and establishes a line of reasoning (the response cannot earn a point for simply restating the prompt).

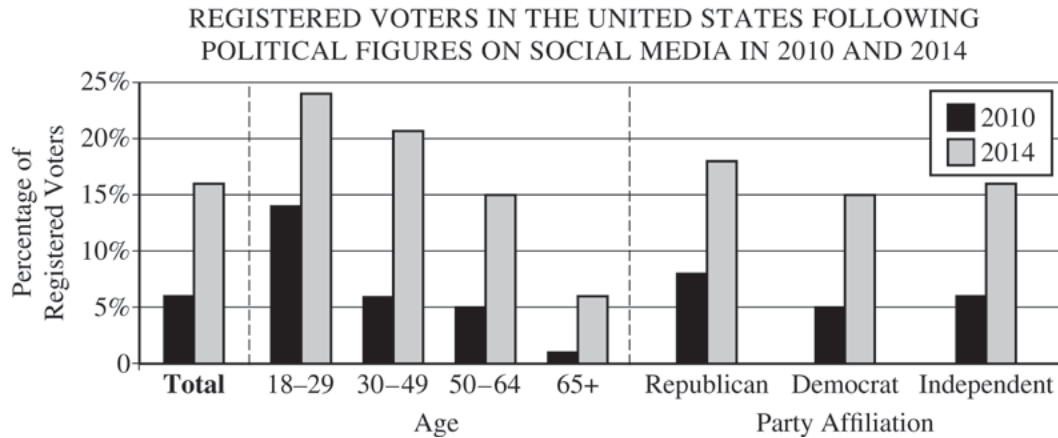
They must then cite and describe one piece of evidence from a list of foundational documents. To earn additional points students must identify a second piece of specific and relevant evidence, making sure they explain how or why both pieces support the claim or thesis. To complete their essay students must identify an opposing or alternative perspective, demonstrate a correct understanding of it, and refute, concede, or rebut that perspective.

Practice Exam

After the practice exam you will find a table that shows the learning objectives and disciplinary practice assessed in each question. The table also provides the answers to the multiple-choice questions.

Section I: Multiple-Choice Questions

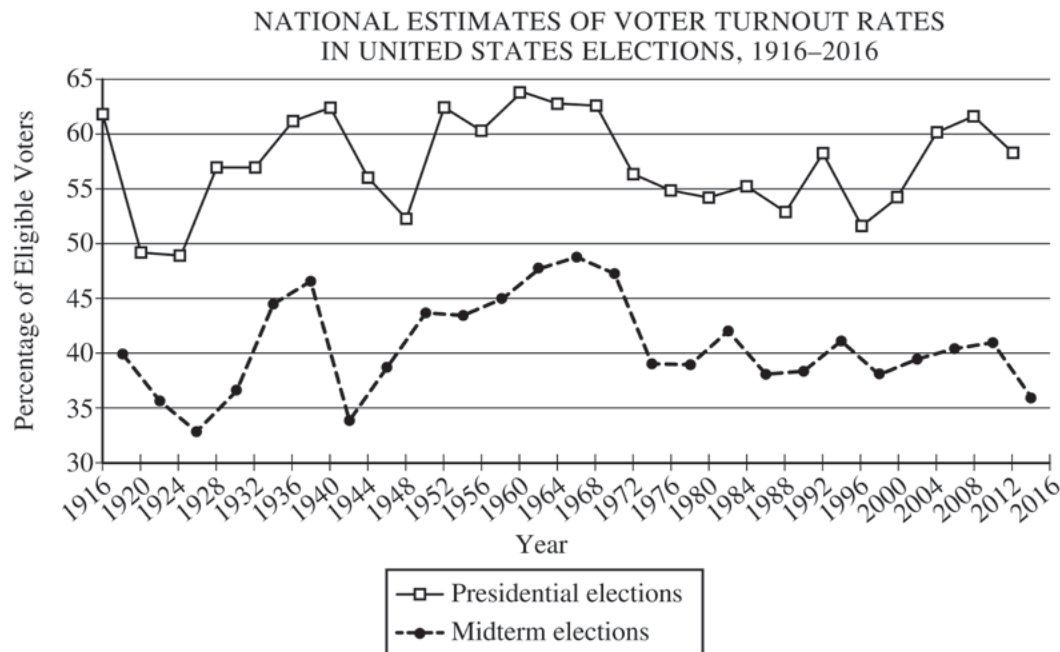
Questions 1 and 2 refer to the graph.



Source: Pew Research Center, 2014. www.pewresearch.org

- Which of the following statements is reflected in the data in the chart?
 - Those who are younger are more likely to be registered to vote than those who are older.
 - Among registered voters, there was a steep increase in social media usage to follow political figures across all age groups and party affiliations.
 - Registered voters in the 65+ age group did not increase their use of social media to follow political figures.
 - Of those using social networking sites, those registered as Republican were more likely to vote than those registered as Democrats.
- Which of the following is a potential consequence of the trend illustrated in the bar chart?
 - Social media has led to more candidates running as independents rather than as members of political parties.
 - Elected officials and candidates running for office are increasingly using social media to reach out to voters and constituents.
 - Social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter have been overrun with political content.
 - Social networking sites have led to increased political polarization in the general public.

