

**INCLUDES**

- ✓ Course framework
- ✓ Instructional section
- ✓ Sample exam questions

# AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics

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**COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION**

Effective  
Fall 2020



# AP<sup>®</sup> Comparative Government and Politics

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## COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTION

Effective  
**Fall 2020**

**AP COURSE AND EXAM DESCRIPTIONS ARE UPDATED PERIODICALLY**

Please visit AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.org](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org)) to determine whether a more recent course and exam description is available.

# What AP® Stands For

Thousands of Advanced Placement teachers have contributed to the principles articulated here. These principles are not new; they are, rather, a reminder of how AP already works in classrooms nationwide. The following principles are designed to ensure that teachers' expertise is respected, required course content is understood, and that students are academically challenged and free to make up their own minds.

1. AP stands for clarity and transparency. Teachers and students deserve clear expectations. The Advanced Placement Program makes public its course frameworks and sample assessments. Confusion about what is permitted in the classroom disrupts teachers and students as they navigate demanding work.
2. AP is an unflinching encounter with evidence. AP courses enable students to develop as independent thinkers and to draw their own conclusions. Evidence and the scientific method are the starting place for conversations in AP courses.
3. AP opposes censorship. AP is animated by a deep respect for the intellectual freedom of teachers and students alike. If a school bans required topics from their AP courses, the AP Program removes the AP designation from that course and its inclusion in the AP Course Ledger provided to colleges and universities. For example, the concepts of evolution are at the heart of college biology, and a course that neglects such concepts does not pass muster as AP Biology.
4. AP opposes indoctrination. AP students are expected to analyze different perspectives from their own, and no points on an AP Exam are awarded for agreement with any specific viewpoint. AP students are not required to feel certain ways about themselves or the course content. AP courses instead develop students' abilities to assess the credibility of sources, draw conclusions, and make up their own minds.

As the AP English Literature course description states: "AP students are not expected or asked to subscribe to any one specific set of cultural or political values, but are expected to have the maturity to analyze perspectives different from their own and to question the meaning, purpose, or effect of such content within the literary work as a whole."

5. AP courses foster an open-minded approach to the histories and cultures of different peoples. The study of different nationalities, cultures, religions, races, and ethnicities is essential within a variety of academic disciplines. AP courses ground such studies in primary sources so that students can evaluate experiences and evidence for themselves.
6. Every AP student who engages with evidence is listened to and respected. Students are encouraged to evaluate arguments but not one another. AP classrooms respect diversity in backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints. The perspectives and contributions of the full range of AP students are sought and considered. Respectful debate of ideas is cultivated and protected; personal attacks have no place in AP.
7. AP is a choice for parents and students. Parents and students freely choose to enroll in AP courses. Course descriptions are available online for parents and students to inform their choice. Parents do not define which college-level topics are suitable within AP courses; AP course and exam materials are crafted by committees of professors and other expert educators in each field. AP courses and exams are then further validated by the American Council on Education and studies that confirm the use of AP scores for college credits by thousands of colleges and universities nationwide.

The AP Program encourages educators to review these principles with parents and students so they know what to expect in an AP course. Advanced Placement is always a choice, and it should be an informed one. AP teachers should be given the confidence and clarity that once parents have enrolled their child in an AP course, they have agreed to a classroom experience that embodies these principles.

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# About AP

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College Board’s Advanced Placement® Program (AP®) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies—with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both—while still in high school. Through AP courses in 38 subjects, each culminating in a challenging exam, students learn to think critically, construct solid arguments, and see many sides of an issue—skills that prepare them for college and beyond. Taking AP courses demonstrates to college admission officers that students have sought the most challenging curriculum available to them, and research indicates that students who score a 3 or higher on an AP Exam typically experience greater academic success in college and are more likely to earn a college degree than non-AP students. Each AP teacher’s syllabus is evaluated and approved by faculty from some of the nation’s leading colleges and universities, and AP Exams are developed and scored by college faculty and experienced AP teachers. Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States grant credit, advanced placement, or both on the basis of successful AP Exam scores; more than 3,300 institutions worldwide annually receive AP scores.

## AP Course Development

In an ongoing effort to maintain alignment with best practices in college-level learning, AP courses and exams emphasize challenging, research-based curricula aligned with higher education expectations.

Individual teachers are responsible for designing their own curriculum for AP courses and selecting appropriate college-level readings, assignments, and resources. This course and exam description presents the content and skills that are the focus of the corresponding college course and that appear on the AP Exam. It also organizes the content and skills into a series of units that represent a sequence found in widely adopted college textbooks and that many AP teachers have told us they follow in order to focus their instruction. The intention of this publication is to respect teachers’ time and expertise by providing a roadmap that they can modify and adapt to their local priorities and preferences. Moreover, by organizing the AP course content and skills into units, the AP Program

is able to provide teachers and students with formative assessments—Personal Progress Checks—that teachers can assign throughout the year to measure students’ progress as they acquire content knowledge and develop skills.

## Enrolling Students: Access, Opportunity, and Readiness

The AP Program welcomes all students willing to challenge themselves with college-level coursework and career preparation. We strongly encourage educators to invite students into AP classes, including students from ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, geographic, or other groups not broadly participating in a school’s AP program. We believe that readiness for AP is attainable, and that educators can expand readiness by opening access to Pre-AP course work. We commit to support educators and communities in their efforts to make AP courses widely available, advancing students in their plans for college and careers.

## Offering AP Courses: The AP Course Audit

The AP Program unequivocally supports the principle that each school implements its own curriculum that will enable students to develop the content understandings and skills described in the course framework.

While the unit sequence represented in this publication is optional, the AP Program does have a short list of curricular and resource requirements that must be fulfilled before a school can label a course “Advanced Placement” or “AP.” Schools wishing to offer AP courses must participate in the AP Course Audit, a process through which AP teachers’ course materials are reviewed by college faculty. The AP Course Audit was created to provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements for AP courses and to help colleges and universities validate courses marked “AP” on students’ transcripts. This process ensures that AP teachers’ courses meet or exceed the curricular and resource expectations that college and secondary school faculty have established for college-level courses.

The AP Course Audit form is submitted by the AP teacher and the school principal (or designated administrator) to confirm awareness and understanding of the curricular and resource requirements. A syllabus or course outline, detailing how course requirements are met, is submitted by the AP teacher for review by college faculty.

Please visit the [AP Course Audit](#) website for more information to support the preparation and submission of materials for the AP Course Audit.

## How the AP Program Is Developed

The scope of content for an AP course and exam is derived from an analysis of hundreds of syllabi and course offerings of colleges and universities. Using this research and data, a committee of college faculty and expert AP teachers work within the scope of the corresponding college course to articulate what students should know and be able to do upon the completion of the AP course. The resulting course framework is the heart of this course and exam description and serves as a blueprint of the content and skills that can appear on an AP Exam.

The AP Test Development Committees are responsible for developing each AP Exam, ensuring the exam questions are aligned to the course framework. The AP Exam development process is a multiyear endeavor; all AP Exams undergo extensive review, revision, piloting, and analysis to ensure that questions are accurate, fair, and valid, and that there is an appropriate spread of difficulty across the questions.

Committee members are selected to represent a variety of perspectives and institutions (public and private, small and large schools and colleges), and a range of gender, racial/ethnic, and regional groups. A list of each subject's current AP Test Development Committee members is available on [AP Central](#)<sup>®</sup>.

Throughout AP course and exam development, College Board gathers feedback from various stakeholders in both secondary schools and higher education institutions. This feedback is carefully considered to ensure that AP courses and exams are able to provide students with a college-level learning experience and the opportunity to demonstrate their qualifications for advanced placement or college credit.

## How AP Exams Are Scored

The exam scoring process, like the course and exam development process, relies on the expertise of both AP teachers and college faculty. While multiple-choice questions are scored by machine, the free-response

questions and through-course performance assessments, as applicable, are scored by thousands of college faculty and expert AP teachers. Most are scored at the annual AP Reading, while a small portion is scored online. All AP Readers are thoroughly trained, and their work is monitored throughout the Reading for fairness and consistency. In each subject, a highly respected college faculty member serves as Chief Faculty Consultant and, with the help of AP Readers in leadership positions, maintains the accuracy of the scoring standards. Scores on the free-response questions and performance assessments are weighted and combined with the results of the computer-scored multiple-choice questions, and this raw score is converted into a composite AP score on a 1–5 scale.

AP Exams are **not** norm-referenced or graded on a curve. Instead, they are criterion-referenced, which means that every student who meets the criteria for an AP score of 2, 3, 4, or 5 will receive that score, no matter how many students that is. The criteria for the number of points students must earn on the AP Exam to receive scores of 3, 4, or 5—the scores that research consistently validates for credit and placement purposes—include:

- The number of points successful college students earn when their professors administer AP Exam questions to them.
- The number of points researchers have found to be predictive that an AP student will succeed when placed into a subsequent, higher-level college course.
- Achievement-level descriptions formulated by college faculty who review each AP Exam question.

## Using and Interpreting AP Scores

The extensive work done by college faculty and AP teachers in the development of the course and exam and throughout the scoring process ensures that AP Exam scores accurately represent students' achievement in the equivalent college course. Frequent and regular research studies establish the validity of AP scores as follows:

AP Score	Credit Recommendation	College Grade Equivalent
5	Extremely well qualified	A
4	Well qualified	A-, B+, B
3	Qualified	B-, C+, C
2	Possibly qualified	n/a
1	No recommendation	n/a

While colleges and universities are responsible for setting their own credit and placement policies, most private colleges and universities award credit and/or advanced placement for AP scores of 3 or higher. Additionally, most states in the U.S. have adopted statewide credit policies that ensure college credit for scores of 3 or higher at public colleges and universities. To confirm a specific college's AP credit/placement policy, use the search engine available on the [AP Credit Policy Search](#) page.

### **BECOMING AN AP READER**

Each June, thousands of AP teachers and college faculty members from around the world gather for seven days in multiple locations to evaluate and score the free-response sections of the AP Exams. Ninety-eight percent of surveyed educators who took part in the AP Reading say it was a positive experience.

There are many reasons to consider becoming an AP Reader, including opportunities to:

- **Bring positive changes to the classroom:** Surveys show that the vast majority of returning AP Readers—both high school and college

educators—make improvements to the way they teach or score because of their experience at the AP Reading.

