## Advanced Placement® U.S. Government & Politics

Instructor: Renee Douglas Classroom: 1202

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Tutoring Hours: T/Th 3-3:30

**Course Description:** AP® U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level year-long course that not only seeks to prepare students for success on the AP Exam in May, but also provide students with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that are currently shaping American politics and society. It is important to note that this course is not a history course; it is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system as well as the behaviors and attitudes that shape this system and are the byproduct of this system.

AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices by using a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, students will be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well-reasoned, thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

## Instructional Schedule

This AP U.S. Government and Politics class is taught in two semesters using a traditional school day schedule. Each class period is 50 minutes long.

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)

**Big Ideas (from** [**AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description**](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-us-government-and-politics-course-and-exam-description.pdf?course=ap-united-states-government-and-politics)**):**

1. 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 of majority rule and minority rights.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI) Multiple actors and institutions interact to produce and implement possible policies.
5. 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.

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## The Disciplinary Practices and Reasoning Processes

Questions on the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam ask students to apply the course content through the disciplinary practices and reasoning skills.

Throughout the course, students will have the opportunity to develop these five disciplinary practices:

* Practice 1: Concept Application
* Practice 2: Supreme Court Case Law Application
* Practice 3: Data Analysis
* Practice 4: Source Analysis
* Practice 5: Argumentation

While engaging in the disciplinary practices, students will also apply the following reasoning skills:

* Reasoning Process 1: Definition/Classification
* Reasoning Process 2: Process
* Reasoning Process 3: Causation
* Reasoning Process 4: Comparison

**Text and Readings [CR1]:**

Wolfford, David. *AMSCO® Advanced Placement® United States Government & Politics,* 2nd Edition.

Des Moines, Iowa: Perfection Learning, 2018. ([purchase required](https://www.perfectionlearning.com/social-studies/advanced-placement/united-states-government-politics-ap-exam.html))

Krutz, G. S., & OpenStax (Nonprofit organization),. (2017). *American government*.

Additionally, throughout the course, articles from major periodicals and newspapers (such as *Time, The New Yorker, The Washington Post, The Atlantic, New York Times, and Wall Street Journal*) will be assigned.

**Required Foundational Documents**

This course, especially Unit 1, will incorporate the analysis and discussion of nine required foundational documents to help understand the context and beliefs of the founders and their critics and the debates surrounding the writing and ratification of the U.S. Constitution:

* 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 Birmingham Jail”

**Required Supreme Court Cases**

This course, especially Unit 3, will incorporate the analysis of the following 15 required Supreme Court cases as well provide opportunities to connect them to other non-required landmark cases:

* *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)
* *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)
* *Schenck v. United States* (1919)
* *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)
* *Baker v. Carr* (1961)
* *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
* *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)
* *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)
* *New York Times Company v. United States* (1971)
* *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)
* *Roe v. Wade* (1973)
* *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
* *United States v. Lopez* (1995)
* *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)
* *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* (2010)

**Learning Strategies:**

* The primary learning strategy is a lecture/discussion format, which will take place about two to three days per week.
* Students will create current events presentations in which they find news items tied to each of the 5 Big Ideas. Included in the current events presentation will be an analysis of one Political Cartoon.
* Students will learn to analyze charts and graphs including demographic data throughout the course, but especially in Units 4 & 5.
* Students will also read articles and prepare analytical questions in advance of a student-led discussion. This discussion will focus on working together to interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources.
* Students will have the opportunity to practice developing an argument in an essay with each Unit Exam.
* Students will be responsible to engage in political science research projects and/or an applied civics project that ties to the AP Government framework.



**AP Practice Exams**

It is a given that comprehensive, cumulative tests will be given to prepare the student for mastery on the national AP exam. Both semesters normally include cumulative exams given in similar format as the national AP Government and Politics Exam. Times will be announced well in advance of the exams and will coordinate with the other AP exams at our school.

**Google Classroom**

* This class will be supplemented with Google Classroom and it will serve as an out of class tool that will allow the students to remain in contact with the class and necessary material. It is imperative that each and every student join the website.
* Students will join using their student login information going through the SSO portal at HCBE.net They will then need to join this class.
* Once they have joined the class, they will have access to class PowerPoint’s, guided notes, study guides, resources, and other material that will further extend their knowledge and understanding of the material.
* There’s an App for that: Google classroom is accessible online and on any mobile device with Internet capabilities, offering a free iPhone and Android app. Notification settings within Google Classroom can be set to receive alerts via text or email.

**Grading Policy**

Grade weights are listed in the chart below. Assignments will vary in point value depending on the length, breadth, and depth of the topic at hand. Periodic progress reports will be issued, but students are responsible for keeping up with their grades and can track them via Infinite Campus. Assignments will be returned to students after grading.

| Major Assessments (45%) | Minor Assessments (20%) | Daily Work (15%) | Final Exam (20%) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| * Exams * Unit Tests * Major Projects * Essays | * Quizzes * DBQs * FRQs * Essays * Mini-Projects | * Articles * Study Guides * Classwork | * Final Assessment * Exam exemptions based on HCBE policy |

**Cyberbulling:** As define by Dictionary.com, “the act of harassing someone online by sending or posting mean messages.” Please keep in mind that Google Classroom is designed to work as an extension of the classroom; therefore, anything done on the site through the access of VHS class will be treated the saem as if it were said aloud in the classroom. Inappropriate comments or use of the site can result in disciplinary action.