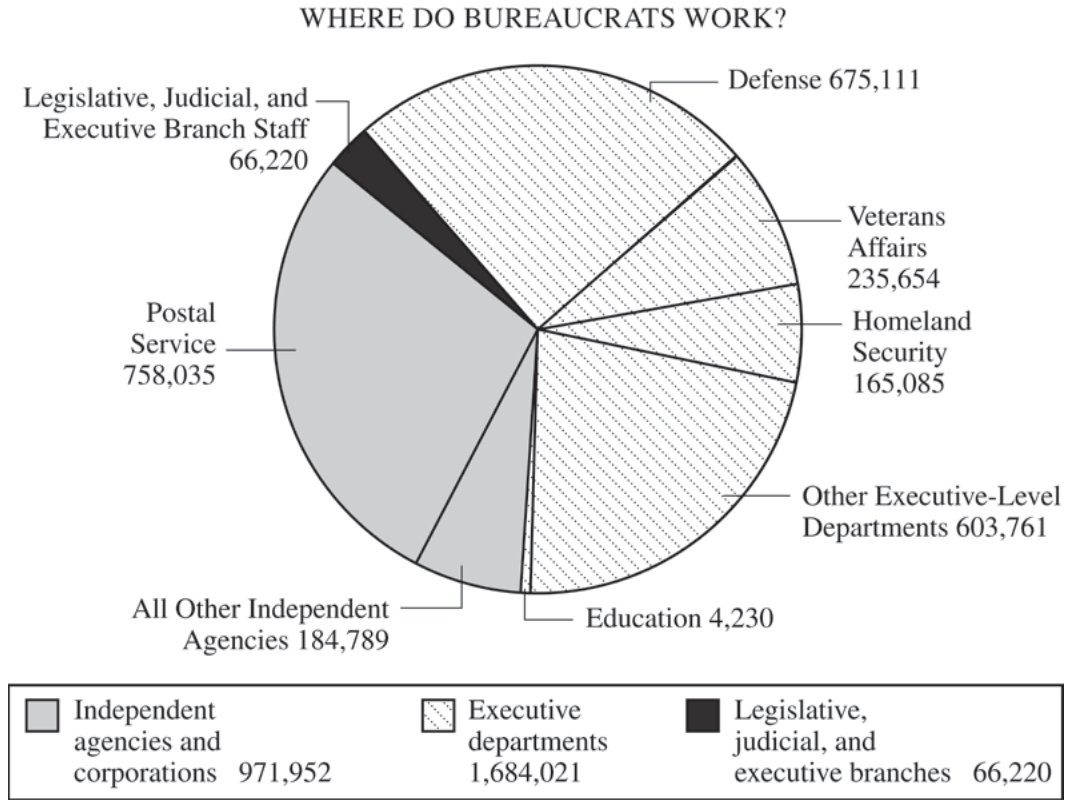
Questions 3 and 4 refer to the graph below.



Source: FairVote. www.fairvote.org

3. Which of the following best describes a trend in the line graph above?
- (A) Voter turnout in midterm elections increased substantially between 1982 and 2010.
 - (B) Voter turnout in presidential elections generally increased between 1940 and 1948.
 - (C) Voter turnout in midterm elections generally decreased between 1966 and 2014.
 - (D) Voter turnout in presidential elections consistently decreased between 1972 and 2008.
4. Which of the following is an accurate conclusion based on a comparison of the trends in the line graph above and your knowledge of voter behavior?
- (A) More citizens vote in presidential elections because more citizens are eligible to vote in presidential elections than in midterm elections.
 - (B) More citizens vote in presidential elections because there is more media coverage of presidential elections than midterm elections.
 - (C) More citizens vote in midterm elections because midterm elections are more important than presidential elections.
 - (D) More citizens vote in midterm elections because there is more money spent on campaigns in midterm elections than in presidential elections.

Questions 5 and 6 refer to the pie chart below.

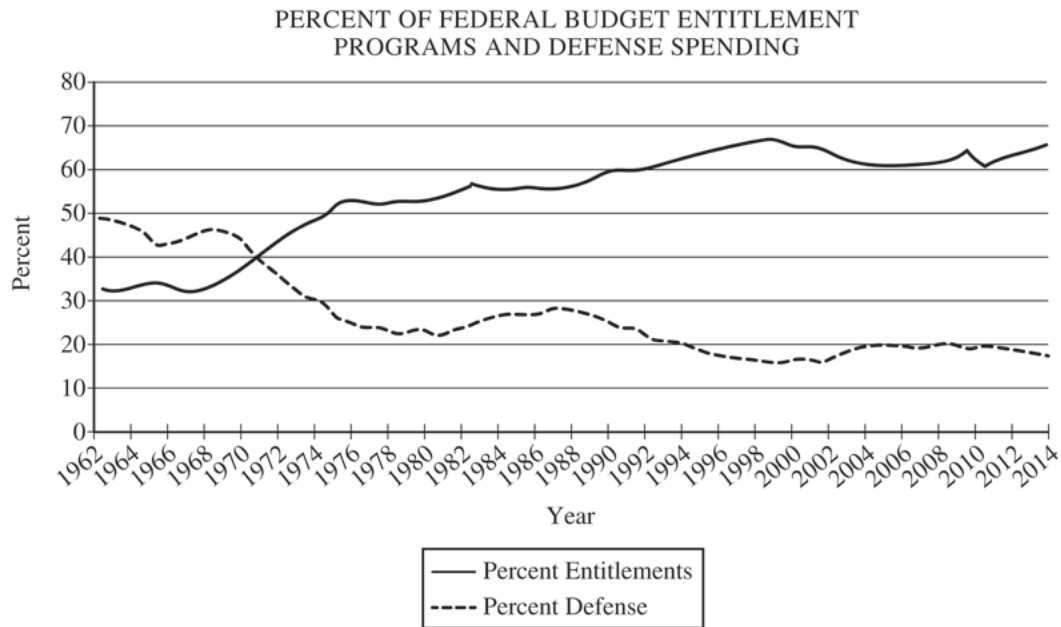


Source: The United States Office of Personnel Management, 2006

5. Which of the following accurately describes the information presented in the pie chart?
- (A) The legislative, judicial, and executive branches employ more bureaucrats than does the Department of Veterans Affairs.
 - (B) The number of federal employees working in Washington, D.C., outnumbers those working in the states.
 - (C) Congress has allocated more money to the Department of Homeland Security than to the Department of Defense.
 - (D) The United States Postal Service has the largest number of employees within the federal bureaucracy.

