

Advanced Placement American Government
Biloxi High School
Spring 2021- Exam 5/3/2021
Hayley Whitehead

Course Description

Course Scope: The Advanced Placement Program is intended for qualified students who wish to complete studies in secondary school equivalent to a one semester college course. The course is designed to serve as a starting point for student's active participation in the government of the United States. The class involves both the study of general concepts and specific case studies involving constitutional law. It requires familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas that make up the political reality of the United States.

This course is an introduction to the U.S. national governments. The course attempts to reconcile the idealism found in the Constitution and the reality of the political process today.

- Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy
- Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government
- Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
- Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs
- Unit 5: Political Participation

Textbook

Readings will be assigned at the beginning of each unit and students are expected to keep up with reading and be prepared to discuss material in class. Periodic reading quizzes may be given to ensure student adherence.

Edwards, G., Wattenberg, M., & Lineberry, R. (2014). *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. New Jersey: Pearson School, 16th Edition.

Supplemental Readings

The primary text will be heavily supplemented by outside readings, especially the use of the fifteen required Court cases and nine foundational documents (see below). In addition to the required cases and documents, recent articles regarding current political issues will be provided to students.

Required Documents

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

Required Supreme Court Cases

- Marbury v. Madison (1803)
- McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
- United States v. Lopez (1995)

- Engel v. Vitale (1962)
- Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)
- Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)
- New York Times Company v. United States (1971)
- Schenck v. United States (1919)
- Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)
- Roe v. Wade (1973)
- McDonald v. Chicago (2010)
- Brown v. Board of Education, I (1954)
- Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC) (2010)
- Baker v. Carr (1961)
- Shaw v. Reno (1993)

Additional Materials

- 3 ring binder with dividers for each unit of study (Recommended)
- 2-3 Packs of 3X5 index cards (important, NO SUBSTITUTIONS)
- Students may be required to obtain materials and supplies to complete projects and presentations.

Course Requirements:

There are five major tests, a final exam, along with weekly reading guides, **FRQ** questions, and unit projects. All students will also research and participate in discussions relating to unit topics. **There will be no individual extra credit assignments given and work more than 3 class periods late will not be accepted.** All exams are modeled after the Advanced Placement Exam. The following shows an example of a possible grade breakdown.

Grading:

Your average for the quarter will be converted into a letter grade using the standard BPS grading scale:

A = 100 – 90	Term Grades	
B = 89 - 80	Tests	55% (3 assessments per term)
C = 79 - 70	Activity Assignments	35% (~10-15 assignments)
D = 69 - 65	CTA	10%
F = 64 & Below		

Course Outline

Students will be given a calendar at the beginning of each unit outlining lesson topics, chapter reading schedule, and major due dates. Students/parents can also access course assignments and due dates for Google Classroom. It is their responsibility to keep mindful of upcoming assignments. “I forgot” is NOT an acceptable excuse. Instructions for readings are as follows.

Unit Titles	Text Chapters	Time for Study (approx.)
I. Foundations of American	1, 2, 3	10 classes
II. Interactions Among Branches Of Government (1st Term)	11,12,13,14,15	14 classes
III. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (1 st Term)	4, 5	12 classes

IV. American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (2 nd Term)	6,7,8	17 classes
V. Political Participation (2 nd Term)	9,10	16 classes

Course Goals/Student Objectives

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy – 10 classes

Essential Questions

- How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety?
- How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system?
- How does development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact U.S. citizens?

Class Topics

- The philosophical foundations and documents of American democracy, including the *Declaration of Independence*, social contract theory, republicanism, types of democracy, and the tension between individual liberty and order/safety.
- How the Articles of Confederation (AOC) failed to adequately balance individual liberty and public order/safety, and how the framers wrestled with these questions in drafting the Constitution
- The compromises reached at the Constitutional Convention and the debate between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification debate
- The evolving relationship between the national and state governments, including the grant process, policy issues (ADA, Medicaid, Marijuana), and the idea of devolution

Unit 2: Interaction Among the Branches – 14 classes

Essential Questions

- How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?
- To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21st century?

