

AP[®]

CollegeBoard

AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics

Effective
Fall 2018

**SKILL AND CONTENT
EXPECTATIONS
FOR LEARNING AND
ASSESSMENT**

COURSE FRAMEWORK



Endorsed by the
National Constitution Center

AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics Course Framework

Effective Fall 2018

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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.

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.

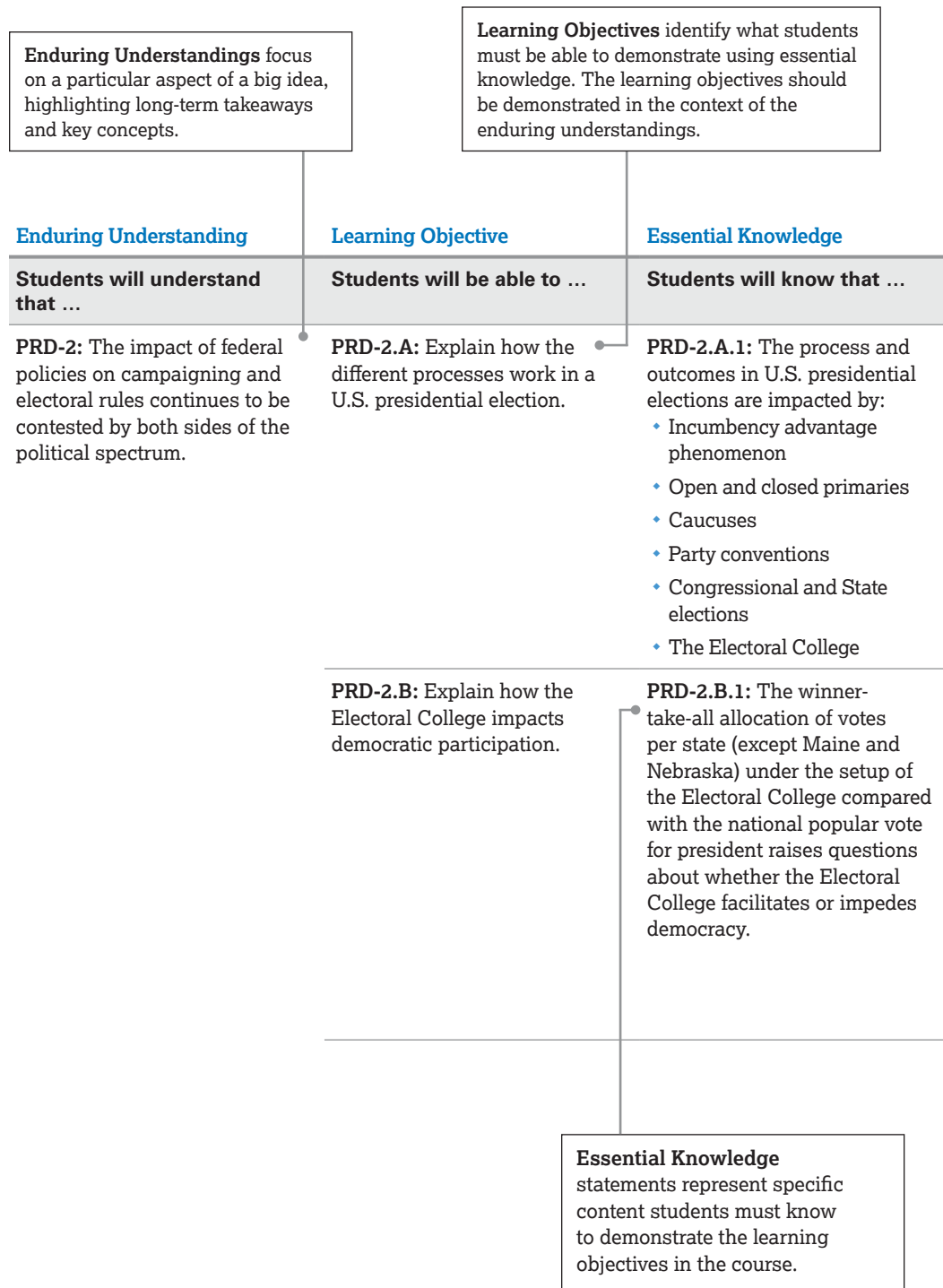
The course is designed to be a half-year course, although some high schools teach it as a full-year course. The content outline is divided into five separate units that comprise major course topics. Each unit begins with a short narrative providing background and context, followed by two or more essential 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.

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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.B: Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the U.S.</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.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.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.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.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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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>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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<p>CON-2: Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.</p> <p>BIG IDEA: Constitutionalism (continued)</p>	<p>CON-2.B: Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.</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
	<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>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.

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>

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 (continued)</p>	<p>CON-3.C: Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.</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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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.

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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>

Enduring Understanding	Learning Objective	Essential Knowledge
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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 (continued)</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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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.

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.

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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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> <hr/> <p>PMI-5.D: Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent-candidate success.</p> <hr/> <p>PMI-5.E: Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.</p> <hr/> <p>PMI-5.F: Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.</p> <hr/> <p>PMI-5.G: Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.</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> <hr/> <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> <hr/> <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> <hr/> <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 <hr/> <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, PACs, 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
Students will understand that ...	Students will be able to ...	Students will know that ...
<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 Project

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.

AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam measures students' understanding of the course learning objectives, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes. Both sections of the exam will assess' knowledge and ability to interpret the nine required foundational documents and 15 required Supreme Court cases. The following table provides a brief overview of the exam format and types of questions.

Exam Overview

Section I

Multiple Choice — 55 Questions | 80 Minutes | 50% of Exam Score

- ♦ **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

Section II

Free Response — 4 Questions | 100 Minutes | 50% of Exam Score

- ♦ **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 for the visual representation, and explain how it relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior
- ♦ **SCOTUS Comparison:** Compare a non-required Supreme Court case with a required Supreme Court case, explaining how information from the required case is relevant to that in the non-required one
- ♦ **Argument Essay:** Develop an argument in the form of an essay, using evidence from one or more required foundational documents

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