6. Which of the following best explains the difference in the number of bureaucrats employed by the Department of Education and the Department of Homeland Security?
- (A) The Department of Homeland Security was created before the Department of Education.
 - (B) The Department of Education receives its funding from Congress, while the Department of Homeland Security works directly for the president.
 - (C) The Department of Education primarily addresses state issues, whereas the Department of Homeland Security primarily addresses national issues.
 - (D) The Department of Homeland Security hires more employees at the state level than the Department of Education.

Questions 7 and 8 refer to the graph below.



Source: Office of Management and Budget, 2014.

7. Which of the following is an accurate statement about the information in the line graph?
- (A) Defense spending has consistently been a larger part of the federal budget than entitlement spending.
 - (B) Entitlement spending has steadily become a larger portion of the federal budget.
 - (C) Between 1980 and 2000, defense spending increased faster than entitlement spending.
 - (D) In 2000 entitlement spending passed defense spending as a share of the federal budget.
8. Based on the information in the line graph, which of the following is the most likely implication of entitlement and defense spending as a portion of the federal budget?
- (A) Changes in entitlement spending put pressure on discretionary spending.
 - (B) Discretionary spending levels are set by law and cannot be changed.
 - (C) Congressional budget committees can ignore entitlement spending.
 - (D) Democrats and Republicans generally agree on increasing entitlement spending.

Questions 9 and 10 refer to the table below.

UNITED STATES PRESIDENTIAL GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS

	Presidential Candidate	Electoral Vote		Popular Vote	
1	Republican Party	271	50.4%	50,456,002	47.9%
2	Democratic Party	266	49.4%	50,999,897	48.4%
3	Green Party	0	0	2,882,955	2.7%
4	Reform Party	0	0	448,895	0.4%

Source: uselectionatlas.org, 2017

9. Based on the results shown in table, which candidate won the election?
- (A) The Democratic Party candidate
 - (B) The Green Party candidate
 - (C) The Reform Party candidate
 - (D) The Republican Party candidate
10. Based on the data shown in the table, which of the following statements is true about the electoral college?
- (A) It can work against the principle of popular sovereignty when a candidate wins without winning the most votes nationwide.
 - (B) It creates a scenario in which electors frequently do not vote for the candidate they pledge to support.
 - (C) It undermines the rights of states to determine their own method of electing the president.
 - (D) It encourages independents and third-party candidates to run for office.

Questions 11–14 refer to the passage below.

I go further, and affirm that bills of rights, in the sense and in the extent in which they are contended for, are not only unnecessary in the proposed constitution, but would even be dangerous. They would contain various exceptions to powers which are not granted; and on this very account, would afford a colourable pretext to claim more than were granted. For why declare that things shall not be done which there is no power to do? Why for instance, should it be said, that the liberty of the press shall not be restrained, when no power is given by which restrictions may be imposed? I will not contend that such a provision would confer a regulating power; but it is evident that it would furnish, to men disposed to usurp, a plausible pretence for claiming that power.

—Alexander Hamilton, *The Federalist* paper number 84

11. Which of the following statements best summarizes Hamilton’s argument?
 - (A) Even though civil liberties are protected by a bill of rights, there are some reasonable exceptions.
 - (B) Listing rights will lead some to assume that government may regulate those rights.
 - (C) Freedom of the press is essential for a functioning democracy.
 - (D) A bill of rights is necessary to protect civil liberties such as freedom of the press.

12. Which of the following constitutional provisions limits the power of the national government in Hamilton’s argument?
 - (A) Enumerated powers in Article I
 - (B) Faithful execution of the laws in Article II
 - (C) Judicial review in Article III
 - (D) Supremacy Clause in Article VI

13. Supporters of Hamilton’s view that a bill of rights could be dangerous to liberty could point to which of the following cases?
 - (A) *Schenck v. United States* (1919)
 - (B) *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
 - (C) *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971)
 - (D) *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)

14. Based on the text, which of the following statements would the author most likely agree with?
- (A) The United States Constitution explicitly prohibits the government from restricting the press.
 - (B) The amendment process would create confusion about the meaning of the United States Constitution.
 - (C) The Bill of Rights could potentially be used to limit civil liberties.
 - (D) The media ought to be held accountable for publishing untrue information about public figures.

Questions 15–17 refer to the passage below.

A society that puts equality—in the sense of equality of outcome—ahead of freedom will end up with neither equality nor freedom. The use of force to achieve equality will destroy freedom, and the force, introduced for good purposes, will end up in the hands of people who use it to promote their own interests. On the other hand, a society that puts freedom first will, as a happy by-product, end up with both greater freedom and greater equality. . . . A free society releases the energies and abilities of people to pursue their own objectives. It prevents some people from arbitrarily suppressing others. It does not prevent people from achieving positions of privilege, but so long as freedom is maintained, it prevents those positions of privilege from becoming institutionalized.