Class Topics

- Structure of Congress, including significant differences between the chambers regarding organization, leadership, incumbency, and powers
- Congressional representation and gerrymandering
- The president's formal and informal powers
- Judicial independence, *Federalist No. 78*, *Marbury v. Madison*, and judicial decision-making
- How the bureaucracy operates and its place in the checks and balances system
- The future of entitlement spending in the United States

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights – 12 classes

Essential Questions

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

Class Topics

- The role of the courts, the due process, and equal protection clauses in the expansion of civil liberties and civil rights, including the idea of selective incorporation
- The expansion of the liberties protected by the First and Second Amendments
- The development of the right to privacy and its implications for reproductive rights and 4th Amendment protections
- A history of civil rights issues and how historically disadvantaged groups in American society have achieved greater quality and equitable treatment in society

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs - 17 classes

Essential Questions

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

Class Topics

- Elements of a scientific poll, the different types of polls, and how they are used in U.S. government and politics
- The basic tenets of American political culture, the conservative and liberal political ideologies, and how these are acquired (political socialization)

Unit 5: Political Participation – 16 classes

Essential Questions

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

Class Topics

- The evolution of voting rights and the current state of voter turnout
- Factors that influence voter choice in elections
- The functions of political parties in the United States and third parties in United States government and politics
- The development of candidate-centered campaigns
- The theory of critical elections
- Interest groups in United States government and politics
- Nominations, campaigns, and elections in United States government and politics
- The media as a linkage institution, including changes in media, such as the growth of social media and partisan media sources

Essays

The free response portion of the A.P. Exam comprises 50% of the score. To prepare students for this enterprise, bi-weekly essays or FRQ'S will be completed **IN CLASS**. FRQ's will be written in class on the assigned date. Students absent on the date of the FRQ will have an alternate assignment.

****Each unit test will include FRQ'S to prepare for the A.P. Exam.****

Community Involvement Project

Before May 1, each student will be required to dedicate time outside of school by attending two meetings of a political nature. This can be a school board meeting, city council meeting, or political rally. If you are unsure if your planning gathering meets the requirement, check with Ms. Whitehead. You will need to have a signed notice and photograph of your attendance of the meetings. A writing project will accompany your evidence of attendance. More details will be given at a later date.

Make-up work

1. Assignments turned in after they are collected on the due date can be turned in the following class period with a 50% deduction. Work turned in later than three class periods will not be accepted.
2. Students have two days from the day they return from an absence to make up and turn in all assignments that were missed for full credit.
3. Students absent for a school activity are required to turn in missing work upon return to class and are not given additional time.
4. Students must be prepared to make up tests on the first day they return to class. All tests/quizzes must be made up within a week. NO EXCEPTIONS!
5. It is the student's responsibility to check on all missed assignments or exams.

Student Responsibilities

***AP Government is taught at the level of a first-year college course. Most students find the workload, pace of this course, reading level, and general expectations extremely demanding. It is entirely possible to work very hard and still not receive an A in this course. Any student considering this course should keep this in mind and adjust their expectations accordingly. ***

- ✓ Attendance is critical if a student is to be successful in A.P. Government.
- ✓ All rules outlined in Biloxi H.S. student handbook (tardies, electronic devices, etc.) will be followed. Failure to adhere to these will result in the appropriate discipline
- ✓ All students are expected to take the AP examination on May 3 .
- ✓ Participate in class on a daily basis.
- ✓ Complete all assignments thoroughly and on time.
- ✓ Keep a well-organized and complete binder for the entire year and bring it to class daily
- ✓ Bring a charged laptop to class daily.
- ✓ Ask the instructor for help if needed – I am committed to helping you succeed.
- ✓ Be honest with me and yourself and take responsibility regarding your performance in this class.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes will receive no credit for the assignment and could face additional disciplinary action. Cheating or plagiarism is an unacceptable way to handle procrastination. Students are expected to take the appropriate steps if an assignment cannot be completed by the due date.

Note to Parents:

This is an AP class with heightened requirements of your son or daughter. The class will prepare your son or daughter for college. Writing is heavily emphasized in this course, as is reading. I encourage you to discuss politics at home with your son/daughter. Offer your views and opinions but keep in mind, **this is not a debate class concerned solely with the relative merits of being a Democrat or Republican!**

Please read over the syllabus and keep it for your records. Return this slip to Ms. Whitehead by the next class period.

By signing this I acknowledge that I have read the above syllabus and agree to all of its rules and regulations. If I have any questions or concerns I will contact Ms. Whitehead.

Please sign and return no later than _____.

Student _____ Date _____

Parent _____ Date _____