- **Gain in-depth understanding of AP Exam and AP scoring standards:** AP Readers gain exposure to the quality and depth of the responses from the entire pool of AP Exam takers and thus are better able to assess their students' work in the classroom.
- **Receive compensation:** AP Readers are compensated for their work during the Reading. Expenses, lodging, and meals are covered for Readers who travel.
- **Score from home:** AP Readers have online distributed scoring opportunities for certain subjects. Check the [AP Reader](#) site for details.
- **Earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs):** AP Readers earn professional development hours and CEUs that can be applied to PD requirements by states, districts, and schools.

### **How to Apply**

Visit the [Become an AP Reader](#) site for eligibility requirements and to start the application process.

# AP Resources and Supports

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By completing a simple activation process at the start of the school year, teachers and students receive access to a robust set of classroom resources.

## AP Classroom

**AP Classroom** is a dedicated online platform designed to support teachers and students throughout their AP experience. The platform provides a variety of powerful resources and tools to provide yearlong support to teachers and enable students to receive meaningful feedback on their progress.



### UNIT GUIDES

Appearing in this publication and on AP Classroom, these planning guides outline all required course content and skills, organized into commonly taught units. Each unit guide suggests a sequence and pacing of content, scaffolds skill instruction across units, organizes content into topics, and provides tips on taking the AP Exam.



### PERSONAL PROGRESS CHECKS

Formative AP questions for every unit provide feedback to students on the areas where they need to focus. Available online, Personal Progress Checks measure knowledge and skills through multiple-choice questions with rationales to explain correct and incorrect answers, and free-response questions with scoring information. Because the Personal Progress Checks are formative, the results of these assessments cannot be used to evaluate teacher effectiveness or assign letter grades to students, and any such misuses are grounds for losing school authorization to offer AP courses.\*



### PROGRESS DASHBOARD

This dashboard allows teachers to review class and individual student progress throughout the year. Teachers can view class trends and see where students struggle with content and skills that will be assessed on the AP Exam. Students can view their own progress over time to improve their performance before the AP Exam.



### AP QUESTION BANK

This online library of real AP Exam questions provides teachers with secure questions to use in their classrooms. Teachers can find questions indexed by course topics and skills, create customized tests, and assign them online or on paper. These tests enable students to practice and get feedback on each question.

\*To report misuses, please call 877-274-6474 (International: +1-212-632-1781).

## Digital Activation

In order to teach an AP class and make sure students are registered to take the AP Exam, teachers must first complete the digital activation process. Digital activation gives students and teachers access to resources and gathers students' exam registration information online, eliminating most of the answer sheet bubbling that has added to testing time and fatigue.

AP teachers and students begin by signing in to **My AP** and completing a simple activation process at the start of the school year, which provides access to all AP resources, including AP Classroom.

To complete digital activation:

- Teachers and students sign in to or create their College Board accounts.
- Teachers confirm that they have added the course they teach to their AP Course Audit account and have had it approved by their school's administrator.
- Teachers or AP Coordinators, depending on who the school has decided is responsible, set up class sections so students can access AP resources and have exams ordered on their behalf.
- Students join class sections with a join code provided by their teacher or AP Coordinator.
- Students will be asked for additional registration information upon joining their first class section, which eliminates the need for extensive answer sheet bubbling on exam day.

While the digital activation process takes a short time for teachers, students, and AP Coordinators to complete, overall it helps save time and provides the following additional benefits:

- **Access to AP resources and supports:** Teachers have access to resources specifically designed to support instruction and provide feedback to students throughout the school year as soon as activation is complete.
- **Streamlined exam ordering:** AP Coordinators can create exam orders from the same online class rosters that enable students to access resources. The coordinator reviews, updates, and submits this information as the school's exam order in the fall.
- **Student registration labels:** For each student included in an exam order, schools will receive a set of personalized AP ID registration labels, which replaces the AP student pack. The AP ID connects a student's exam materials with the registration information they provided during digital activation, eliminating the need for preadministration sessions and reducing time spent bubbling on exam day.
- **Targeted Instructional Planning Reports:** AP teachers will get Instructional Planning Reports (IPRs) that include data on each of their class sections automatically rather than relying on special codes optionally bubbled in on exam day.

# Instructional Model

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Integrating AP resources throughout the course can help students develop skills and conceptual understandings. The instructional model outlined below shows possible ways to incorporate AP resources into the classroom.



## Plan

Teachers may consider the following approaches as they plan their instruction before teaching each unit.

- Review the overview at the start of each **unit guide** to identify essential questions, conceptual understandings, and skills for each unit.
- Use the **Unit at a Glance** table to identify related topics that build toward a common understanding and then plan appropriate pacing for students.
- Identify useful strategies in the **Instructional Approaches** section to help teach the concepts and skills.



## Teach

When teaching, supporting resources could be used to build students' conceptual understanding and their mastery of skills.

- Use the topic pages in the **unit guides** to identify the required content.
- Integrate the content with a skill, considering any appropriate scaffolding.
- Employ any of the instructional strategies previously identified.
- Use the available resources on the topic pages to bring a variety of assets into the classroom.



## Assess

Teachers can measure student understanding of the content and skills covered in the unit and provide actionable feedback to students.

- At the end of each unit, use **AP Classroom** to assign students the online **Personal Progress Checks**, as homework or an in-class task.
- Provide question-level feedback to students through answer rationales; provide unit- and skill-level feedback using the progress dashboard.
- Create additional practice opportunities using the **AP Question Bank** and assign them through **AP Classroom**.

# About the AP Comparative Government and Politics Course

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AP Comparative Government and Politics introduces students to the rich diversity of political life outside the United States. The course uses a comparative approach to examine the political structures; policies; and political, economic, and social challenges of six selected countries: China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Students compare the effectiveness of approaches to many global issues by examining how different governments solve similar problems. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments.

## College Course Equivalent

AP Comparative Government and Politics is equivalent to a one-semester introductory college course in comparative government and politics.

## Prerequisites

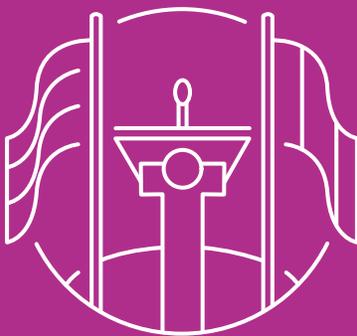
There are no prerequisites for AP Comparative Government and Politics. Students should be able to read a college-level textbook and write grammatically correct, complete sentences.

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GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

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# Course Framework



# Introduction

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*The AP Comparative Government and Politics course detailed in this framework reflects what comparative political science teachers, professors, and researchers agree that a college-level comparative government and politics course should teach students to do: define and describe major political concepts, analyze patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences, and compare and contrast political institutions and processes across countries.*

The *AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description* defines what representative colleges and universities typically expect students to know and be able to do in order to earn college credit or placement. Students practice the skills used by comparative political scientists by studying data, political writings from different countries, and the processes and outcomes of politics in a variety of country settings. Students will show mastery of these skills on the AP Exam through various means, including applying concepts, analyzing data, comparing countries, and writing political science arguments.

Students study six countries in AP Comparative Government and Politics: China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom.\*

Although the course framework is designed to provide a clear and detailed description of the course content and skills, it is not a curriculum. Teachers create their own curricula to meet the needs of their students and any state or local requirements.

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\*We recognize that the official names of these countries are the People's Republic of China, Islamic Republic of Iran, United Mexican States, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Russian Federation, and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In AP Comparative Government and Politics, we use the common forms of these names.

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# Course Framework Components

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## Overview

This course framework provides a description of what students should know and be able to do to qualify for college credit or placement.

### The course framework includes two essential components:

#### 1 DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

The disciplinary practices are central to the study and practice of comparative government and politics. Students should develop and apply the described practices on a regular basis over the span of the course.

#### 2 COURSE CONTENT

The course content is organized into commonly taught units of study that provide a suggested sequence for the course. These units comprise the content and conceptual understandings that colleges and universities typically expect students to master to qualify for college credit and/or placement. This content is grounded in big ideas, which are cross-cutting concepts that build conceptual understanding and spiral throughout the course.

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# Disciplinary Practices

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The table that follows presents the disciplinary practices, along with their related skills, that students should develop during the AP Comparative Government and Politics course. These practices form the basis of the tasks on the AP Exam.

The unit guides later in this publication embed and spiral these practices throughout the course, providing teachers with one way to integrate the practices into the course content with sufficient repetition to prepare students to transfer those skills when taking the AP Exam.

More detailed information about teaching the disciplinary practices can be found in the Instructional Approaches section of this publication.



# Disciplinary Practices

Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Practice 4	Practice 5
<b>Concept Application</b> 1 Apply political concepts and processes in authentic contexts.	<b>Country Comparison</b> 2 Compare political concepts and processes among the course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom).	<b>Data Analysis</b> 3 Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics.	<b>Source Analysis</b> 4 Read, analyze, and interpret text-based sources.	<b>Argumentation</b> 5 Develop an argument in essay format.

## SKILLS

- 1.A** Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 1.B** Explain political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 1.C** Compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 1.D** Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.
- 1.E** Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.

- 2.A** Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 2.B** Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *similar* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 2.C** Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *different* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

- 3.A** Describe the data presented.
- 3.B** Describe patterns and trends in data.
- 3.C** Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.
- 3.D** Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 3.E** Explain possible limitations of the data provided.

- 4.A** Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.
- 4.B** Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
- 4.C** Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

- 5.A** Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.
- 5.B** Support the argument using relevant evidence.
- 5.C** Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim/thesis.
- 5.D** Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.

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# AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

# Course Content

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Based on the Understanding by Design® (Wiggins and McTighe) model, this course framework provides a description of the course requirements necessary for student success. The framework specifies what students should know and be able to do to, with a focus on big ideas that encompass core principles, theories, and processes of the discipline. The framework also encourages instruction that prepares students for advanced comparative political science coursework and to be active and informed about politics abroad.

## Big Ideas

The big ideas serve as the foundation of the course and enable students to create meaningful connections among concepts. They are themes that become threads that run throughout the course. Revisiting the big ideas and applying them in a variety of contexts allows students to develop a deeper conceptual understanding. Below are the big ideas of the course and a brief description of each.