—Milton Friedman, *Free to Choose* (1980)

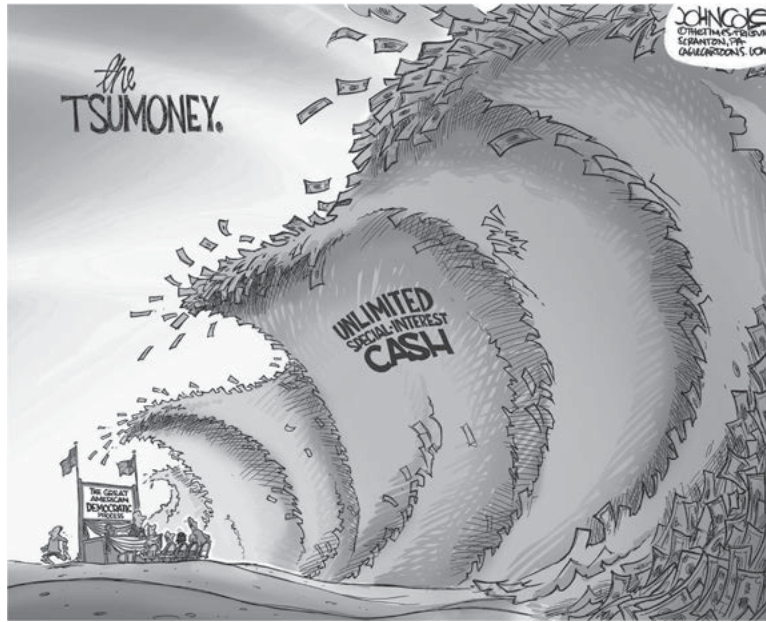
15. Which of the following statements is most consistent with the author’s argument in this passage?
- (A) Equality is not an important outcome in society.
 - (B) There should be more emphasis on governmental action to achieve equality.
 - (C) Undermining freedom will extinguish both freedom and equality.
 - (D) Individual freedom and equality are not compatible values.
16. Which of the following ideological perspectives is most consistent with the passage?
- (A) Liberal
 - (B) Progressive
 - (C) Libertarian
 - (D) Socialist
17. Which of the following governmental policies would the author most likely support?
- (A) Restricting individuals from carrying guns in public
 - (B) Requiring individuals traveling in cars to wear seat belts
 - (C) Establishing minimum age requirements to access adult social media sites
 - (D) Allowing individuals to purchase marijuana for recreational use

Questions 18 and 19 refer to the map below.



18. The map shows the outline of a congressional district. Which of the following statements best explains the motivation behind the way in which it is drawn?
- (A) It has been drawn by a political party to group together moderate voters.
 - (B) It has been drawn cooperatively by both political parties to ensure a fair election.
 - (C) It has been drawn to group together diverse voters to foster highly competitive elections.
 - (D) It has likely been drawn to pack together voters who are registered with the same party.
19. Which of the following is a consequence of the way the district is drawn on the map?
- (A) It will likely lead to a less competitive general election, which could lead to increased partisanship.
 - (B) It will likely lead to a highly contentious and competitive election.
 - (C) It will lead to a seat that will be occupied by a member of a third party.
 - (D) It will lead to very high turnout in the election.

Questions 20 and 21 refer to the cartoon below.

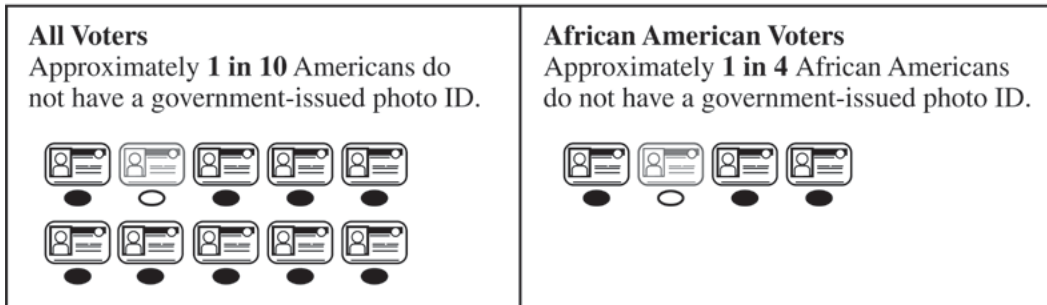


John Cole, The Scranton Times-Tribune

20. Which of the following best describes the message in the political cartoon?
- (A) Contributions from special interests have undermined fair and competitive political campaigns.
 - (B) Placing limits on special interest contributions would not diminish the role of money in elections.
 - (C) Although money garners attention from the media and voters, it does not influence how people vote.
 - (D) Special interests have a large amount of cash but a small number of votes to use to influence elections.
21. Which of the following Supreme Court cases is most relevant to the topic of the cartoon?
- (A) *Baker v. Carr* (1962)
 - (B) *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission* (2010)
 - (C) *New York times Co. v. United States* (1971)
 - (D) *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)

Questions 22 and 23 refer to the infographic below.

VOTERS WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT-ISSUED PHOTO ID



Source: Brennan Center for Justice, New York University, 2006.

