



**ADVANCED PLACEMENT  
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS  
GRADE 12**

*Counselors are available to assist parents and students with course selections and career planning. Parents may arrange to meet with the counselor by calling the school's guidance department.*

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics is offered to the serious student who desires the challenge of a college-level course in high school. The course will give students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States through the investigation of Constitutional and political institutions and behaviors. Extensive reading and writing are required. Students are expected to take the Advanced Placement Examination in May. College credit may be granted, subject to the requirements of the college or university.

**PREREQUISITE**

Virginia and United States History  
or  
Advanced Placement United States History

**OPTIONS FOR NEXT COURSE**

None

**REQUIRED STUDENT TEXTBOOK**

*American Government* (D.C. Heath, 1998)  
*American Government Readings and Cases*, 16<sup>th</sup> edition (Pearson, 2006)

**SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS**

The teacher may choose to supplement the basal textbook with materials to extend and enrich the students' understanding of course topics. The material may be drawn from daily newspapers, periodicals, television and other visual media, primary source documents, simulations, and computer programs.

For more information on this or any other Advanced Placement course, visit College Board Online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

**THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ATTITUDES THAT COMPRISE THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS COURSE ARE SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS FROM THE PRESCRIBED CURRICULUM**

**TOPICS OF STUDY**

**Unit 1: Constitutional Foundations**

- APGOV.1.1 Compare the advantages and disadvantages of political systems.
- APGOV.1.2 Describe the influences of 18<sup>th</sup> century political philosophers on Revolutionary America.
- APGOV.1.3 Describe events leading to the establishment of the United States Constitution.
- APGOV.1.4 Analyze arguments offered during the debate over Constitutional ratification.
- APGOV.1.5 Identify the purposes of the parts of the Constitution.
- APGOV.1.6 Account for limited popular participation in early constitutional government.
- APGOV.1.7 Identify basic characteristics of American government.

**Unit 2: Federalism**

- APGOV.2.1 Compare philosophies of federalism.
- APGOV.2.2 Identify key events in the dynamics of American federalism.
- APGOV.2.3 Recognize the contradiction presented by the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment and Article I, Section 8, Clause 18.
- APGOV.2.4 Describe national government aid to states.
- APGOV.2.5 Analyze contemporary issues illustrating the continuing conflict between states' rights and national authority.

**Unit 3: Civil Rights And Civil Liberties**

- APGOV.3.1 Differentiate between civil rights and civil liberties.
- APGOV.3.2 Describe the provisions of the First Amendment.
- APGOV.3.3 Describe the effect of key Supreme Court decisions involving First Amendment liberties.
- APGOV.3.4 Describe the provisions of the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
- APGOV.3.5 Describe the effects of Supreme Court decisions involving the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
- APGOV.3.6 Describe the provisions of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
- APGOV.3.7 Describe effects of Supreme Court decisions involving the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Amendments.

- APGOV.3.8 Describe the provisions of the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
- APGOV.3.9 Describe the effects of Supreme Court decisions that relate to the 8<sup>th</sup> Amendment.
- APGOV.3.10 Analyze the relationship between the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment and the *Bill of Rights*.
- APGOV.3.11 Summarize key Supreme Court decisions in the area of civil rights.
- APGOV.3.12 Analyze contemporary issues relative to civil rights and civil liberties.
- APGOV.3.12 Account for the presumption of a fundamental right to privacy.

**Unit 4: Legislative Branch**

- APGOV.4.1 Compare the advantages and disadvantages of the bicameral legislature of the United States.
- APGOV.4.2 Identify the Constitutional and "informal" qualifications for House and Senate membership.
- APGOV.4.3 Describe the roles of Congressmen.
- APGOV.4.4 Describe the structural organization of the Congress of the United States.
- APGOV.4.5 Compare characteristics of the House of Representative and the Senate.
- APGOV.4.6 Identify the lawmaking roles of the House and Senate.
- APGOV.4.7 Trace the law-making process.
- APGOV.4.8 Analyze issues relevant to legislative structures and practice.
- APGOV.4.9 Analyze methods and issues of apportionment.

**Unit 5: The Presidency And The Executive Branch**

- APGOV.5.1 Identify the formal (Constitutional\*) and informal qualifications for the office of President.
- APGOV.5.2 Describe the process for the election of the President.
- APGOV.5.3 Describe the provisions of the 12<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution.
- APGOV.5.4 Describe the influence (check and balance) of the Legislative branch on the office of the Presidency.
- APGOV.5.5 Identify methods of Presidential influence and control over public opinion.

APGOV.5.6 Assess the effects of the formal (Constitutional) and informal powers of the office of the President

### **Unit 6: Judicial Branch**

- APGOV.6.1 Describe the constitutional role of the courts in American government.
- APGOV.6.2 Trace the ascendancy of the Supreme Court.
- APGOV.6.3 Outline the federal court system.
- APGOV.6.4 Identify current members of the Supreme Court and their ideologies.
- APGOV.6.5 Outline the Supreme Court's policy/decision making process.
- APGOV.6.6 Describe the politics of judicial selection.
- APGOV.6.7 Discuss the disadvantages of an interpretive body that lacks enforcement capabilities.