### **BIG IDEA 1: POWER AND AUTHORITY (PAU)**

Political systems and regimes govern societies and determine who has power and authority. They shape the level of legitimacy and produce different policy outcomes.

### **BIG IDEA 2: LEGITIMACY AND STABILITY (LEG)**

Political legitimacy is the degree to which a government's right to rule is accepted by the citizenry. Governments that maintain high levels of legitimacy tend to be more stable and have an easier time enacting, implementing, and enforcing their policies.

### **BIG IDEA 3: DEMOCRATIZATION (DEM)**

Democratization is a process that involves the adoption of free and fair elections, the extension of civil liberties, and the establishment of the rule of law. Democratization is a long-term and often uneven process that typically results in increased governmental transparency and greater citizen access and influence over policy making.

*continued on next page*

#### **BIG IDEA 4: INTERNAL/EXTERNAL FORCES (IEF)**

Internal forces, such as political culture, citizen participation, civil society, interest groups, environmental pressures, and internal divisions based on class, religion, ethnicity, and/or territory, can both challenge and reinforce regimes. External forces, especially globalization, include the increasing worldwide flow of goods, investments, ideas, and people in a manner that is largely unconstrained by national borders.

#### **BIG IDEA 5: METHODS OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS (MPA)**

Political scientists collect data and make observations in order to describe patterns and trends and explain the political behavior of individuals, groups, organizations, and governments. They use data and ideas from other disciplines such as economics, sociology, history, and geography when drawing conclusions.

#### **UNITS**

The course content is organized into commonly taught units. The units have been arranged in a logical sequence frequently found in many college courses and textbooks.

The five units in AP Comparative Government and Politics, and their weighting on the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam, are listed below.

Pacing recommendations at the unit level and on the Course at a Glance table provide suggestions on how to teach the required course content and administer the Personal Progress Checks. The suggested class periods are based on a schedule

in which the class meets five days a week for 45 minutes each day. While these recommendations have been made to aid planning, teachers should of course adjust the pacing based on the needs of their students, alternate schedules (e.g., block scheduling), or their school's academic calendar.

#### **TOPICS**

Each unit is broken down into teachable segments called topics. The topic pages (starting on page 34) contain all required content for each topic. Although most topics can be taught in one or two class periods, teachers are again encouraged to pace the course to suit the needs of their students and school.

<b>Units</b>	<b>Exam Weighting</b>
<b>Unit 1:</b> Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments	<b>18–27%</b>
<b>Unit 2:</b> Political Institutions	<b>22–33%</b>
<b>Unit 3:</b> Political Culture and Participation	<b>11–18%</b>
<b>Unit 4:</b> Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations	<b>13–18%</b>
<b>Unit 5:</b> Political and Economic Changes and Development	<b>16–24%</b>

# Spiraling the Big Ideas

The following table shows how the big ideas spiral across units.

Big Ideas	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
 <b>Power and Authority</b> <b>PAU</b>	<i>Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments</i>	<i>Political Institutions</i>	<i>Political Culture and Participation</i>	<i>Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations</i>	<i>Political and Economic Changes and Development</i>
	✓	✓		✓	
<b>Legitimacy and Stability</b> <b>LEG</b>	✓		✓		✓
<b>Democratization</b> <b>DEM</b>			✓	✓	
<b>Internal/External Forces</b> <b>IEF</b>			✓	✓	✓
<b>Methods of Political Analysis</b> <b>MPA</b>	✓				

# Course at a Glance

## Plan

The Course at a Glance provides a useful visual organization of the AP Comparative Government and Politics curricular components, including:

- Sequence of units, along with approximate weighting and suggested pacing. Please note, pacing options are provided for teaching the course for a full year and for a single semester.
- Progression of topics within each unit.
- Spiraling of the big ideas and practices across units.

## Teach

### DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

*Disciplinary practices spiral across units.*

<b>1</b> Concept Application	<b>3</b> Data Analysis
<b>2</b> Country Comparison	<b>4</b> Source Analysis
	<b>5</b> Argumentation

### BIG IDEAS

*Big ideas spiral across units.*

<b>PAU</b> Power and Authority	<b>IEF</b> Internal/External Forces
<b>LEG</b> Legitimacy and Stability	<b>MPA</b> Methods of Political Analysis
<b>DEM</b> Democratization	

## Assess

Assign the Personal Progress Checks—either as homework or in class—for each unit. Each Personal Progress Check contains formative multiple-choice and free-response questions. The feedback from the Personal Progress Checks shows students the areas where they need to focus.

**UNIT**  
**1**

## Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

**~22/~11** Class Periods

**18–27%** AP Exam Weighting

<b>MPA</b> <b>3</b>	<b>1.1</b> The Practice of Political Scientists
<b>PAU</b> <b>1</b>	<b>1.2</b> Defining Political Organizations
<b>PAU</b> <b>2</b>	<b>1.3</b> Democracy vs. Authoritarianism
<b>PAU</b> <b>1</b>	<b>1.4</b> Democratization
<b>PAU</b> <b>2</b>	<b>1.5</b> Sources of Power and Authority
<b>PAU</b> <b>4</b>	<b>1.6</b> Change in Power and Authority
<b>PAU</b> <b>4</b>	<b>1.7</b> Federal and Unitary Systems
<b>LEG</b> <b>3</b>	<b>1.8</b> Political Legitimacy
<b>LEG</b> <b>1</b>	<b>1.9</b> Sustaining Legitimacy
<b>LEG</b> <b>3</b>	<b>1.10</b> Political Stability

### Personal Progress Check 1

**Multiple-choice: ~30 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Conceptual Analysis
- Quantitative Analysis (partial)
- Comparative Analysis (partial)

**UNIT**  
**2**

## Political Institutions

**~32/~16** Class Periods

**22–33%** AP Exam Weighting

<b>PAU</b> <b>1</b>	<b>2.1</b> Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems
<b>PAU</b> <b>2</b>	<b>2.2</b> Comparing Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems
<b>PAU</b> <b>1</b>	<b>2.3</b> Executive Systems
<b>PAU</b> <b>5</b>	<b>2.4</b> Executive Term Limits
<b>PAU</b> <b>4</b>	<b>2.5</b> Removal of Executives
<b>PAU</b> <b>2</b>	<b>2.6</b> Legislative Systems
<b>PAU</b> <b>4</b>	<b>2.7</b> Independent Legislatures
<b>PAU</b> <b>1</b>	<b>2.8</b> Judicial Systems
<b>PAU</b> <b>5</b>	<b>2.9</b> Independent Judiciaries

### Personal Progress Check 2

**Multiple-choice: ~20 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Argument Essay (partial)
- Comparative Analysis
- Argument Essay (partial)

**NOTE:** Partial versions of the free-response questions are provided to prepare students for more complex, full questions that they will encounter on the AP Exam.

**UNIT 3**

**Political Culture and Participation**

**~28/~14** Class Periods **11–18%** AP Exam Weighting

IEF 1	3.1 Civil Society
IEF 2	3.2 Political Culture
IEF 1	3.3 Political Ideologies
IEF 3	3.4 Political Values and Beliefs
DEM 3	3.5 Nature and Role of Political Participation
DEM 5	3.6 Forces that Impact Political Participation
DEM 4	3.7 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
LEG 2	3.8 Political and Social Cleavages
LEG 5	3.9 Challenges from Political and Social Cleavages

**Personal Progress Check 3**

- Multiple-choice: ~20 questions**  
**Free-response: 3 questions**
- Argument Essay (partial)
  - Argument Essay
  - Quantitative Analysis

**UNIT 4**

**Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations**

**~18/~9** Class Periods **13–18%** AP Exam Weighting

DEM 2	4.1 Electoral Systems and Rules
DEM 4	4.2 Objectives of Election Rules
PAU 3	4.3 Political Party Systems
PAU 2	4.4 Role of Political Party Systems
IEF 5	4.5 Impact of Social Movements and Interest Groups
IEF 4	4.6 Pluralist and Corporatist Interests

**Personal Progress Check 4**

- Multiple-choice: ~15 questions**  
**Free-response: 3 questions**
- Comparative Analysis
  - Argument Essay
  - Conceptual Analysis

**UNIT 5**

**Political and Economic Changes and Development**

**~20/~10** Class Periods **16–24%** AP Exam Weighting

IEF 3	5.1 Impact of Global Economic and Technological Forces
IEF 2	5.2 Political Responses to Global Market Forces
IEF 1	5.3 Challenges from Globalization
IEF 3	5.4 Policies and Economic Liberalization
LEG 4	5.5 International and Supranational Organizations
LEG 2	5.6 Adaptation of Social Policies
LEG 5	5.7 Impact of Industrialization and Economic Development
LEG 3	5.8 Causes and Effects of Demographic Change
LEG 4	5.9 Impact of Natural Resources

**Personal Progress Check 5**

- Multiple-choice: ~25 questions**  
**Free-response: 3 questions**
- Quantitative Analysis
  - Argument Essay
  - Conceptual Analysis

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## AP COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

# Unit Guides

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### Introduction

Designed with extensive input from the community of AP Comparative Government and Politics educators, the unit guides offer all teachers helpful guidance in building students' skills and knowledge. The suggested sequence in these unit guides was identified through a thorough analysis of the syllabi of highly effective AP teachers and the organization of typical college textbooks.

This unit structure respects new AP teachers' time by providing one possible sequence they can adopt or modify rather than having to build from scratch. An additional benefit is that these units enable the AP Program to provide interested teachers with formative assessments—the Personal Progress Checks—that they can assign their students at the end of each unit to gauge progress toward success on the AP Exam. However, experienced AP teachers who are satisfied with their current course organization and exam results should feel no pressure to adopt these units, which comprise an optional sequence for this course.

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# Using the Unit Guides

UNIT  
1

**18–27%** AP EXAM WEIGHTING

**~22/~11** CLASS PERIODS

## Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

**Developing Understanding**

Comparative political scientists seek to understand similarities and differences between states, evaluating political realities and understanding political change. This first unit sets the foundation for students to think like comparative political scientists by teaching them to read and analyze qualitative and quantitative data related to the six required course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom) and helping them understand concepts and examples they can use to support an argument about the countries.

Understanding the similarities and differences in political systems, regimes, and governments—how they function and how they gain and maintain power and legitimacy—as well as the terminology used to describe them provides students with the foundational knowledge needed to be able to compare course countries throughout future units.