22. Based on the infographic, which of the following claims would an opponent of state voter-ID laws most likely make?
- (A) Voter-ID laws are likely to decrease turnout among African American voters because they are less likely to have government-issued IDs.
 - (B) (Voter turnout will likely decrease by 10% if voters are required to present a government-issued ID to vote.
 - (C) Voter-ID laws will likely decrease election fraud, which will increase voter confidence in institutions and thereby increase turnout.
 - (D) African American voters who do not have government-issued IDs are likely to participate at the grassroots level and exert influence through channels other than turning out to vote.
23. Based on the infographic, which of the following strategies would a group seeking to increase turnout likely pursue?
- (A) Use radio ads to advocate stricter voter-ID laws
 - (B) Hold a voter registration drive in public high schools
 - (C) Lobby state legislatures to overturn voter-ID legislation
 - (D) Lobby Congress to eliminate the Voting Rights Act
24. Which of the following important functions of democracy would most likely be more difficult without political parties?
- (A) Eliminating corruption in the bureaucracy
 - (B) Educating the public about upcoming elections
 - (C) Ensuring that only eligible voters can vote
 - (D) Reducing gridlock in Congress

25. Which of the following is a consequence of candidate-centered campaigns?
- (A) The electoral success of third-party candidates sharply increases.
 - (B) Parties tighten their control over candidate fund-raising to ensure compliance with regulations.
 - (C) Candidates have less accountability for their positions because the importance of the party platform increases.
 - (D) Candidates' ability to appeal to voters can outweigh the importance of experience and policy positions.
26. Which of the following may the president do to limit the Supreme Court's power?
- (A) Fire and replace justices
 - (B) Refuse to enforce a ruling by the Court
 - (C) Adopt new constitutional amendments
 - (D) Veto parts of the Court's decisions
27. The legislative process at the national level of government reflects the intent of the framers of the Constitution to create a legislature that would be
- (A) less powerful than the executive
 - (B) slow and deliberate in the law-making process
 - (C) able to involve as many citizens as possible in the law making process
 - (D) able to ensure that all citizens are equally represented
28. Members of the United States House of Representatives Committee on Veterans Affairs are concerned about the quality of services at hospitals run by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Which of the following is an action the committee can take to address the problem?
- (A) Holding a hearing and subpoenaing high-level officials in the Department of Veterans Affairs to testify
 - (B) Impounding funding for veterans hospitals until problems are resolved
 - (C) Placing a referendum on the ballot in each state to increase health-care funding for veterans
 - (D) Appointing a new secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs

-
29. The application of the death penalty has been limited in recent decades and cannot be applied to minors and people who are found to be mentally incompetent. Which of the following is a reason for this?
- (A) The Supreme Court redefined what constitutes an unreasonable intrusion under the Fourth Amendment.
 - (B) The Supreme Court changed its interpretation of what constitutes cruel and unusual punishment under the Eighth Amendment.
 - (C) The Fifth Amendment's due process clause motivated state legislatures to limit the death penalty.
 - (D) The right to an attorney guaranteed by the Sixth Amendment led to limited application of the death penalty.
30. Which of the following best illustrates the concept of iron triangles?
- (A) The tendency of interest groups to hire former legislators, lobbyists, and judges
 - (B) The inability of third-party candidates to garner public attention through media coverage
 - (C) The long-term relationships between agencies, congressional committees, and interest groups in specific policy areas
 - (D) The practice of congressional leaders diverting PAC funds meant for certain popular candidates to those in more competitive races
31. A member of the House of Representatives has introduced a bill to raise the minimum wage, but it has been in committee for 36 days and is unlikely to make it to the floor. Which of the following is the best course of action for the representative to take to get a vote on the bill?
- (A) Presenting a cloture motion
 - (B) Placing a hold on the bill
 - (C) Introducing a concurrent resolution
 - (D) Filing for a discharge petition

32. Based on previous rulings, the Supreme Court is most likely to view a case concerning which of the following as a right-to-privacy case?
- (A) A university whose admissions standards prevent women from attending the institution
 - (B) A person who is licensed to carry a handgun and brings one to a political rally
 - (C) A high school student who leaves class at a specified time during each school day for daily prayer
 - (D) A woman who is prevented from an abortion
33. Which of the following statements describes a difficulty presidents face in the policy implementation process?
- (A) Members of the bureaucracy often lack the expertise to carry out the president's preferred policies.
 - (B) Members of the president's Cabinet can be removed at any time by Congress.
 - (C) Because of civil service laws, it is not easy for the president to remove professional bureaucrats when they disagree with the president's agenda.
 - (D) Congress generally gives specific details about how the laws they pass will be executed by members of the professional bureaucracy.
34. Based on previous court rulings, which of the following scenarios would most likely violate the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment?
- (A) A police officer inspects the contents of a computer hard drive without a warrant.
 - (B) A mayor refuses to allow an unpopular group to hold a political rally.
 - (C) A public school system uses race-based segregation.
 - (D) The federal government passes a law prohibiting assault rifles.
35. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 authorized the government to deny income tax deductions for employer health plans that did not offer employees the option of keeping their health insurance after leaving the job. Which enumerated power allowed Congress to make the law?
- (A) Regulating commerce among the states
 - (B) Declaring laws unconstitutional
 - (C) Borrowing money on the credit of the United States
 - (D) Issuing copyrights and patents

-
36. Which of the following actions by public school students would most likely be protected symbolic speech based on the precedent established by *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)?
- (A) Leading prayers over the school's public address system
 - (B) Publishing an editorial in the school newspaper
 - (C) Protesting a school board decision by disrupting a school assembly
 - (D) Wearing t-shirts objecting to a school board decision
37. Which of the following scenarios would most likely be considered a violation of the Fourth Amendment?
- (A) A suspect is interrogated without being informed of the right to an attorney.
 - (B) A person is tried twice for the same crime.
 - (C) A suspect's cell phone is analyzed by police before a warrant is issued.
 - (D) A person is prosecuted for a federal crime without a jury.
38. A new president has been elected and has a number of positions to fill within the federal bureaucracy. Which of the following is an example of filling a position based on political patronage?
- (A) Choosing a secretary of state to appease members from the opposition party
 - (B) Nominating a high-level campaign fund-raiser to serve as an ambassador to New Zealand
 - (C) Reappointing the secretary of defense even though he or she was appointed by the previous president, who is a member of the opposite party
 - (D) Asking the chair of a prestigious university's economics department to serve as chair of the Council of Economic Advisers

In a public opinion poll of a representative sample of a population, 1,200 people were asked to agree, disagree, or express neutrality toward the following statements.

