

AP® United States Government and Politics 2020-21

Adapted from sample syllabus from College Board

Curricular Requirements

- CR1 The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR2 The course includes the Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR3 The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR4 The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR5 The course includes the Political Participation Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).
- CR6 The course integrates public policy within each unit.
- CR7 The course addresses the big ideas by connecting enduring understandings across one or more units.
- CR8 The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts.
- CR9 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret quantitative data to explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors
- CR10 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.
- CR11 The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret visual information to explain how the elements of the visual illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors.

AP® United States Government and Politics

- CR12 The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios.
- CR13 The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework.
- CR14 Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework that culminates in a presentation of findings.
- CR15 Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework and connect them to other non-required landmark cases.
- CR16 Students and teachers have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook.

AP United States Government and Politics Syllabus

Section #1: Overview of the Course and the AP Exam

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 (19 days)

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government (34 days)

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (18 days)

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (13 days)

Unit 5: Political Participation (26 days)

The course also consists of:

- A one-class period review day in each unit
- A unit exam at the end of each unit that will be administered over two class periods
- A week for civic engagement project presentations at the end of the course
- Two weeks of review for the AP Exam at the end of the course

The political knowledge, enduring understandings, and big ideas acquired and developed in each unit will be applied to the disciplinary practices using the reasoning processes outlined below.

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 multiple choice 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 hypothetical and real-world scenarios

AP® United States Government and Politics Exam

Timing: One hour and 20 minutes

Percentage of Total Exam: 50%

Free-Response Questions:

Number of Questions: 4

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

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

Timing: One 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 the information is presented, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned opinion regarding this information.

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

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)
- Methods of Political Analysis (MPA)

Reasoning Processes

The reasoning processes are the thought processes that will facilitate connection-making and analysis in the pursuit of effectively executing the disciplinary practices in the course. In other words, the reasoning processes form the cognitive bridge between the course content/big ideas and the disciplinary practices. The reasoning processes in this course include:

- Definition/Classification: Demonstrating knowledge of course concepts
- Explain - Process: Explaining political processes

- Explain - Causation: Explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors
- Explain - Comparison: Explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors

Disciplinary Practices

The disciplinary practices are the tasks students will apply to the course content using the reasoning processes. Becoming proficient in these disciplinary practices gives students the tools to analyze political information,

Grading policies

SRG: Standards Referenced Grading

| Assessment/Practice Proficiency Levels | |
|--|--|
| 4 | Advanced Understanding of the Standard |
| 3 | Meets the Standard |
| 2 | Approaches the Standard |
| 1 | Does not Meet the Standard |

| | Scale Score Percentages |
|-----|-------------------------|
| 4 | 100% |
| 3.5 | 92% |
| 3 | 85% |
| 2.5 | 77% |
| 2 | 70% |
| 1.5 | 60% |
| 1 | 50% |
| M | 0 |
| S | 100% |
| I | 75% |
| U | 50% |

| Course Grade Scale | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| A | 89.5 - 100 |
| B | 79.5 – 89.4 |
| C | 69.5 – 79.4 |
| D | 59.5 – 69.4 |
| F | 0 – 59.4 |
| | |

*****Due to the complexity of final assessments, they may be weighted 2x and will be indicated in the gradebook.**

Grade Reporting Criteria/Weights

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Content Knowledge | 45% |
| Skills | 45% |
| Practice | 10% |

Grades are based on achievement of Content Standards and Grade Level Expectations.

***Weekly progress grades are posted at <https://ic.adasm12.org/campus/portal/adams12.isp>**

General Expectations

- Grades are based upon the demonstration of proficiency on units associated within specific grade reporting criteria.
- **Assessment:** Assessments are a means to determine a student's mastery and understanding of information, skills, concepts, or processes.
- **Practice: 10%** Practice includes opportunities for students to receive clear, specific, and timely feedback as they are developing knowledge and skills, prior to assessments.
- Assessments will be graded based on teacher/district/state rubrics.
 - Multiple opportunities will be offered on some assessments through the practice of looping content.
 - There will be no multiple opportunities on assessments that are considered finals.
 - Multiple opportunities does not mean endless opportunities.
 - Attendance policy will be followed in the administration of assessments.

Class Expectations

Missing or incomplete assignments/assessments for this course: Superintendent Policies 6280 Homework and 6281 Make-Up Work will be followed for this course. **They state that it is the student's responsibility to request and obtain missing work.** When a student has an excused absence, the student has the same number of days they were absent plus one day to make up assignments. Students who are unexcused may not be able to receive feedback from practice prior to required assessments.

Students are held to the Academic Integrity Policy for Mountain Range High School.