**Building the Disciplinary Practices**

Comparative political scientists study political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors in various countries.

This first unit introduces the practice of data analysis. Quantitative data may be represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, or infographics. Initially, students should accurately describe presented data, which builds an understanding that allows them to then identify and explain trends and patterns in the data.

Like quantitative sources, text-based qualitative sources help students understand how governmental and political institutions function and the reasons for their behaviors. When asking students to use these sources, have them identify an author's claim(s) and the supporting evidence and whether that evidence is logical throughout the piece.

**Preparing for the AP Exam**

The AP Comparative Government and Politics course requires students to apply their knowledge in a variety of contexts and real-world scenarios. On the AP Exam, students will show an understanding of how political concepts actually work, often by describing or explaining an interaction or application within a given scenario.

The conceptual analysis question on the exam requires that students focus on the application of a concept with no required country. Students should go beyond description and definition by explaining the impact of a political concept and transferring their knowledge to different political concepts.

Students often struggle with explanations by neglecting to explain the *how* or *why* in the context of the question. Have students practice by asking them to explain the steps, stages, and interactions of processes; explain and link causes and effects; and identify and explain the significance of similarities and differences.

AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description
Course Framework V.1 | 31

## UNIT OPENERS

**Developing Understanding** provides an overview that contextualizes and situates the key content of the unit within the scope of the course.

The **big ideas** serve as the foundation of the course and develop understanding as they spiral throughout the course. The **essential questions** are thought-provoking questions that motivate students and inspire inquiry.

**Building the Disciplinary Practices** describes specific aspects of the practices that are appropriate to focus on in that unit.

**Preparing for the AP Exam** provides helpful tips and common student misunderstandings identified from prior exam data.

UNIT  
1

**Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments**

### UNIT AT A GLANCE

	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
			<b>~22/~11</b> CLASS PERIODS
APU-1	1.1 The Practice of Political Scientists	1.A.1 Describe patterns and trends in data.	
	1.2 Defining Political Organizations	1.A.2 Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.3 Democracy vs. Authoritarianism	1.A.3 Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
PRU-1	1.4 Democratization	1.A.4 Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.	
	1.5 Sources of Power and Authority	1.A.5 Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with similar political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.6 Change in Power and Authority	1.A.6 Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
PRU-2	1.7 Federal and Unitary Systems	1.A.7 Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.8 Political Legitimacy	1.A.8 Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
LEP-1	1.9 Sustaining Legitimacy	1.A.9 Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.	
	1.10 Political Stability	1.A.10 Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	

Go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 1. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

32 | Course Framework V.1
AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description

The **Unit at a Glance table** shows the topics, related enduring understandings, and suggested skills. The "class periods" column has been left blank so that teachers can customize the time they spend on each topic.

The **suggested skill** for each topic shows one way teachers can link the content in that topic to a specific AP Comparative Government and Politics skill. The individual skill has been thoughtfully chosen in a way that allows teachers to spiral those skills, along with the disciplinary practices, throughout the course. The questions on the Personal Progress Checks are based on this pairing. However, AP Exam questions can pair the content with any of the skills.

# Using the Unit Guides

UNIT 1  
Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	1.1	<b>Create Representations</b> Using the data collection resources identified in essential knowledge statement MPK-1.A.8 (e.g., the Human Development Index), ask students to identify a set of data that can be used to investigate relationships among course countries, such as voting patterns by gender and ethnicity. Then have them create a representation that best shows the data and the trends. Follow up this activity with a whole-group discussion about quantitative analysis and why it is important.
2	1.3	<b>Graphic Organizer</b> This topic is a good place to introduce a comparative look across the core course countries. Using a graphic organizer, such as a Venn diagram, and the content in essential knowledge statements PAU-1.B.1, PAU-1.B.2, and PAU-1.B.3, ask students to generate the relevant similarities and differences between the countries and their governments.
3	1.6	<b>Discussion Groups</b> Use learning objective PAU-1.D (Explain sources of power and authority in political systems) and have students gather information and show their understanding of changes in power and authority. Ask students to consider peaceful versus violent change or how different regimes maintain sovereignty. By allowing students to engage in small-group discussion, you can then scale up to a whole-group discussion, which may expand on the ideas expressed in the small groups.

**Unit Planning Notes**

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you will introduce country comparison and present both data and text-based sources for analysis.

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AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description | Course Framework V.1 | 33

The **Sample Instructional Activities** page includes optional activities that can help teachers tie together the content and skill of a particular topic. Additionally, this page offers space for teachers to make notes on their approach to the individual topics and the unit as a whole.

UNIT 1  
Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

## TOPIC 1.4 Democratization

**Required Course Content**

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

**MPK-1**  
Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**PAU-1.C**  
Explain the process and goals of democratization.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

**PAU-1.C.1**  
Democratization is a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime, while this process can start or temporarily change direction, the process aims to result in the following over time:

- More competition, fairness, and transparency in elections
- Increased citizen participation in policy-making processes
- Universal suffrage for adult citizens
- Greater governmental transparency
- Protected civil rights and liberties
- Equal treatment of citizens
- Establishment of the rule of law

**PAU-1.C.2**  
Democratic electoral systems can accommodate ethnic diversity and increase multiparty competition with rule adjustments, including gender or cultural quotas, proportional representation, and changes in vote thresholds and district boundaries.

continued on next page

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

**CA-1** Concept Application

**1.2** Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.

**AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

- Classroom Resources > The Democratic Transition in Nigeria

AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description | Course Framework V.1 | 39

## TOPIC PAGES

The **suggested skill** offers a possible skill to pair with the topic.

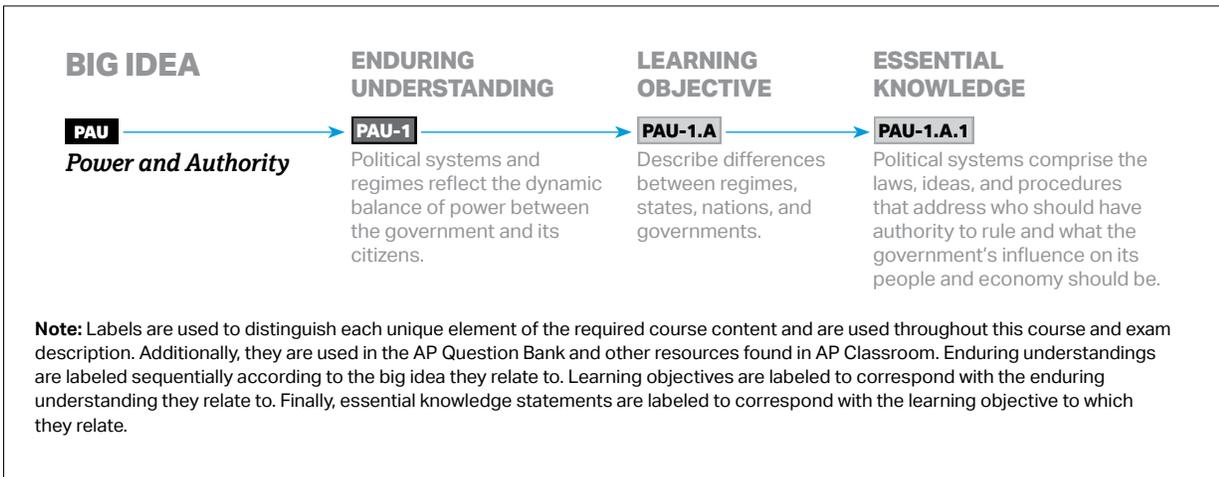
Where possible, **available resources** are listed that might help teachers address a particular topic in their classroom.

**Enduring understandings** are the long-term takeaways related to the big ideas that leave a lasting impression on students. Students build and earn these understandings over time by exploring and applying course content throughout the year.

**Learning objectives** define what a student should be able to do with content knowledge in order to progress toward the enduring understandings.

**Essential knowledge** statements describe the knowledge required to perform the learning objectives.

## REQUIRED COURSE CONTENT LABELING SYSTEM



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**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT 1**

**Political  
Systems,  
Regimes, and  
Governments**



**18–27%**  
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



**~22/~11**  
CLASS PERIODS

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The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue computer monitor icon.

Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

### **Personal Progress Check 1**

**Multiple-choice: ~30 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Conceptual Analysis
- Quantitative Analysis (partial)
- Comparative Analysis (partial)

# Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

## ← → Developing Understanding

### BIG IDEA 1

#### Power and Authority **PAU**

- How does a political system affect the daily life of citizens?
- How do people both inside and outside the government impact the relationship between the government and its citizens?

### BIG IDEA 2

#### Legitimacy and Stability **LEG**

- How does the perceived legitimacy of a government by its citizenry impact how other countries see it?

### BIG IDEA 5

#### Methods of Political Analysis **MPA**

- How do comparative political scientists generate meaningful conclusions that can be applied to other countries?

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Understanding the similarities and differences in political systems, regimes, and governments—how they function and how they gain and maintain power and legitimacy—as well as the terminology used to describe them provides students with the foundational knowledge needed to be able to compare course countries throughout future units.

## Building the Disciplinary Practices

**2.A 3.B 4.A**

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## UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
			~22/~11 CLASS PERIODS
MPA-1	1.1 The Practice of Political Scientists	3.B Describe patterns and trends in data.	
	1.2 Defining Political Organizations	1.A Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
PAU-1	1.3 Democracy vs. Authoritarianism	2.A Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.4 Democratization	1.D Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.	
	1.5 Sources of Power and Authority	2.B Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>similar</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	1.6 Change in Power and Authority	4.A Describe the author’s claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
PAU-2	1.7 Federal and Unitary Systems	4.B Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
LEG-1	1.8 Political Legitimacy	3.C Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
	1.9 Sustaining Legitimacy	1.E Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.	
	1.10 Political Stability	3.D Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	



Go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign the **Personal Progress Check** for Unit 1. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	1.1	<p><b>Create Representations</b></p> <p>Using the data collection resources identified in essential knowledge statement MPA-1.A.8 (e.g., the Human Development Index), ask students to identify a set of data that can be used to investigate relationships among course countries, such as voting patterns by gender and ethnicity. Then have them create a representation that best shows the data and the trends. Follow up this activity with a whole-group discussion about quantitative analysis and why it is important.</p>
2	1.3	<p><b>Graphic Organizer</b></p> <p>This topic is a good place to introduce a comparative look across the core course countries. Using a graphic organizer, such as a Venn diagram, and the content in essential knowledge statements PAU-1.B.1, PAU-1.B.2, and PAU-1.B.3, ask students to generate the relevant similarities and differences between the countries and their governments.</p>
3	1.6	<p><b>Discussion Groups</b></p> <p>Use learning objective PAU-1.D (<i>Explain sources of power and authority in political systems</i>) and have students gather information and show their understanding of changes in power and authority. Ask students to consider peaceful versus violent change or how different regimes maintain sovereignty. By allowing students to engage in small-group discussion, you can then scale up to a whole-group discussion, which may expand on the ideas expressed in the small groups.</p>



### Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you will introduce country comparison and present both data and text-based sources for analysis.