Statement A: The government should spend more money on welfare.

Result: 35-percent of the respondents agreed.

Statement B: The government should spend more money on helping the poor.

Result: 60-percent of respondents agreed.

39. Which of the following most likely accounts for the different results?
- (A) The questions were not open-ended.
 - (B) There were no welfare recipients in the sample.
 - (C) The sample size was not large enough to be reliable.
 - (D) The questions contained a difference in wording.
40. A nonprofit advocacy group seeks to block an expensive subsidy to what it believes is an environmentally destructive project. Which of the following accurately depicts the free-rider problem in this scenario?
- (A) The public can expect to reap the benefits of blocking the subsidy without making any contribution to the nonprofit group.
 - (B) The public will recognize that the cost of the project greatly outweighs the benefit, so they can expect their legislators to vote against the subsidy.
 - (C) The advocacy group will be able to carry out activities at an unusually low cost because of discounts and tax breaks afforded to nonprofit organizations.
 - (D) A company can purchase support from certain members of the public who will persuade their legislators to vote in favor of the subsidy.
41. Senator Smith votes her conscience on bills that her constituents care little about, but she votes according to the wishes of the majority of her constituents on other bills. Which model of representation do her actions embody?
- (A) The politico model
 - (B) The trustee model
 - (C) The majoritarian model
 - (D) The delegate model

42. A recent poll indicates that 60 percent of all people in the United States support a flat tax system. Which of the following supports the credibility of the poll result?
- (A) The poll reported a sampling error.
- (B) The poll was conducted online and open to anyone who wished to participate.
- (C) The poll was administered to several thousand people who were stopped while shopping in malls across the country.
- (D) Before the question was asked, respondents were told that a flat tax system is fairer than a progressive tax and will lead to economic growth.
43. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on government?

	<u>Federalist</u>	<u>Anti-Federalist</u>
(A)	Favored a weak central government and strong state governments	Favored a strong central government and weak state governments
(B)	Believed the creation of a bill of rights was necessary	Believed the creation of a bill of rights was not necessary
(C)	Favored the legislative branch having more power than the executive	Favored increasing the power of the national judiciary over the states
(D)	Believed a large republic ensured the best protection of individual freedoms	Believed only a small republic could best ensure protection of individual freedoms

44. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the two court cases?

	<i>McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)</i>	<i>United States v. Lopez (1995)</i>
(A)	Declared an act of Congress unconstitutional	Recognized the importance of state sovereignty and local control
(B)	Decided that Congress had implied powers	Ruled that state laws were supreme to national laws
(C)	Led to an increase in power for the national government	Established limits to Congress' power under the commerce clause
(D)	Decided that a state had the power to tax a national bank	Declared the Gun-Free School Zones Act unconstitutional

45. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of constitutional provisions?

	<u>Enhance Federal Power</u>	<u>Enhance State Power</u>
(A)	Necessary and proper clause	Fourteenth Amendment
(B)	Commerce clause	Tenth Amendment
(C)	Supremacy clause	Seventeenth Amendment
(D)	Fifth Amendment	Article V

46. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of the House of Representatives and the Senate?

	<u>House of Representatives</u>	<u>Senate</u>
(A)	Only the Speaker of the House can initiate the legislative process by proposing bills	Only the majority leader can initiate the legislative process by proposing bills
(B)	Members can delay the policy-making process by invoking cloture	Members can delay the policy-making process through the use of a filibuster
(C)	Members are elected by constituents in a local district based on population	Members are elected by constituents of an entire state
(D)	Members serve six-year terms	Members serve two-year terms

47. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of conservative and liberal views concerning social policy?

	<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Liberal</u>
(A)	The federal government should have a stronger role in shaping education	The federal government should provide more funding for public schools
(B)	Licensed gun-owners should be permitted to openly carry firearms in public	The federal government should not conduct background checks for gun purchases
(C)	Racial and gender considerations should be taken into account to promote diversity in workplace hiring decisions	Job promotion should be based on skills and experience, not race or gender
(D)	Individuals should not rely on government aid for their economic well-being	The government should be responsible for helping to improve the economic position of low-income people

-
48. Which of the following policies is most likely to cause tension between the competing values of individualism and equality of opportunity?
- (A) Expanding the national defense system
 - (B) Reducing environmental regulations
 - (C) Decreasing funding for space exploration
 - (D) Implementing affirmative action programs
49. Which of the following is contained in the Fourteenth Amendment and was likely an inspiration for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"?
- (A) The guarantee that citizens have the right to a speedy and public trial regardless of gender, race, or age
 - (B) The principle that all people should be equal under the law, as embodied in the equal protection clause
 - (C) The guarantee that all people, regardless of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, have the right to free speech
 - (D) The due process clause, which implies the right to vote, shall not be denied on the basis of race
50. Which of the following measures would a president adhering to Keynesian economic principles most likely employ during an economic recession?
- (A) An executive order to increase the amount of money in circulation in the economy
 - (B) A budget with significant increases in spending for unemployment benefits and public works projects
 - (C) Legislation to cut individual and corporate income tax rates and decrease regulation of the economy
 - (D) A national budget with dramatic cuts in federal spending on entitlement programs like Social Security
51. Which of the following scenarios would be considered an unconstitutional use of state power?
- (A) A state passes a law that increases the pay of state legislators.
 - (B) A state enacts a law prohibiting smoking in all public places.
 - (C) A state places a tax on furniture made overseas.
 - (D) A state raises the drinking age to 25 years of age.

