

Course Outline

Statement Of Purpose

Students must have an extensive knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens to participate in and shape public policy, and contribute to the maintenance of our democratic way of life. AP United States Government and Politics offers such an opportunity to students interested in a rigorous course of study.

The acquisition of a thorough and systematic comprehension of U.S. government and politics requires that students learn facts and concepts and understand typical political processes. Further, students must be guided to use specific information critically in order to evaluate general propositions about government and politics as well as to analyze political relationships between people and institutions and between different institutions.

Government and Politics, The College Board, Advanced Placement Program, May 2005

Course Overview

At Fairfield Warde High School Advanced Placement US Government and Politics is a yearlong course for seniors. This course requires students to use the knowledge and skills acquired in all of their other high school courses to gain a deeper understanding of American Government and Politics in the 21st Century. The expectation is that all students will take the Advanced Placement US Government and Politics exam given by the College Board on Monday May 5, 2008, therefore the course is organized for students to be successful on the exam.

Advanced Placement courses are designed to give high school students the experience of a college level class with the support of a high school environment. Students are expected to do a substantial amount of reading at home, while class time will be reserved for discussions and activities to support the reading. One day a week will be reserved for student lead discussions on the topic of the week, these discussions will also count for a significant portion of the student's grade for the course.

The Advanced Placement course in US Government and Politics is meant to give students an in depth understanding of how the American government, judicial and political systems operate. Students will not only examine the historical backgrounds of these systems but also their modern functions. It will also be important for students to connect these systems to contemporary policies and events. Therefore it is essential for the students to keep up to date on current events.

The course is divided into six major units of study. Each unit is composed of several chapters in the text and will have several assessments. At the start of each quarter students will get an outline of the reading for the quarter as well as

major assignments, discussions topics and the outside reading book for the quarter.

Expectations for Learning

- Fulfill individual academic potential
- Develop and apply critical and/or creative thinking skills
- Demonstrate an understanding of our American heritage
- Create and express ideas in effective presentations
- Effective reading, speaking, writing and listening skills
- Participate in cooperative and collaborative learning
- Demonstrate self-discipline and personal responsibility for learning

Class Requirements: Each day students are required to bring their notebook (see separate sheet for notebook requirements), writing instruments, and any other materials necessary for the particular class period. Students are expected to come to class with all of the necessary outside work completed. At the start of each week reading when is due; students should come to class with the notes on the chapter and be ready to apply them to the various activities and assignments. The day a chapter is due there is will be a Free Response Question given that day at the start of the period on that chapter. A multiple choice quiz of practice AP questions will be given the Thursday after a chapter is due.

Each Friday is class discussion day. During class discussions, students are given an opportunity to discuss the topic for the week with their classmates and tie it together with both current events and their own personal beliefs. Two students will be in charge of leading the discussion each week, during a quarter each student in the class is expected to co-lead two discussions. A guide for class discussions will be supplied to each student.

If a student is absent during a class, it is his responsibility to come and get the missing work. Just because you were absent doesn't mean that class did not continue. Work must be completed in the same amount of class periods that were missed. Students who miss class un-excused will forfeit their right to make up missing work and the work due on the day they were not in class. When a student misses a class discussion he or she must submit a two page opinion on the discussion topic, due the next class the student attends. If a student misses a test he or she must contact the teacher via email before returning to school to set up an alternative test date.

Grading: The class is designed to give students a college course experiment in a high school setting. Grading therefore will be determined by a blend of traditional college standards (tests, papers and discussions), and more typical high school assignments (quizzes and daily assignments). Quarter Grades are determined by the following:

Tests	25%
Class Discussions	35%
Quizzes	25%

Daily Assignments 15%

Text:

O'Connor, Karen and Larry J. Sabato. American Government: Continuity and Change. New York: Pearson Longman, 2004.