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## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis

3.B

Describe patterns and trends in data.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Classroom Resources >
- ♦ [Comparative Politics Made Simple](#)
- ♦ [Teaching the Comparative Method](#)

## TOPIC 1.1

# The Practice of Political Scientists

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**MPA-1**

Empirical data is important in identifying and explaining political behavior of individuals and groups.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**MPA-1.A**

Explain how political scientists construct knowledge and communicate inferences and explanations about political systems, institutional interactions, and behavior.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**MPA-1.A.1**

Analysis of quantitative and qualitative information (including charts, tables, graphs, speeches, foundational documents, political cartoons, maps, and political commentaries) is a way to make comparisons between and inferences about course countries.

**MPA-1.A.2**

Analyzing empirical data using quantitative methods facilitates making comparisons among and inferences about course countries.

**MPA-1.A.3**

Causation is difficult to determine with certainty in comparative politics, as often there are numerous variables that potentially influence political policies and/or regime stability, with no way to isolate and demonstrate which is producing the change.

**MPA-1.A.4**

Correlation exists when there is an association between two or more variables.

**MPA-1.A.5**

Comparative political research requires differentiation between empirical (factual/objective) and normative (value) statements.

*continued on next page*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### MPA-1.A

Explain how political scientists construct knowledge and communicate inferences and explanations about political systems, institutional interactions, and behavior.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### MPA-1.A.6

Political scientists most often use empirical information to apply concepts, support generalizations, or make arguments.

### MPA-1.A.7

Comparative political scientists compare different political systems to derive conclusions about politics.

### MPA-1.A.8

A number of data collection resources are used to investigate relationships among course countries, including:

- a. The Human Development Index (HDI)
- b. Gross domestic product (GDP) and GDP per capita
- c. GDP growth rate
- d. Gini index (coefficient)
- e. Freedom House
- f. Transparency International
- g. Failed States Index

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Concept Application

## 1.A

Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## TOPIC 1.2

# Defining Political Organizations

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-1**

Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-1.A**

Describe differences between regimes, states, nations, and governments.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-1.A.1**

Political systems comprise the laws, ideas, and procedures that address who should have authority to rule and what the government's influence on its people and economy should be.

**PAU-1.A.2**

States are political organizations that combine a permanent population with governing institutions to exercise control over a defined territory with international recognition. Regimes refer to the fundamental rules that control access to and the exercise of political power. Regimes typically endure from government to government.

**PAU-1.A.3**

A regime can be characterized as democratic or authoritarian based on how it sets rules or makes decisions about how to exercise power.

*continued on next page*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### PAU-1.A

Describe differences between regimes, states, nations, and governments.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### PAU-1.A.4

Government is the set of institutions or individuals legally empowered to make binding decisions for a state. A government's authority is derived from the state's legitimate right to use power to enforce policies and decisions; the right and power to govern itself without outside interference is a crucial aspect of a state's sovereignty. A sovereign state has independent legal authority over a population in a particular territory.

### PAU-1.A.5

A nation is a group of people with commonalities including race, language, religion, ethnicity, political identity, and aspirations.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Country Comparison

## 2.A

Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resources > [Illiberal Democracy and Vladimir Putin's Russia](#)

## TOPIC 1.3

# Democracy vs. Authoritarianism

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-1**

Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-1.B**

Describe democracy and authoritarianism.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-1.B.1**

Factors that indicate the degree of democracy or authoritarianism of states include the extent of state adherence to rule of law, such as:

- The principle that a state should be governed by law and not arbitrary decisions made by individual government officials
- The degree of state influence on or control of the media
- The degree and practice of free and fair elections
- The degree of transparency of governmental decision making
- The nature of citizen participation in government

**PAU-1.B.2**

The branches of national government in democratic regimes are more likely to be independent of one another than in authoritarian regimes. Independence can serve to prevent any one branch from controlling all governmental power.

**PAU-1.B.3**

Authoritarian regimes include illiberal democracies or hybrid regimes, one-party states, theocracies, totalitarian governments, and military regimes.

# TOPIC 1.4

## Democratization

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Concept Application*

**1.D**

Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

- Classroom Resources > [The Democratic Transition in Nigeria](#)

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-1**

Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-1.C**

Explain the process and goals of democratization.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-1.C.1**

Democratization is a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime; while this process can start or temporarily change direction, the process aims to result in the following over time:

- More competition, fairness, and transparency in elections
- Increased citizen participation in policy-making processes
- Universal suffrage for adult citizens
- Greater governmental transparency
- Protected civil rights and liberties
- Equal treatment of citizens
- Establishment of the rule of law

**PAU-1.C.2**

Democratic electoral systems can accommodate ethnic diversity and increase multiparty competition with rule adjustments, including gender or cultural quotas, proportional representation, and changes in vote thresholds and district boundaries.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-1.C**

Explain the process and goals of democratization.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****PAU-1.C.3**

Political corruption inhibits democratization— independent judiciaries can reduce such corruption while protecting individual liberties and civil rights.

**PAU-1.C.4**

Democratization can stall or be reversed; policy changes regarding election rules and civil liberties can support or impede democratization.

**PAU-1.C.5**

Democratic consolidation refers to the process by which a democratic regime matures in terms of election rules, separation of powers, and protection of civil liberties, making it unlikely to revert to authoritarianism without an external shock.

**PAU-1.C.6**

Consensus among competing cultural and political groups about governmental policies associated with democratization and economic development can advance the process and make it sustainable.

# TOPIC 1.5

## Sources of Power and Authority

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 Country Comparison

**2.B**

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *similar* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-1**

Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-1.D**

Explain sources of power and authority in political systems.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-1.D.1**

Sources of power and authority include constitutions, religions, military forces, political parties, legislatures, and popular support; over time, course country (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, or the United Kingdom) regimes have been affected by such sources, represented by:

- a. The Communist Party’s control over China’s military, which provided power and authority to maintain regime stability
- b. The transition of power from dictatorial rule in Iran to a theocracy based on Islamic Sharia law after the 1979 Revolution
- c. The transition of power in Nigeria and Mexico to multiparty republics following military rule and single-party dominance, respectively
- d. The political elite’s backing of a strong president in Russia, creating a managed democracy with election rules favoring one party
- e. Constitutional reforms in the United Kingdom that devolved power to multiple parliaments, allowing the regime to maintain stability

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Source Analysis

## 4.A

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Professional Development >
- Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources
- Writing from Challenging Primary Sources

## TOPIC 1.6

# Change in Power and Authority

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-1**

Political systems and regimes reflect the dynamic balance of power between the government and its citizens.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-1.D**

Explain sources of power and authority in political systems.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-1.D.2**

How a regime chooses to use power in support of sovereignty is determined in large part by its democratic or authoritarian characteristics—democratic regimes can maintain sovereignty using less power than authoritarian regimes.

**PAU-1.D.3**

Changes in regimes occur when rules and institutions are replaced either incrementally or suddenly, as a result of elections, coups, or revolutions in which a large portion of the population supports a change in the political system.

**PAU-1.D.4**

Governments, including political officeholders, can be changed more frequently and easily than regimes through the relatively peaceful process of elections, appointments, and lines of succession. However, governments also change by more violent means, such as revolutions or coups d'état, represented by such violent transitions in Iran and Nigeria.

# TOPIC 1.7

## Federal and Unitary Systems

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Source Analysis*

**4.B**

Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-2**

Distribution of power and authority and the influence of internal and external actors affect regime stability.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-2.A**

- a. Describe federal and unitary systems among course countries.
- b. Explain the purposes of adopting a federal or unitary system.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-2.A.1**

Federal states like Mexico, Nigeria, and Russia divide power among different levels of government to confer a degree of local autonomy in supplying social and educational services, while also reserving powers for the national government. Unitary states like China, Iran, and the United Kingdom concentrate power at the national level with more uniform policies and potentially more efficient policy making.

**PAU-2.A.2**

The degree to which power is centralized or decentralized can change over time in both federal and unitary states, and in many cases reflects a state response to internal and external actors that include ethnic cleavages and operations of supranational organizations and other countries.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis

## 3.C

Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.

## TOPIC 1.8

# Political Legitimacy

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-1**

Political legitimacy reinforces the sovereignty of the state.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-1.A**

Describe the sources of political legitimacy for different types of regimes among course countries.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-1.A.1**

Legitimacy refers to whether a government's constituents believe their government has the right to use power in the way they do. Legitimacy confers authority on and can increase the power of a regime and government.

**LEG-1.A.2**

Sources of legitimacy for both democratic and authoritarian regimes can include popular elections as well as constitutional provisions. Other sources of legitimacy include nationalism, tradition, governmental effectiveness, economic growth, ideology, religious heritage and organizations, and the dominant political party's endorsement.

# TOPIC 1.9

## Sustaining Legitimacy

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Concept Application*

**1.E**

Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-1**

Political legitimacy reinforces the sovereignty of the state.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-1.B**

Explain how governments maintain legitimacy.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-1.B.1**

Governments maintain legitimacy through a variety of processes or factors, including policy effectiveness, political efficacy, tradition, charismatic leadership, and institutionalized laws.

**LEG-1.B.2**

Peaceful resolution of conflicts, peaceful transfer of power, reduced governmental corruption, and economic development can reinforce legitimacy.

**LEG-1.B.3**

An increase in corruption, reduced electoral competition, and serious problems (such as a poor economy or social conflicts) can all undermine legitimacy.