52. Appointments to the federal judiciary are often contentious for which of the following reasons?
- (A) The House of Representatives can undermine presidential authority by overriding judicial appointments.
 - (B) Life terms for federal judges mean that presidential appointments will continue to have influence long after the president's term is over.
 - (C) The president selects nominees based on political orientation, while the Senate focuses on the academic credentials of nominees.
 - (D) Federal judges are given a platform to legislate from the bench, and the Senate is hesitant about relinquishing power to the judiciary.
53. Bureaucratic rule-making is best defined as
- (A) legally binding decisions made by Congress to constrain regulatory agencies
 - (B) guidelines issued by government agencies, which provide specific details about how a policy will be implemented
 - (C) directions given by the president to the bureaucracy regarding how a specific policy will be applied
 - (D) review and supervision of departments and agencies conducted by congressional committees
54. During the Civil War, President Lincoln suspended the right of habeas corpus and detained thousands of citizens who protested the war. Which of the following statements best illustrates this scenario?
- (A) When the public does not support the rights of others, those rights tend to no longer be applied.
 - (B) There is nothing in the Constitution that guarantees the right to a fair trial.
 - (C) There is a tension between civil liberties and public order.
 - (D) Freedom of speech is an absolute right.
55. The president is most likely to use an executive order to make important policy when
- (A) Congress is dominated by the president's party
 - (B) a compromise cannot be reached with Congress
 - (C) the Supreme Court is divided along ideological lines
 - (D) a negotiation with foreign heads of state reaches an impasse

Section II: Free-Response Questions

Directions: It is suggested that you take a few minutes to plan and outline each answer. It is suggested that you spend approximately 20 minutes each on questions 1, 2 and 3 and 40 minutes on question 4. Unless directions indicate otherwise, respond to all parts of all four questions. In your response use substantive examples where appropriate.

1. Consumers complained after EpiPen maker Mylan “hiked the price of the emergency auto-injector by \$100 in recent months for no obvious reason. . . . The price has increased 450 percent since 2004, when a dose cost \$100 in today’s dollars, to its current price of more than \$600. . . . The medication itself isn’t expensive. Analysts calculate that the dosage contained in a single pen is worth about \$1.”

Washington Post, August 23, 2016

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

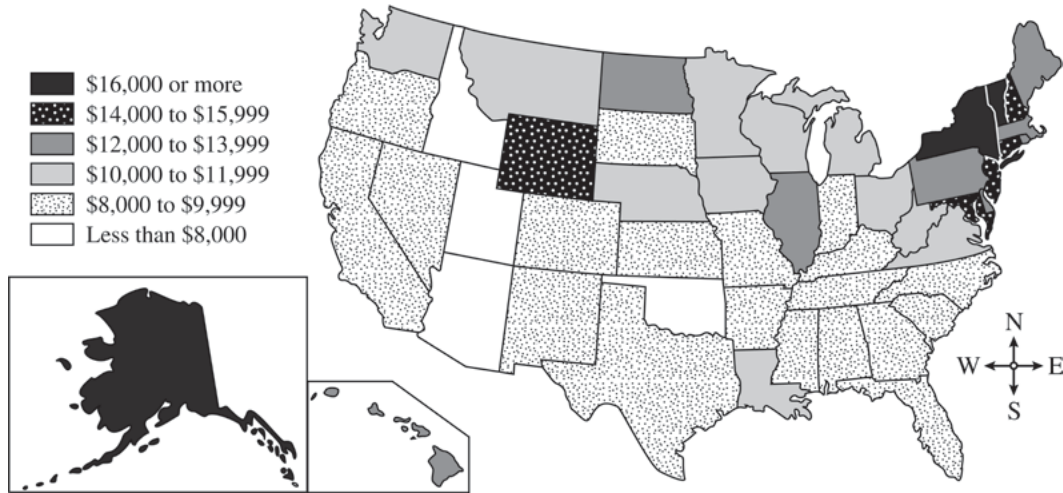
- (A) Describe a power Congress could use to address the comments outlined in the scenario.
- (B) In the context of the scenario, explain how the use of congressional power described in Part A can be affected by its interaction with the presidency.
- (C) In the context of the scenario, explain how the interaction between Congress and the presidency can be affected by linkage institutions.

Scoring the Concept Application Question

A good response should:

- Describe a political institution, behavior, or process connected with the scenario (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 1.a)
- Explain how the response in part (A) affects or is affected by a political process, government entity, or citizen behavior as related to the scenario (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 1.d)
- Explain how the scenario relates to a political institution, behavior, or process in the course (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 1.d)

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



Source: www.census.gov

2. Use the information graphic to answer the questions.
 - (A) Identify the most common level of education spending by states in the Southeast.
 - (B) Describe a similarity or difference in public education spending by state or region, as illustrated in the information graphic, and draw a conclusion about that similarity or difference.
 - (C) Explain how public education spending as shown in the information graphic demonstrates the principle of federalism.

Scoring the Quantitative Analysis Question

A good response should:

- Identify or describe the data in the quantitative visual (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 3.a)
- Describe a pattern, trend, or similarity/difference as prompted in the question (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 3.b) and draw a conclusion for that pattern, trend, or similarity/difference (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 3.c or 3.e)
- Explain how specific data in the quantitative visual demonstrates a principle in the prompt (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 3.d)

3. Monthly town board meetings in Greece, New York, opened with a prayer given by clergy selected from the congregations listed in a local directory, but nearly all the local churches were Christian, so nearly all of the participating prayer givers were, too. A lawsuit was filed alleging that the town violated the Constitution by preferring Christians over other religious groups and by sponsoring sectarian prayers. Petitioners sought to limit the town to “inclusive and ecumenical” prayers that referred only to a “generic God.”

