

## AP United States Government and Politics Syllabus

### Introduction to AP U.S. Government and Politics

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 and 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 through the use of a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, by the end of the course, 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.

**The course will be organized around the following units of study:**

**Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy (17 days)**

**Unit 2: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (15 days)**

**Unit 3: Political Participation (15 days)**

**Unit 4: Interactions Among Branches of Government (15 days)**

**Unit 5: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (10 days)**

### Overview of the AP Exam

**Exam Date: Monday, May 6, 2019**

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

Multiple-Choice Questions: 55 80 minutes, 50%

Free-Response Questions: 4 100 minutes, 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 the information is presented, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned opinion regarding this information.

### Course Content and Big Ideas

The course content consists of the essential political knowledge that will be synthesized in the construction of enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics. The big ideas that connect the content in the course units include:

- Constitutionalism (CON)
- Liberty and Order (LOR)
- Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD)
- Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI)

**Textbook:** *American Government: Roots and Reform* 10<sup>th</sup> edition, O'Connor and Sabato

### **Required Supreme Court Cases [CR15: Supreme Court cases]**

This course will incorporate the analysis of the following 15 required Supreme Court 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)

### **Required Foundational Documents [CR10: foundational documents]**

This course 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”

### **Course Format and Policies**

**Reading:** In order for students to be successful in a college level course, it is essential that they maximize their time and complete all assigned readings prior to class discussions. The readings, lectures and discussions will figure prominently in the content of the quizzes and exams. The students are expected to learn the basic material in their assigned readings. In class they are expected to apply their knowledge in analyzing and evaluating political issues based on their readings.

#### **Quizzes/Tests:**

There will be a test at the end of each unit and frequent quizzes mirroring the AP exam. Quizzes may consist of multiple choice, short answer or one free response question.

**Homework/class work/class participation:** Students will have homework daily, mostly reading a section of the text and outlining. Students can expect approximately 45-60 minutes of homework for each class. Homework assignments and class work will be completed to foster practice of key objectives and components.

## Mr. Coia's Class Rules/Procedures for AP Government & Politics

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

### Rules and Procedures

These rules should help you do your part in creating an atmosphere of learning in our classroom.

*Directions: Students, please read and initial each section on BOTH copies.  
Then, put one copy in your Handout section and turn one in to me.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Unit Guides:** I'll prepare a 3-to-4-week course of study to include all assignments, handouts, and due dates. This is a key part of this class. I suggest printing an extra one for parents to follow along. These guides will keep students and parents informed of the activities and progress of our class.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Online Access:** I will update grades via GradeSpeed each Friday. In addition, I will post each unit guide and other handouts on [www.mrcoia.com](http://www.mrcoia.com). You are required to spend at least 10 minutes on the weekend looking at your grade, handouts, upcoming assignments, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Note-taking:** Each class period requires you to have your notebook opened to your "GOV Classwork" section, dated at the top before the bell rings. You are expected to take notes on our class discussions, lectures, in-class reading, etc. Please do not expect me to tell you when to take notes. Take notes each class.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Food and Drink:** Bottled water is the only food or drink allowed in class. Please eat and drink before school and at lunch.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Electronics:** No phones or iPods are permitted. This is in compliance with the Student Handbook. The item will be turned into the office for parents to pick up.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Discussions:** Class discussions and sharing are the cornerstone of this class. Be prepared to speak. Sitting quietly is not acceptable!

\_\_\_\_\_ **Late Work:** Your work is due regardless of power outages, lack of printer ink, stolen computer, etc. Be responsible and plan ahead. I will accept late work for a maximum of 50% assigned value within two weeks past due. Be sure to write *LATE* and the date.