*continued on next page*

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****LEG-1.B**

Explain how governments maintain legitimacy.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****LEG-1.B.4**

Devolution and delegation of power to regional governments can enhance or weaken legitimacy, creating both opportunities for and obstacles to resolving social, political, and economic issues by:

- a. Promoting policy innovation, matching policies to local needs, improving policies through competition, increasing political participation, checking central power, and allowing better representation of religious/ethnic/minority groups
- b. Creating contradictory policies, potentially making policy implementation more complicated and inefficient, allowing inequality between regions, increasing competition for resources, and exacerbating ethnic and local tensions

**LEG-1.B.5**

Questions about the integrity of election results across the course countries can lead to protests that may weaken legitimacy and any ongoing democratization processes.

## TOPIC 1.10

# Political Stability

**SUGGESTED SKILL**
 *Data Analysis*
**3.D**

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-1**

Political legitimacy reinforces the sovereignty of the state.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-1.C**

Explain how internal actors influence and interact with state authority and either enhance or threaten stability.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-1.C.1**

Internal actors can interact with governments to bolster or undermine regime stability and rule of law, represented by:

- Contrasting methods to combat political corruption among the six course countries
- State responses to separatist group violence, drug trafficking, and discrimination based on gender or religious differences in Iran, Mexico, and Nigeria
- Varied state responses to mass protest movements that oppose governmental policies or their equal enforcement

**LEG-1.C.2**

State authorities of different regime types attempt to limit the influence of divisive and violent actors in their countries to attract more private capital and foreign direct investment and to improve economic growth.

**LEG-1.C.3**

Across the course countries, internal reform pressure from citizen protest groups and civil society can lead to the creation of new political institutions or policies to protect civil liberties, improve transparency, address election fairness and media bias, limit corruption, and ensure equality under law.

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**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT 2**

**Political  
Institutions**



**22–33%**  
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



**~32/~16**  
CLASS PERIODS

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The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue computer monitor icon.

Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

### **Personal Progress Check 2**

**Multiple-choice: ~20 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Argument Essay (partial)
- Comparative Analysis
- Argument Essay (partial)

# Political Institutions



## Developing Understanding

### BIG IDEA 1

#### Power and Authority PAU

- What are the implications of cooperation and conflict within a country's political system?

This unit first looks at the political structure in each course country and then the executive, legislative, and judicial systems within the political structure. Students develop an understanding of the various structures of the branches of government as well as how each uses the structure to wield and maintain power.

Knowing and applying country-specific terminology allows students to understand the similarities and differences between different systems of authority in the context of the six course countries. At the end of this unit, students should be able to characterize the advantages and disadvantages of different institutional arrangements and the implications of having one system over another in regard to stability, legitimacy, and policy making.

## Building the Disciplinary Practices

4.B 5.A

Comparing countries with similar and different political concepts and processes helps students identify problems, analyze policy making, and ultimately explain implications of policy decisions. Coming to understandings by comparison, without preconceived notions, highlights how countries have solved problems or exacerbated them.

In the previous unit, students began practicing identifying and describing the perspective of the author, and now, they will start to connect the author's perspective to the political elements of a country and eventually show how the perspective could impact a country's political elements.

As students begin to read and analyze text-based sources in this unit, these sources can serve as models for students' development of writing their own arguments. Developing an argument in an essay is an important practice in comparative political science and will be assessed on the AP Exam. Student arguments need to be defensible and not simply a restatement of a prompt.

## Preparing for the AP Exam

On the AP Exam, students will be asked to make connections between political concepts, course countries, and arguments in text-based sources. One way that comparative political scientists often think about those connections is by making comparisons between concepts. Students will make comparisons and draw conclusions on both sections of the exam.

The comparative analysis question on the AP Exam requires that students focus on comparison of concepts. When making comparisons, it's important for students to identify the relevant categories of comparison (i.e., what characteristic or attribute they should compare). Two common mistakes that students make are discussing similarities and differences that are (1) not relevant based on the given task and (2) not shared by the objects of comparison. Have students practice identifying categories of comparison regularly. Once students have identified an appropriate and relevant category of comparison, then they can develop their explanation of why the similarities or differences exist and why they are significant.

## UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
			~32/~16 CLASS PERIODS
PAU-3	<b>2.1 Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems</b>	<b>1.B</b> Explain political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>2.2 Comparing Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems</b>	<b>2.C</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>different</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>2.3 Executive Systems</b>	<b>1.D</b> Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.	
	<b>2.4 Executive Term Limits</b>	<b>5.A</b> Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.	
	<b>2.5 Removal of Executives</b>	<b>4.B</b> Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>2.6 Legislative Systems</b>	<b>2.A</b> Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>2.7 Independent Legislatures</b>	<b>4.C</b> Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>2.8 Judicial Systems</b>	<b>1.E</b> Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.	
	<b>2.9 Independent Judiciaries</b>	<b>5.B</b> Support the argument using relevant evidence.	
<p> Go to <a href="#">AP Classroom</a> to assign the <b>Personal Progress Check</b> for Unit 2. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.</p>			

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	2.2	<p><b>Debate</b></p> <p>A debate gives students both the opportunity to collect evidence in support of their position and the chance to orally present and defend it. Be sure to direct students to uncover both the affirming and contradictory evidence on their position. For this topic, you could have students debate whether policy making is more efficient in a presidential or a parliamentary system.</p>
2	2.4	<p><b>Critique Reasoning</b></p> <p>In 2018, China removed presidential term limits. Using op-eds from major national and international newspapers and magazines, ask students to undertake critique reasoning to identify authors' claims, evidence, and analysis. Additionally, have students make connections to previously studied relevant course concepts. Allow for collaborative discussion at multiple levels—pairs, small groups, and whole group—to achieve understanding.</p>
3	2.6	<p><b>Jigsaw</b></p> <p>Using a variety of reference texts (textbooks, websites, databases), place students in country-specific “expert” groups to examine legislative systems. The structures and functions of legislatures in course countries are described in PAU-3.E.1. Then organize students into groups where each course country is represented and have them summarize and present information on the legislative structures of the course countries, allowing students to become “experts” on each country.</p>
4	2.9	<p><b>Match Claims and Evidence</b></p> <p>After describing the structure and functions of judiciaries (Topic 2.8), give students sample claims about independent judiciaries and ask them to evaluate and improve on the claims, if necessary. Then ask them to identify evidence that can be used to support the claims, culminating with a writing activity that asks them to state how and why the evidence they culled supports the claims.</p>



### Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to continue building the skills of country comparison and source analysis while also introducing argumentation.

.....

.....

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Concept Application

## 1.B

Explain political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## TOPIC 2.1

# Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.A**

Describe parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential systems.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.A.1**

Parliamentary systems, such as the United Kingdom, combine the lawmaking and executive functions, which allows the national legislature to select and remove the head of government and cabinet.

**PAU-3.A.2**

Presidential systems, such as Mexico and Nigeria, feature a cabinet that is mostly responsible to the elected executive, with a legislature that can only remove cabinet members through impeachment. These systems have separate fixed-term, popular elections for the national legislature, and a top executive leader serving as both head of state and head of government.

**PAU-3.A.3**

Semi-presidential systems, such as Russia, feature separate popular elections for the president and for the national legislature, allowing the president to nominate a prime minister (who must be approved by the legislature); members of the cabinet are held accountable by both the president and legislature.

TOPIC 2.2

# Comparing Parliamentary, Presidential, and Semi-Presidential Systems

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Country Comparison*

**2.C**

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *different* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- Classroom Resources >
- ♦ [Comparative Politics Made Simple](#)
- ♦ [Teaching the Comparative Method](#)

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.B**

Compare institutional relations among parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential systems.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.B.1**

Although parliamentary systems have fewer institutional obstacles to enact policy than presidential systems (presidential systems have divided branch powers), parliamentary systems have their own checks on the executive branch.

**PAU-3.B.2**

Parliaments may censure cabinet ministers, refuse to pass executive proposed legislation, question the executive and cabinet ministers, and impose time deadlines on calling new elections.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Concept Application

## 1.D

Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.

## TOPIC 2.3

# Executive Systems

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.C**

Explain the structure, function, and change of executive leadership in course countries.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.C.1**

Governments have executive institutions, including chief executives and cabinets, that formulate, implement, and enforce policy through different methods and agencies.

**PAU-3.C.2**

Titles, powers, structure, and functions vary in executive leadership across the six countries:

- a. China's president serves as commander in chief, chair of China's Military Commission, and General Secretary of the Chinese Communist party (NPC); the president nominates the premier of the NPC, who in turn serves as head of government overseeing the civil service; changes in top leadership are accomplished behind closed doors.
- b. Iran's Supreme Leader sets the political agenda, serves as commander in chief, and appoints top ministers, the Expediency Council, half of the Guardian Council, and the head of the judiciary. The president is elected for up to two 4-year terms, oversees the civil service, and conducts foreign policy.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.C**

Explain the structure, function, and change of executive leadership in course countries.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- c. Mexico's elected president, as both head of state and head of government, serves as commander in chief and leader of the bureaucracy, and can approve domestic legislation and lead foreign policy; the president is restricted to one term.
- d. Nigeria's elected president, as both head of state and head of government, serves as chief executive, commander in chief, and head of civil service, and can approve domestic legislation and conduct foreign policy.
- e. Russia's prime minister, the head of government, oversees the civil service. The elected president, head of state and commander in chief, appoints top ministers, conducts foreign policy, and presides over the Duma under certain conditions.
- f. The United Kingdom's monarch serves ceremonially as head of state and formally appoints as prime minister the leader of the party or coalition holding the largest number of seats in the House of Commons. The prime minister can call elections, sets the foreign policy agenda, and serves as de facto commander in chief and chief executive over the civil service.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

## 5.A

Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.

## TOPIC 2.4

**Executive Term Limits****Required Course Content****ENDURING UNDERSTANDING****PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-3.C**

Explain the structure, function, and change of executive leadership in course countries.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****PAU-3.C.3**

Executive term limits have advantages and disadvantages with regard to promoting stability and effective policies in a country.

- a. Advantages of executive term limits are that they check executive power by and inhibit the emergence of dictators and personality rule; help to focus the officeholder on governing rather than winning elections; and provide opportunities for new leaders with new ideas, policies, or goals.
- b. Disadvantages of executive term limits are that they force good executives to leave office; allow insufficient time for an officeholder to achieve goals; impede policy continuity; weaken accountability; create a lame-duck period for the officeholder; prevent the officeholder from building experience as chief executive; and can cause poorly designed policy.