Supplementary Texts:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics (2006 – 4th Edition)

W.W. Norton & Company: New York/London

Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings (2003 – 3rd edition)

Lanahan Publishers, Inc.: Baltimore, MD

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Political Issues (2006- 14th edition)

McGraw-Hill Dushkin: Dubuque, Iowa

Selected, Edited, and with Introductions by George McKenna and Stanley Feingold

The American Political Tradition: and the Men Who Made It. (1976)

Vintage Books: A Division of Random House, Inc./New York

Richard Hofstadter

Faultlines: Debating the Issues in American Politics (1990)

W.W. Norton & Company: New York/London

David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

The Great Chief Justice: John Marshall and the Rule of Law (1996)

University Press of Kansas

Charles Hobson

Reading Assignments: The following reading assignments from the text are due on the following dates. Although our schedule has to remain somewhat flexible due to the school schedule, the AP Exam is May 7th regardless of the school schedule. Students need to keep to the reading schedule in order to be prepared for the exam.

Tuesday, September 4 th	Chapter 1 – <i>The Political Landscape</i>
Monday, September 10 th	Chapter 2 – <i>The Constitution</i>
Monday, September 24 th	Chapter 3 - <i>Federalism</i>
Tuesday, October 2 nd	Chapter 4 – <i>State and Local Gov.</i>
Monday, October 8 th	Chapter 7 - <i>Congress</i>
Monday, October 22 nd	Chapter 8 – <i>The Presidency</i>
Monday, November 5 th	Chapter 9 – <i>The Executive Branch and the Federal Bureaucracy</i>
Monday, November 12 th	Chapter 10 – <i>The Judiciary</i>
Monday, November 26 th	Chapter 5 – <i>Civil Liberties</i>
Monday, December 12 th	Chapter 6 – <i>Civil Rights</i>
Wednesday, January 2 nd	Chapter 11 – <i>Political Opinion and Political Socialization</i>
Monday, January 21 nd	Chapter 12 – <i>Political Parties</i>
Monday, February 4 th	Chapter 13 – <i>Voting and Elections</i>
Monday, February 11 th	Chapter 14 – <i>The Campaign Process</i>
Monday, February 25 th	Chapter 16 – <i>Interest Groups</i>
Monday, March 10 th	Chapter 15 – <i>The News Media</i>
Monday, March 17 th	Chapter 17 – <i>Social Welfare Policy</i>
Monday, March 24 th	Chapter 18 – <i>Economic Policy</i>
Monday, March 30 th	Chapter 19 – <i>Foreign and Military Policy</i>

Units of Study

Unit I: Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change

Chapter 1 – *The Political Landscape*

Chapter 2 – *The Constitution*

Chapter 3 - *Federalism*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics

Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution. Louis Hartz p.3

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings (2003 – 3rd edition)

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Laboratories of Democracy. David Osborne. P. 138

United States v. Lopez (1995). P. 147

The American Political Tradition: and the Men Who Made It. (1976)

Richard Hofstadter

The Founding Fathers: An Age of Realism. Richard Hofstadter. P.5

Major Assignment:

Read and Annotate Selections from the Federalist Papers

Discussion Topics:

- America's Current Political Landscape
- Constitutional Convention
- Americans' Rights
- Role of Federalism in the United States
- The Power of the States

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards:

United States Constitution and Government

Students will apply knowledge of the United States Constitution, how the U.S. system of government works and how the rule of law and the values of liberty and equality have an impact on individual, local, state, and national elections.

Students will explain how the design of the U.S. Constitution is intended to balance and check the powers of the branches of government.

Students will apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.

Unit II: Institutions of National Government

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change
Chapter 7 - *Congress*
Chapter 8 – *The Presidency*
Chapter 9 – *The Executive Branch and the Federal Bureaucracy*
Chapter 10 – *The Judiciary*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics
Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer
The Power to Persuade, From Presidential Power – Richard Neustadt. p. 175
The Court in American Life, from Storm Center: The Supreme Court in American Politics. David O'Brien. P.255

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings (2003 – 3rd edition)

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Congress: The Electoral Connection. David Mayhew. p.155
Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents. Richard Neustadt. P. 215

Faultlines: Debating the Issues in American Politics (1990)

David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

The Role of the Senate in Judicial Confirmation. Stephan B. Presser. P. 101

The Great Chief Justice: John Marshall and the Rule of Law (1996)

Charles Hobson

The Limits of Judicial Power. P. 150

Major Assignments:

Simulation of Congressional Committees
Iron Triangle Role Play
Mock Trial

Discussion Topics:

- Powers of Congress
- Representation in the Legislative Branch
- Powers of the President
- Changing Role of the President
- Is there a way to fix bureaucracy?
- What should be the role of the US Supreme Court?