In the ensuing case, *Town of Greece v. Galloway* (2014), the Supreme Court held in a 5–4 decision that no constitutional violation existed. The majority opinion stated that legislative prayer in this situation lent gravity to public business, reminded lawmakers to transcend petty differences to pursue a higher purpose, reflected values that were a part of the nation’s heritage, provided a spirit of cooperation, and celebrated the changing of seasons. The audience was primarily lawmakers themselves, and though many bowed their heads during the prayer, they did not solicit similar gestures by the public. It was delivered as a ceremonial portion of the town’s meeting.

- (A) Identify the constitutional clause that is common to both *Greece v. Galloway* (2014) and *Engel v. Vitale* (1962).
- (B) Based on the constitutional clause identified in part A, explain why the facts of *Engel v. Vitale* led to a different holding than the holding in *Greece v. Galloway*.
- (C) Describe an action that members of the public who disagree with the holding in *Greece v. Galloway* could take to limit its impact.

Scoring the SCOTUS Comparison Question

A good response should:

- Identify a similarity or difference between the two Supreme Court cases, as specified in the question (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 2.c)
- Provide prompted factual information from the specified required Supreme Court case (0-1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 2.a), and explain how or why that information from the specified required Supreme Court case is relevant to the non-required Supreme Court case described in the question (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 2.c)
- Describe or explain an interaction between the holding in the non-required Supreme Court case and a relevant political institution, behavior, or process (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 2.d)

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

In your essay, you must:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information:
 - ◆ At least ONE piece of evidence must be from one of the following foundational documents:
 - Brutus 1
 - Federalist No. 10
 - U.S. Constitution
 - ◆ Use a second piece of evidence from another foundational document from the list or from your study of the electoral process
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal

Scoring the Argument Essay

A good response should:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question and establishes a line of reasoning (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 5.a)
- Describe one piece of evidence that is accurately linked to the topic of the question (1 out of 3 points); use one piece of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument (2 out of 3 points); use two pieces of specific and relevant evidence to support the argument (3 out of 3 points) (Disciplinary Practice 5.b)
- Explain how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 5.c)
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal that is consistent with the argument (0–1 point) (Disciplinary Practice 5.d)

Answer Key and Question Alignment to Course Framework

Multiple-Choice Question	Answer	Disciplinary Practice	Enduring Understanding/ Learning Objective	Unit
1	B	3.b	PRD-3.B	5
2	B	3.c	PRD-3.B	5
3	C	3.b	MPA-3.C	5
4	B	3.c	MPA-3.C	5
5	D	3.a	PMI-2.B	2
6	C	3.d	CON-2.A	1
7	B	3.a	CON-3.A	2
8	A	3.d	CON-3.A	2
9	D	3.a	PRD-2.A	5
10	A	3.d	PRD-2.B	5
11	B	4.a	CON-2.B	1
12	A	4.b	CON-2.B	1
13	A	2.b	LOR-2.A	3
14	C	4.c	LOR-2.A	3
15	C	4.a	PMI-4.E	4
16	C	4.b	PMI-4.E	4
17	D	4.c	PMI-4.E	4
18	D	4.a	CON-3.C	2
19	A	4.c	CON-3.C	2
20	A	4.a	PRD-2.E	5
21	B	2.b	PRD-2.E	5
22	A	4.a	MPA-3.C	5
23	C	4.c	PMI-5.G	5
24	B	1.b	PMI-5.B	5
25	D	1.b	PRD-2.E	5
26	B	1.a	CON-5.B	2
27	B	1.b	LOR-1.A	1
28	A	1.e	PMI-2.C	2
29	B	1.b	LOR-2.D	3
30	C	1.a	PMI-5.E	5

Multiple-Choice Question	Answer	Disciplinary Practice	Enduring Understanding/ Learning Objective	Unit
31	D	1.e	CON-3.B	2
32	D	2.d	LOR-3.B	3
33	C	1.b	PMI-2.A	2
34	C	2.d	PMI-3.A	3
35	A	1.e	CON-2.B	1
36	D	2.a	LOR-2.C	3
37	C	1.e	LOR-3.B	3
38	B	1.d	PMI-2.A	2
39	D	3.e	MPA-2.A	4
40	A	1.e	PMI-5.F	5
41	A	1.d	CON-3.C	2
42	A	3.e	MPA-2.A	4
43	D	1.c	CON-1.A	1
44	C	2.c	CON-2.B	1
45	B	1.c	CON-2.B	1
46	C	1.c	CON-3.A	2
47	D	1.c	PMI-4.E	4
48	D	1.e	MPA-1.A	4
49	B	2.d	PRD-1.A	3
50	B	1.e	PMI-4.D	4
51	C	1.d	CON-2.A	1
52	B	1.e	CON-4.B	2
53	B	1.a	CON-4.B	2
54	C	2.d	LOR-2.D	3
55	B	1.d	CON-4.A	2

Free-Responses Questions	Question Type	Enduring Understandings/Learning Objectives	Unit
1	Concept Application	CON-3.A, CON-4.A, PMI-2.C, PMI-5.E, PRD-3.A	2, 5
2	Quantitative Analysis	CON-2.A	1
3	SCOTUS Comparison	CON-5.A, LOR-2.C, PRD-1.A, PMI-4.B, PMI-5.E	2, 3, 4, 5
4	Argument Essay	LOR-1.A, LOR-1.B, CON-1.A, MPA-3.A, PMI-5.B, PMI-5.D, PRD-2.B	1, 5

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