# TOPIC 2.5

## Removal of Executives

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Source Analysis*

**4.B**

Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.D**

Describe procedures for the removal of executive leadership by other institutions.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.D.1**

Across the course countries, executive leaders can be removed by the legislative branch through different procedures that control the abuse of power.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Country Comparison

## 2.A

Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## TOPIC 2.6

# Legislative Systems

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.E**

Describe legislative structures and functions in course countries.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.E.1**

Legislative institutions of course countries include the following structures and functions:

- a. China's party-controlled system is unicameral and consists of an elected National People's Congress that the constitution recognizes as the government's most powerful institution that elects the president, approves the premier, and legitimizes policies of the executive.
- b. Iran's theocracy is unicameral; the Majles is elected and holds the power to approve legislation, oversee the budget, and confirm presidential nominees to the Cabinet. This body acts under the supervision of the Guardian Council to ensure compatibility with Islam and Sharia law.
- c. Mexico's congressional-presidential system is bicameral. It consists of an elected lower house—the Chamber of Deputies—that approves legislation, levies taxes, and verifies outcomes of elections. The elected upper house, the Senate, holds the unique power to confirm presidential appointments to the Supreme Court, approve treaties, and approve federal intervention in state matters.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.E**

Describe legislative structures and functions in course countries.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- d. Nigeria's congressional-presidential system is bicameral, consisting of an elected upper and lower chamber (Senate and House of Representatives). Both chambers hold the power to approve legislation, and the Senate possesses unique impeachment and confirmation powers.
- e. Russia's parliamentary-hybrid system is bicameral, and consists of an elected state Duma, which passes legislation and confirms the prime minister. An appointed Federation Council approves budget legislation, treaties, judicial nominees, and troop deployment.
- f. The United Kingdom's parliamentary system is bicameral, consisting of an elected House of Commons—which approves legislation—and the prime minister appointed by the monarch, whereas an appointed House of Lords reviews and amends bills from the Commons, effectively delaying implementation as a power check.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Source Analysis

## 4.C

Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

## TOPIC 2.7

# Independent Legislatures

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

## PAU-3

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

## PAU-3.F

Explain how legislative powers are constrained by other institutions and/or processes, which can affect legislative independence.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

## PAU-3.F.1

Legislative powers can be constrained by other governmental institutions, including:

- a. China's Politburo Standing Committee, which is the actual center of power in the Chinese state
- b. China's Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), which assumes legislative duties most of the year when the NPC is not in session, sets NPC legislative agenda, supervises NPC member elections, and interprets the Constitution and laws
- c. Iran's Expediency Council, which is selected by the Supreme Leader as an advisory committee to resolve disputes between the Majles and the Guardian Council
- d. Iran's Guardian Council, which vets candidates and oversees the Majles to make sure laws comply with Islamic law

## PAU-3.F.2

Legislatures have the potential to reinforce legitimacy and stability by responding to public demand, openly debating policy, facilitating compromise between factions, extending civil liberties, and restricting the power of the executive.

## TOPIC 2.8

# Judicial Systems

**SUGGESTED SKILL**
 *Concept Application*
**1.E**

Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.G**

Describe the structure and functions of judiciaries.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.G.1**

Judiciaries in course countries have different functions and use various methods to appoint judges to interpret and apply laws and resolve disputes, represented by:

- a. In China, rule by law (instead of rule of law) means the judicial system is subservient to the decisions of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), which controls most judicial appointments.
- b. The Iranian judiciary's major function is to ensure that the legal system is based on religious law, so judges must be trained in Islamic Sharia law. The head of the judiciary is appointed by the Supreme Leader and can nominate half of the Guardian Council with approval by the Majles.
- c. The Mexican judiciary is in transition—the Supreme Court has the power of judicial review and subsequent constitutional amendments have been implemented with the intent to make the system more independent and effective.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-3.G**

Describe the structure and functions of judiciaries.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- d. In Mexico, Supreme Court magistrates are nominated by the president and approved by the Senate for a term of 15 years.
- e. The Nigerian judiciary has the power of judicial review, and an effort has been made to reestablish its legitimacy and independence by reducing corruption; under the system of federalism, Islamic Sharia Courts have been established in the north.
- f. In Nigeria, Supreme Court judges are recommended by a judicial council and are appointed by the president with confirmation by the Senate.
- g. Russia's government uses the judicial system to target opposition, and although constitutionally the courts have the power of judicial review, this power has not been used to limit the authority of the governing branches.
- h. In Russia, judges are nominated by the president and approved by the Federation Council.
- i. The United Kingdom's judicial system uses common law to enforce the rule of law; major functions of the Supreme Court include its serving as the final court of appeals, protecting human/civil rights and liberties, and ruling on devolution disputes.

# TOPIC 2.9

# Independent Judiciaries

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Argumentation*

**5.B**

Support the argument using relevant evidence.

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-3**

The structure and function of political institutions reflect the allocation of power within a political system.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-3.H**

Explain the importance of independent judiciaries relative to other political institutions.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-3.H.1**

The degree of the judiciary’s independence from other branches of government depends on the amount of authority the courts have to overrule executive and legislative actions, the process by which judicial officials acquire their jobs, the length of judicial terms, the professional and academic backgrounds that judicial officials are expected to have, and the processes used to remove judges from their posts.

**PAU-3.H.2**

Independent judiciaries can strengthen democracy by maintaining checks and balances, protecting rights and liberties, establishing the rule of law, and maintaining separation of powers.

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**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT 3**

**Political  
Culture and  
Participation**



**11–18%**  
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



**~28/~14**  
CLASS PERIODS

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The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue computer monitor icon.

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Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

### **Personal Progress Check 3**

**Multiple-choice: ~20 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Argument Essay (partial)
- Argument Essay
- Quantitative Analysis

# Political Culture and Participation



## Developing Understanding

### **BIG IDEA 2** *Legitimacy and Stability* **LEG**

- What changes might a government face in response to a controversial cleavage?

### **BIG IDEA 3** *Democratization* **DEM**

- Why might a country discourage participation? Encourage?

### **BIG IDEA 4** *Internal/External Forces* **IEF**

- How does regime type impact the function of civil society in a country?

Politics hinges on the interactions between the state and society. A country's political patterns are influenced by the characteristics and demands of its population. Citizens participate in politics both individually and in groups. Cleavages within the population, such as ethnicity, religion, or class, become politically relevant.

This unit includes civil society, a range of voluntary associations that are autonomous from the state and that can help mediate state power and enhance the power of citizens. Students learn about participation in both authoritarian and democratic regimes and how the type of regime impacts the type of participation. Understanding that concept will help guide students in Unit 4, where they consider the role and impact of parties and elections on political participation.

## Building the Disciplinary Practices

**3.C 3.D 5.B 5.C**

In the first unit students learned about the practice of data analysis and how to accurately describe presented data. Unit 2 builds on that understanding and expands it to include the ability to explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions about political elements within and across course countries. Students should begin to explain how and/or why processes, systems, institutions, elections, or demographics relate to one another and not simply describe them in isolation. As students continue to build these skills, they will then connect the data and its trends/patterns to draw implications about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors within and across the course countries.

In the previous unit, students began writing their own defensible arguments that were not simply restatements of the prompt. They should continue that practice by writing arguments that establish a line of reasoning, utilizing specific evidence to support their claim/thesis and unify the essay.

## Preparing for the AP Exam

The AP Exam asks students to analyze quantitative data presented visually and apply that analysis to their understanding of political concepts in both the multiple-choice and free-response sections.

In both types of questions, students will need to be able to (1) identify or describe data, (2) describe patterns or trends in data, (3) describe or explain a political concept, (4) draw conclusions about patterns or trends in data, and (5) explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

Students often struggle to connect conclusions drawn from data to political concepts, such as behavior. Encourage them to take their conclusions further and explain how a trend, identified by data, can lead to conclusions about a course country's political system or institutions.

UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
IEF-1	<b>3.1 Civil Society</b>	<b>1.E</b> Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.	~28/~14 CLASS PERIODS
	<b>3.2 Political Culture</b>	<b>2.C</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>different</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>3.3 Political Ideologies</b>	<b>1.C</b> Compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>3.4 Political Values and Beliefs</b>	<b>3.C</b> Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	
DEM-1	<b>3.5 Nature and Role of Political Participation</b>	<b>3.D</b> Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>3.6 Forces that Impact Political Participation</b>	<b>5.B</b> Support the argument using relevant evidence.	
	<b>3.7 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties</b>	<b>4.A</b> Describe the author’s claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	
LEG-2	<b>3.8 Political and Social Cleavages</b>	<b>2.A</b> Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>3.9 Challenges from Political and Social Cleavages</b>	<b>5.C</b> Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim/thesis.	
 Go to <b>AP Classroom</b> to assign the <b>Personal Progress Check</b> for Unit 3. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.			

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	3.1	<p><b>Debriefing</b></p> <p>Civil society is a challenging topic for students. They tend to struggle with defining and applying it. For complex issues, such as civil society, you can lead a facilitated discussion to solidify and deepen understanding of civil society, which is reflected in essential knowledge statements IEF-1.A.1 and IEF-1A.2. You can have students do a comparison across countries, including researching specific examples. For example, they could compare civil societies in different types of governments (e.g., authoritarian versus democratic regimes).</p>
2	3.4	<p><b>Look for a Pattern</b></p> <p>This topic presents an opportunity to analyze polling data that addresses values and beliefs that impacts citizens' voting and ultimately how they wish governments to make policy choices that address political problems. Have students examine complex data with multiple variables to find trends and draw conclusions. The <a href="#">Pew Research Center: Global Attitudes &amp; Trends</a> is a resource for this data, and course countries may have their own polling institutions. You may ask students to create their own visual representations after they evaluate data.</p>
3	3.8	<p><b>Socratic Seminar</b></p> <p>By holding a focused discussion around the essential question <i>What changes might a government face in response to a controversial cleavage?</i> you can provide students with an opportunity to illustrate their understanding of the learning objectives LEG-2.A and LEG-2.B and essential knowledge statements LEG-2.A.1 and LEG-2.B.1 to LEG-2.B.4 related to political and social cleavages. This activity also allows for comparative analysis of cleavages across course countries, which is a challenge area for students.</p>



### Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to continue analyzing and interpreting data and developing arguments with evidence and reasoning.

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**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Concept Application*

**1.E**

Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.