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards

United States Constitution and Government

Students will apply knowledge of the United States Constitution, how the U.S. system of government works and how the rule of law and the values of liberty and equality have an impact on individual, local, state, and national elections.

Students will explain how the design of the U.S. Constitution is intended to balance and check the powers of the branches of government.

Students will apply an understanding of historical and contemporary conflicts over constitutional principles.

Unit III: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change

Chapter 5 – *Civil Liberties*

Chapter 6 – *Civil Rights*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics

Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions. Abraham Lincoln. p. 102

Letter from Birmingham Jail. Martin L. King., Jr. p. 108

In Defense of Prejudice. Jonathan Rauch. p. 116

Rights in an Insecure World: Why National Security and Civil Liberty Are Complements. Deborah Pearlstein. p. 126

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings (2003 – 3rd edition)

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Gideon's Trumpet. Anthony Lewis. p. 351

Security versus Civil Liberties. Richard Posner. p. 365

The Rage of a Privileged Class. Ellis Cose. p. 376

Faultlines: Debating the Issues in American Politics (1990)

David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

Dissent in Barbara Grutter v. Lee. Justice Clarence Thomas. P. 40

Major Assignment:

In Depth Analysis of Pertinent Court Cases of Liberties and Rights

Examples

Sheff v. O'Neill (CT Supreme Court Case)

Griswold v. Connecticut (US Supreme Court Case)

Discussion Topics:

- Are Americans' Civil Liberties being protected?
- Case Study: Any Supreme Court Case on Civil Liberties

- When, if ever, should affirmative action be used?
- What role should the federal government play in protecting civil rights?

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards:

Historical Thinking

Students will develop historical thinking skills, including chronological thinking and recognizing change over time; contextualizing, comprehending and analyzing historical literature; researching historical sources; understanding the concept of historical causation; understanding competing narratives and interpretation; and constructing narratives and interpretation.

Students will formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple resources.

Students will describe the multiple intersecting causes of events

Political Systems

Students will explain that political systems emanate from the need of humans for order, leading to compromise and the establishment of authority.

Students will explain how purposes served by government have implications for the individual and society

Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of citizens to participate in and shape public policy, and contribute to the maintenance of our democratic way of life.

Students will evaluate whether or when their obligations as citizens require that their personal desires, beliefs and interests be subordinated to the public good.

Unit IV: Political Beliefs and Behaviors

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change
Chapter 11 – *Political Opinion and Political Socialization*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics
Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer
Polling the Public. George Gallup. p. 293

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Phantom Public. Walter Lippmann. p. 434

Public Opinion and American Democracy. V.O. Key. P. 438

Major Assignment:

Students conduct their own political polls

Discussion Topics:

- What do polls really mean?
- Case Study: Examine any political poll

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards:

Local, United States and World History

Students will use historical thinking skills to develop an understanding of the major historical periods, issues and trends in United States history, world history, and Connecticut and local history.

Students will explain relationships among the events and trends studied in local, national and world history.

Unit V: Political Parties, Interest Groups and Mass Media

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change

Chapter 12 – *Political Parties*

Chapter 13 – *Voting and Elections*

Chapter 14 – *The Campaign Process*

Chapter 15 – *The News Media*

Chapter 16 – *Interest Groups*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics

Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

The Not-So-Swift Mainstream Media. Jonathan V. Vast. p. 306

The Unpolitical Animal: How Political Science Understands Voters. Louis Menand. p. 345