You will receive a coupon for two free late turn-ins per semester. If you decide to use it, tear off one and staple it to the top of the late assignment. Put it in the inbox in the classroom by the next day (not the next class period).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Tardy Policy:** You must be in your chair with all materials opened and ready on your desk when the bell rings. Tardy = lunch detention.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Attendance:** You are expected to attend class every day and follow attendance guidelines as stated in the student handbook. **Poor attendance, whether excused or unexcused, can negatively affect your grade and, more importantly, your understanding of the material.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Excused absences:** Since all of the assignments are in the unit guide and online, you will have the information to complete assignments even when you are absent. You must get the appropriate materials by asking a student, checking the web site, or talking to me outside of class time. The start of class is not the appropriate time to get your missing information. I will post homework and handouts online.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Far East, Field trips, and planned absences:** You are expected to get any work that you will miss before you leave and have it in at the same time as other students. For extended trips, please set up a meeting with me before you leave so that you can have it on your return. You will have the same amount of time to work on assignments, so I will meet with you to explain all work one or two weeks before your absence to give you plenty of time to work on it before leaving. This accomplishes two things: first, if you have any questions as you complete the assignments, we can discuss problems before leaving; second, this makes you work ahead and not behind so when you return to class, you are not lost and can quickly continue in the course of instruction with your peers. This takes more planning on my part, but I think it is valuable for students.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Family trips and extended vacations:** As per DoDEA policy, these are considered unexcused absences, and the work must be completed before you leave to be counted for credit.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Unexcused absences or unexcused tardies:** Sorry, you cannot make-up the assignment, quiz, or exam.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Note:** **Students are responsible to take quizzes and exams regardless of an absence prior to the test day.** Talk to students or me when you are out. Again, all information will be online and in your unit guide.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Cheating & Plagiarism:** Please do your own work. You will receive a zero for the test or assignment, as well as a referral to the office. This zero cannot be made up. If you are unsure if you plagiarized something, use this simple rule: "Did someone else write this, and do I not have quotation marks around it?" This includes copying from the Internet or from another student. For copying work, both the giver and receiver are equally guilty, and the penalty will apply to both.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Extra Credit:** There may be an additional assignment or two offered for you to earn extra credit. These extra points may help make up for a missing assignment. *Work hard on the credit throughout the year, rather than stressing about the extra credit.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Bathroom breaks/ leaving the room:** Please use the rest room, get a drink, etc. during passing time. Of course, if you need to go, let me know, then sign out before leaving.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Classroom Management:** My hope is that you will be self-managers in the classroom to nurture a positive atmosphere. If needed, here are the steps to discipline that I follow:

1. Verbal reminder in class
2. Verbal reminder in hall and/or lunch detention
3. Contact parents
4. Referral to office

\_\_\_\_\_ For **some offenses**, the students may get a lunch detention (e.g. tardy) or a referral (insubordination, dress code, etc.) without the reminder first. This set of directions and the student handbook act as the first reminder.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chain of Command:** I want to treat students as responsible learners and self-advocates. If there is an issue, **I expect students to make contact with me first about it before a parent does.** This will allow me to work with the student directly to ensure the issue is quickly addressed. If the student is unsatisfied, then parent contact is appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Grade Policy:** We will follow the DoDEA grading scale in this course. As this is an AP class, I will not round up grades beyond what GradeSpeed already does. For the grade, we'll use these categories:

50%	Tests/Writing/Projects
30%	Quizzes/Class work
20%	Homework

Semester exams count toward 20% of the final semester grade

<p><b>Need Assistance?</b> I want you to succeed in class and will help you as much as I can. Seminar works best, along with before and after school, and lunch. Let me know when you need some extra time. I'll be happy to meet with you to discuss assignments.</p>
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### Required Supplies

- THREE tabbed sections in your school binder. Title these tabs: *GOV HANDOUTS* and *GOV CLASSWORK* and *GOV OUTLINES*. A few paper pockets will help keep your work neat and organized. You do not need to have a separate binder for this class, but you will need the tabs.
- Several packs of index cards (I can provide them in small quantity each week, but it is encouraged for you to have your own at home)
- Plenty of loose-leaf paper, highlighter, pencils, pens, eraser, etc. *No ripped paper from spirals allowed.*
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**Period:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Signature Form**

AP Government & Politics  
Mr. Coia

**Here is your first homework assignment:**

- Take this information home and review it with your parents. You and your parents will sign this page, and the course description and activities will go in your notebook. Return this signed page and ONE copy of the initialed rules to Mr. Coia.
- Spend 15 minutes looking at the [www.mrcoia.com](http://www.mrcoia.com) site. Look at the homework page, handouts, forum, etc. You will be expected to check in at least once per week on the weekends, or more if you are absent. Let me know if there is a problem accessing this page.
- Purchase and prepare your required supplies for school. Bring them to class.
- Put a copy of the rules in the *Gov Handouts* section of your class binder. Turn one in to me in our next class session.

**Students:**

I have read these rules and understand what Mr. Coia expects of me. **I have put a copy of the rules in the *Gov Handouts* section of the class binder** so that I can refer to them if I have a question.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Parents:**

Please review these rules with your child. Also, please take a look at the online services so that you can stay informed of assignments and progress in class.

**This is a college-level course that contains rigorous writing and reading requirements. Attendance is vital to success.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Preferred parent email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me if you have questions. I am looking forward to partner with you to have an excellent year in AP Government.

Regards,

Ron Coia  
[Ron.coia@pac.dodea.edu](mailto:Ron.coia@pac.dodea.edu)  
AP Government & Politics