### **Unit 7: Bureaucracy**

- APGOV.7.1 Define the role and structural components of the bureaucracy.
- APGOV.7.2 Analyze the process used to select the bureaucracy.
- APGOV.7.3 Describe key legislation that has affected the bureaucracy.
- APGOV.7.4 Outline the bureaucracy's relationship with the branches of government and interest groups.
- APGOV.7.5 Describe problems affecting Bureaucracy.
- APGOV.7.6 Analyze current issues facing the bureaucracy.

### **Unit 8: Political Beliefs And Behaviors**

- APGOV.8.1 Define political culture and sources of political socialization.
- APGOV.8.2 Identify influences on the development of American political culture.
- APGOV.8.3 Examine the shift from government's "original dilemma" (liberty vs. social orders) to "current dilemma" (liberty vs. equality).
- APGOV.8.4 Compare and contrast the major American political ideological groupings.
- APGOV.8.5 Define the role of the *political elite* in the governing process.
- APGOV.8.6 Cite evidence and causes for mistrust of government.
- APGOV.8.7 Define political efficacy.
- APGOV.8.8 Identify the methods that measure public support of governmental policies.
- APGOV.8.9 Define *political ideology* and determine its impact or lack thereof on political elections.

APGOV.8.10 List the cleavages that shape and define political attitudes.

### **Unit 9: Political Parties, Interest Groups And Elections**

- APGOV.9.1 Evaluate the purposes and functions of political parties.
- APGOV.9.2 Outline the organization of political parties.
- APGOV.9.3 Identify issue-related philosophies of the Democratic and the Republican parties.
- APGOV.9.4 Trace the historical development of the American two-party system.
- APGOV.9.5 Account for the development of third parties in American history.
- APGOV.9.6 Analyze current issues and trends of political parties.
- APGOV.9.7 Account for interest groups in American politics.
- APGOV.9.8 Describe the activities of interest groups.
- APGOV.9.9 Identify the legal restraints on political action groups.
- APGOV.9.10 Identify the forms and functions of mass media.
- APGOV.9.11 Describe the roles of the media in the political process.
- APGOV.9.12 Identify the legal restraints and protections of the media.

### **Unit 10: Policy Making**

- APGOV.10.1 Define Public Policy.
- APGOV.10.2 Identify the process used to develop public policy.
- APGOV.10.3 Identify the roles of institutions and groups involved in developing economic policy.
- APGOV.10.4 Describe the theories associated with economic policy.
- APGOV.10.5 Describe the role of fiscal policy in economic policy making.
- APGOV.10.6 Describe the role of monetary policy in economic policy making.
- APGOV.10.7 Analyze current economic policy issues
- APGOV.10.8 Identify the roles of institutions and groups in developing social policy.
- APGOV.10.9 Identify the role of institution and groups in developing environmental policy.
- APGOV.10.10 Identify the role of institutions and groups in developing U.S. foreign policy.
- APGOV.10.11 Evaluate the instruments of foreign policy.
- APGOV.10.12 Analyze current foreign policy issues.

## CITIZENSHIP GOALS

- Working cooperatively with classmates to accomplish tasks and solve problems
- Valuing democratic traditions and respecting the rights, values, and property of others
- appreciating the heritage of American Government and its contributions to American democratic institutions, values, and beliefs
- Recognizing the power of an individual to make a difference
- Accepting responsibility for class work and personal behavior
- Managing time and tasks efficiently and productively
- Accepting the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- Keeping informed on current issues and events
- Participating in school elections and community service projects

## SKILLS

- **Study Skills**
  - Taking organized and useful notes from lectures, discussions, and various printed sources of information
  - Preparing a bibliography
- **Chart/Graph Skills**
  - Drawing inferences from varied charts, graphs, tables, and time lines
  - Using and creating charts, graphs, and tables to organize, display, and depict data
- **Map/Globe Skills**
  - Making and interpreting special purpose maps

- **Problem-Solving/Decision-making Skills**
  - Applying the problem-solving process to investigate key decisions in American Government
  - Evaluating the decision-making and problem-solving processes of key political leaders
  - Identifying alternative courses of action and predicting likely consequences of each
- **Critical Thinking Skills**
  - Distinguish between causes and effects
  - Distinguish between fact and opinion, recognizing propaganda, and detecting author bias
  - Assessing the validity of differing political interpretations
- **Communication Skills**
  - Preparing oral and written reports, projects, and presentations
  - Expressing ideas orally and in writing
  - Contributing ideas and suggestions to class discussion
  - Reading for a variety of purposes: critically, analytically, to predict outcomes, to answer questions, to form opinions, and to skim for facts
  - Restating major ideas of a complex topic in concise form
  - Writing papers analyzing historical issues or topics
  - Collecting, analyzing, and evaluating historical information related to an issue, or question; drawing conclusions from the data; and forming a thesis or hypothesis



## VIRGINIA BEACH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A H E A D O F T H E C U R V E

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools, in partnership with the entire community, will empower every student to become a life-long learner who is a responsible, productive and engaged citizen within the global community.

### DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

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Alternative formats of this publication which may include taped, Braille, or large print materials are available upon request for individuals with disabilities. Call or write The Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Secondary Instructional Services, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, 2512 George Mason Drive, P.O. Box 6038, Virginia Beach, VA 23456-0038, Telephone (757) 263-1070 or (757) 263-1429, fax (757) 263-1412.