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

The Lobbyists. Jeffrey Birnbaum. p. 474

Deadlock. Political Staff of the Washington Post. p. 514

I Ain't Got Time to Bleed. Jesse Ventura. p. 611

Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Political Issues

Selected, Edited, and with Introductions by George McKenna and Stanley Feingold

The Emerging Democratic Majority. John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira. p. 56

An Emerging Republican Majority. Daniel Case. p. 67

Major Assignments:

Creation of Students' Own Political Parties

Presidential Campaign Video Ads

Media Diary – Logged Various Hours of News Programming -
Comparison

Discussion Topics:

- What is the purpose of political parties in the twenty first century?
- What is the best way to get people to vote?
- What campaign strategies should presidential hopefuls employ for 2008?
- How do interest groups help the political process?
- What are the ethical issues behind interest groups?
- How does the media impact the political process?

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards:

Historical Themes

Students will apply their understanding of historical periods, issues and trends to examine such historical themes as ideals, beliefs and institutions; conflict and conflict resolution; human movement and interaction; and science and technology in order to understand how the world came to be the way it is.

Students will analyze the causes and consequences of major technological turning points in history, e.g., their effects on people, societies, and economies.

Historical Thinking

Students will develop historical thinking skills, including chronological thinking and recognizing change over time; contextualizing, comprehending and analyzing historical literature; researching historical sources; understanding the concept of historical causation; understanding competing narratives and interpretation; and constructing narratives and interpretation.

Students will formulate historical questions and hypotheses from multiple perspectives, using multiple sources.

Students will evaluate data within the historical, social, political and economic context in which it was created, testing its credibility and evaluating its bias.

Unit VI: Public Policy

Text Readings:

Chapters from American Government: Continuity and Change

Chapter 17 – *Social Welfare Policy*

Chapter 18 – *Economic Policy*

Chapter 19 – *Foreign and Military Policy*

Supplemental Text Readings:

The Enduring Debate: Classic and Contemporary Readings in American Politics

Edited by: David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

Growing American Inequality: Sources and Remedies. Gary Burtless. P. 543

Providing Social Security Benefits in the Future: A Review of the Social Security System and Plans to Reform It. David C. John. P. 561

American Polity: The Lanahan Readings

Ann G. Serow, Everett C. Ladd

Jihad v. McWorld Benjamin Barber. P. 709

Who Speaks for America?. Eric Alterman. P. 727

Faultlines: Debating the Issues in American Politics (1990)

David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, Kenneth R. Mayer

Nation Building. Marina Ottway. P. 204

Major Assignments:

Each student will analyze a different public policy initiative

Teams will create and present new public policy initiatives

Discussion Topics:

- What types of social welfare policy do Americans want to see enacted?
- Should the United States practice deficit spending?
- Case Study: Any foreign policy initiative not dealing with Iraq

State of Connecticut Social Studies Standards:

Economic Systems

Students will demonstrate that various economic systems coexist, and that economic decisions are made by individuals and/or governments, influenced by markets, cultural traditions, individuals and governments in the allocation of goods and services.

Students will interpret important statistics about the national economy, the inflation rate, unemployment rate, Gross Domestic Product, and its growth rate.

Students will analyze the impact of government taxing and spending actions and changes in the money supply and interest rates on the national economy.

Students will explain reasons for government action in the economy, including providing public goods and services, maintaining competition, redistributing income, promoting employment, stabilizing prices and sustaining reasonable rates of economic growth.

Students will analyze the impact of specific government actions in the economy on different groups, including consumers, employees and businesses.

International Relations

Students will demonstrate an understanding of how the major elements of international relations and world affairs affect their lives and the security and well-being of their community, state, and nation.

Students will identify and analyze the various domestic, political, economic, and social interests, which play roles in the development of foreign policy.

Students will describe and analyze the process by which foreign policy decisions are developed and executed.

Additional Help: Additional support will be available on Mondays and Wednesdays after school, as well as by appointment.

Please feel free to contact me at any point during the school year with any questions or concerns.

Email: amacintosh@fairfield.k12.ct.us

Amy E. MacIntosh

Please sign and date below to indicate that you have read and understand the course outline for Advanced Placement US Government and Politics.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Email Address: _____