**BYOD**  BYOD activities will be announced in advance and will be at the teacher’s discretion. Any student that is caught using his/her device for non-instructional or off-task purposes will be subject to disciplinary action. Headphones and charging devices are prohibited.

**Make-Up Work, Late Work, Remediation, & Tutoring** Students are responsible for all work, notes, etc. Follow school policy. Ask the teacher. Work assigned prior to an absence is due the day upon return. This policy includes tests and quizzes. Be prepared to take them the day you return whenever feasible with the class. A zero will be placed in the grade book until work is complete. NI’s and Instructional absences do NOT change school policy. See me before the NI. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late work is not generally accepted.

**Academic Honesty:** All students are expected to conduct themselves in the most honest fashion in the class and this school. Should a student fail to do so, the student will earn a “0” for the assignment that was not completed honestly.

**Classroom Expectations**

* Be Punctual.
  + Be ready to go Bell to Bell
  + Tardy policy = school policy
* Be Prepared.
  + Bring necessary supplies. -Pen, updated notebook, etc.
  + Restroom breaks will be minimal.
* Be Polite.
  + Respect others.
  + Cleanliness.
  + No food or drink, just water.
  + Avoid Distractions.
* Be Productive.
  + Always do your best.
  + Own it.
  + Invest in yourself and others.
  + Gain and grow knowledge and skills

**AP National Exam**

**Date: Monday, May 2, 2022**

**AP Exam timeline:**

* **8.21.21– Deadline for students to electronically join all AP classes on College Board website (APcentral.collegeboard.org). \*Help line for students and parents 1-888-225-5427**
* **10.29.21 – Deadline for students to register for AP exams on the College Board website.**
* **2.18.22 – Deadline to pay all AP exam fees.**

**AP Fees**

* **Paid Students:**

**· $96.00 per exam**

* **Free and Reduced lunch students:**

**· First exam regardless of course is paid for by GADOE and is free of charge to the student.**

**· Additional exams for FR students are $53 each.**

* **STEM exams**

**· For students who do not qualify for College Board fee reduction, GADOE will pay for one AP STEM exam for each student enrolled in an AP STEM course.**

* **Exams ordered after ordering deadline:**

**· $40 fee per exam regardless of free and reduced lunch/STEM status.**

* **Cancel or fail to take AP exam after ordering deadline:**

**· $40 fee per exam regardless of free and reduced lunch/STEM status.**

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam will be comprised of the following sections:

**Multiple-Choice Questions**

Number of Questions: 55

Structure – The questions on the multiple-choice section will ask students to:

* Analyze and compare political concepts
* Analyze and interpret quantitative, text-based, and visual sources
* Apply course concepts, foundational documents, and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of contexts and to real-world scenarios.

Timing: 1 hour and 20 minutes

Percentage of Total Exam: 50%

**Free-Response Questions**

Number of Questions: 4

Structure – The four questions on the free-response section will ask students to:

* Apply political concepts in real-world scenarios
* Compare the decisions and implications of different Supreme Court cases
* Analyze quantitative data and the implications of that data
* Develop an argument using required foundational documents as evidence

Timing: 1 hour and 40 minutes

Percentage of Total Exam: 50%

As the breakdown of the AP Exam highlights, success in this course and on the AP Exam requires far more than the memorization of political knowledge. Success in this course and on the AP Exam requires connection-making with the aim of being able to analyze political information regardless of the format in which the information is presented, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned opinion regarding this information. These skills are scaffolded throughout the course through teacher modeling, explicit instruction, and multiple opportunities for practice in reading and writing that reflects the work that political scientists do.

The different pieces of the course fit together in pursuit of this aim through course content and big ideas, reasoning processes, and disciplinary practices.

**Final Note:** This class is meant to be a learning experience for you. The goal is to not only teach you about the essentials of American Government, but also to give you exposure to a college level experience. This process may be frustrating for you at times. If you are having a particularly difficult time or just need some extra guidance in maneuvering through this course, please don’t hesitate to discuss the matter with me. It is my hope that you enjoy this experience and that you become lifelong participants in our democratic system. Be sure you use every resource I have made available to you. These resources include the AP Classroom, Google Classroom, the assigned readings, Power Point notes and web links.

It is imperative that students complete these reading assignments in a timely manner, prior to the associated lecture. A common rule of thumb at the college level is that for every one hour spent in class, the student should study for two hours outside of class. This time should be spent in completing the assigned reading, taking notes on that reading, reviewing notes taken from prior discussions and studying for each of the unit tests. Failure to complete reading assignments will result in lower test scores as a selection of test questions will come directly from the assigned reading. Additionally, these readings are meant to enhance the learning experience in this class. If a student fails to read an assignment, further grasp of the topic will not be achieved.

**Parent Syllabus Page – Please sign and turn in to the teacher tomorrow.**

I have read this Syllabus and understand the standards, requirements, and expectations for Mrs. Douglas’s 2021-2022

AP Government and Politics class.

Student Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Best Phone number to contact\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_