# TOPIC 3.1

## Civil Society

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-1**

Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-1.A**

Describe civil society.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-1.A.1**

Civil society comprises a range of voluntary associations that are autonomous from the state, including local religious and neighborhood organizations, news media, business and professional associations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

**IEF-1.A.2**

The strength and variety of civil society organizations differs depending on the regime type in which they operate. Civil society organizations can be limited by government registration and monitoring policies.

**IEF-1.B**

Explain the role of civil society among course countries.

**IEF-1.B.1**

Though civil society organizations are not necessarily political, a robust civil society serves as an agent of democratization.

**IEF-1.B.2**

Across the course countries, civil society organizations, to varying degrees, can monitor and lobby the government, expose governmental malfeasance, represent the interests of members, and provide members with organizational experience.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-1.B**

Explain the role of civil society among course countries.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-1.B.3**

Across course countries, the placing of restrictions on NGOs and civil society tends to highlight violations of civil liberties protected under foundational documents.

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Country Comparison*

**2.C**

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *different* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

**TOPIC 3.2**

**Political Culture**

**Required Course Content**

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

**IEF-1**

Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**IEF-1.C**

Explain how political culture relates to citizen behavior and the role of the state.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

**IEF-1.C.1**

Political culture is the collective attitudes, values, and beliefs of the citizenry and the norms of behavior in the political system. It sets expectations about the exercise of power to establish a balance between social order and individual liberty.

**IEF-1.C.2**

Political culture is influenced by factors of geography, religious traditions, and history, forming a population's values and beliefs about the role of government, the rights of the individual, and the extent and role of citizens in controlling government policy making.

**IEF-1.C.3**

Political culture is transmitted through the process of political socialization, which is the lifelong process of acquiring one's beliefs, values, and orientations toward the political system.

**IEF-1.C.4**

Family, schools, peers, religious institutions, media, and social environments, including civic organizations, play a crucial role in the socialization process and help develop political attitudes and values.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-1.C**

Explain how political culture relates to citizen behavior and the role of the state.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-1.C.5**

Though many agents of socialization (e.g., family, school, peers, media, and government) are similar across regime types, authoritarian regimes apply more concerted governmental pressures to socialize their citizens around conforming beliefs than do democratic regimes.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 *Concept Application*

## 1.C

Compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## TOPIC 3.3

# Political Ideologies

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-1**

Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-1.C**

Explain how political culture relates to citizen behavior and the role of the state.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-1.C.6**

A political ideology is a set of values and beliefs about the goals of government, public policy, or politics, as represented by:

- a. Individualism—belief in individual civil liberties and freedom over governmental restrictions
- b. Neoliberalism—belief in limited governmental intervention in the economy and society; supports privatization, free trade, deregulation, and the elimination of state subsidies
- c. Communism—belief in the abolition of private property with near total governmental control of the economy
- d. Socialism—belief in the reduction of income disparities and the nationalization of major private industries
- e. Fascism—extreme nationalist ideology that favors authoritarian rule and the rights of the ethnic majority over that of ethnic minorities and the political opposition
- f. Populism—political philosophy that supports the interests and rights of the common people over that of the elites

# TOPIC 3.4

## Political Values and Beliefs

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Data Analysis*

**3.C**

Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-1**

Political culture, including core beliefs and values that address the tension between order and liberty, shapes the relationship between a state and its citizens.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-1.D**

Explain how political values and beliefs frame policy choices to address particular political problems.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-1.D.1**

Contrasting political ideologies, including rule by law as opposed to rule of law, affect how the state treats its citizens and deals with specific problems, such as political corruption.

- a. Political beliefs associated with authoritarian regimes tend to rely on rule by law, in which the state uses the law to reinforce the authority of the state.
- b. Political beliefs associated with democratic regimes tend to rely on rule of law, in which the state is limited to the same rules as its citizens.

**IEF-1.D.2**

Beliefs about social and economic equality can be held by citizens in both democratic and authoritarian regimes but can be contrasted by the amount of enforcement responsibility transferred to the government and the amount of choice afforded to citizens to protect their health and material well-being (ranging from limited governmental social protections to a welfare state).

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****IEF-1.D**

Explain how political values and beliefs frame policy choices to address particular political problems.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****IEF-1.D.3**

Post-materialism refers to social valuing of self-expression and quality of life that leads to applying pressure on governments to address environmental issues and social and economic equality.

TOPIC 3.5

# Nature and Role of Political Participation

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Data Analysis*

**3.D**

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCE**

- Classroom Resources > [The Nation-State in the Twenty-First Century: Successes, Challenges, and Failures](#)

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**DEM-1**

The way a regime uses power and authority to support or suppress its citizens establishes a balance between order and individual liberty.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**DEM-1.A**

Explain the nature and role of political participation as related to a regime’s use of authority and power.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**DEM-1.A.1**

Political participation can be voluntary or coerced and may occur at the individual or group level.

**DEM-1.A.2**

Political participation can range from behavior supportive of a regime (either independently or under state direction) to oppositional behavior that seeks to change governmental policies or overthrow the regime.

**DEM-1.A.3**

Certain political conditions make it more likely that citizens will engage in violent political behavior, including when citizens feel that more conventional options for political participation are ineffective or unavailable.

**DEM-1.A.4**

Formal political participation (including casting ballots in elections) can be encouraged across regime types to enhance legitimacy, gather input, act as a safety valve, or apply a check on governmental policies, though authoritarian regimes are more likely to use citizen participation to intimidate opposition or give an illusion of influence, while democratic regimes hold elections to allow citizen control of the policy-making process.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****DEM-1.A**

Explain the nature and role of political participation as related to a regime's use of authority and power.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****DEM-1.A.5**

Referenda allow citizens to vote directly on policy questions and are used for a variety of reasons, including as a means to promote democratic policy making, to allow a chief executive to bypass the legislature, and to oblige citizens to make difficult and potentially unpopular decisions on public policy issues. The United Kingdom has used referenda to decide questions about the devolution of powers to regional assemblies, the separation and creation of an independent nation-state, and their withdrawal from the European Union.

TOPIC 3.6

# Forces that Impact Political Participation

SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

5.B

Support the argument using relevant evidence.

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

DEM-1

The way a regime uses power and authority to support or suppress its citizens establishes a balance between order and individual liberty.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

DEM-1.B

Explain how political participation affects and is affected by democratic or authoritarian regime types.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

DEM-1.B.1

Authoritarian and democratic regimes support similar forms of participation to influence policy making (including casting votes in public elections) but differ in how much impact citizens have on policies and policy making based on how open and competitive elections are. In many elections in authoritarian regimes, there are few if any opposition candidates—those advocating differing views from that of the controlling party/elite—who are allowed to run for office. The government often intervenes in these elections to ensure that its preferred candidates and parties win.

DEM-1.B.2

Informal participation, such as protests and political criticism expressed through social media, is treated differently across regime types. In authoritarian systems, there is less tolerance of critical viewpoints that may challenge authoritarian regimes.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****DEM-1.B**

Explain how political participation affects and is affected by democratic or authoritarian regime types.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****DEM-1.B.3**

Both authoritarian and democratic regimes regulate formal political participation by placing restrictions on voting access and disallowing disruptive and violent protests, but authoritarian regimes manage and limit citizen participation to a much greater extent.

**DEM-1.B.4**

Authoritarian regimes tolerate mass political protests and movements less than democratic regimes do, valuing public order more than individual liberties and civil rights.

# TOPIC 3.7

## Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Source Analysis*

**4.A**

Describe the author's claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- External Resource > [National Constitution Center's Rights Around the World](#)
- Classroom Resources > [Illiberal Democracy and Vladimir Putin's Russia](#)
- Professional Development >
  - ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
  - ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**DEM-1**

The way a regime uses power and authority to support or suppress its citizens establishes a balance between order and individual liberty.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**DEM-1.C**

Explain the extent to which civil rights and civil liberties are protected or restricted in different regimes.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**DEM-1.C.1**

Protection of key civil liberties differs across the six course countries.

**DEM-1.C.2**

Both democratic and authoritarian regimes impose constraints on the media to protect citizens and maintain order, but democratic regimes generally tolerate a high degree of media freedom to encourage citizen control of the political agenda and check political power and corruption.

**DEM-1.C.3**

Stronger authoritarian regimes monitor and restrict citizens' media access to a greater degree to maintain political control, as represented by:

- a. The Chinese Communist Party's use of the Great Firewall to limit political criticism on social media
- b. The Iranian court's suspension or revocation of media licenses when a jury finds owners guilty of publishing anti-religious material or information detrimental to the national interest
- c. The Russian government's nationalization of most broadcast media and rigid controls on opposition news segments

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****DEM-1.C**

Explain the extent to which civil rights and civil liberties are protected or restricted in different regimes.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****DEM-1.C.4**

A government is transparent when it allows information about government and policy making to circulate openly; authoritarian regimes tend to prefer secret or closed proceedings to maximize order.

**DEM-1.C.5**

Competitive authoritarian regimes act as a hybrid of democratic and authoritarian regimes; Russia is characterized as a competitive authoritarian regime or illiberal democracy, holding contested elections but with limited degrees of competitiveness and providing minimal civil liberty protections and governmental transparency.

**DEM-1.C.6**

Comparing data that shows the extent to which governments protect or restrict civil liberties over time can determine regime placement on an authoritarian/democratic scale.

**TOPIC 3.8**  
**Political and Social Cleavages**

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Country Comparison*

**2.A**

Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

**Required Course Content**

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

**LEG-2**

How governments respond to social and political divisions affects interactions between citizens and long-term regime stability.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**LEG-2.A**

Describe politically relevant social cleavages.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

**LEG-2.A.1**

Social and political cleavages can be described as internal divisions that structure societies and may be based on class, ethnicity, religion, or territory, as represented by:

- a. In China, ethnic and regional divisions between the majority Han ethnic group and at least 55 recognized ethnic minorities, such as the Uighurs in the northwest and the Tibetans in the southwest, and between areas that have developed at different rates.
- b. In Iran, religious divisions between the Shi'a Muslim majority and members of other religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism, have resulted in a threatening atmosphere despite official recognition; within practitioners of Islam, there are divisions between the Shi'a majority and those who are Sunni. There are also ethnic cleavages between the majority Persians and several ethnic minorities, including Azerbaijanis and Kurds.
- c. In Mexico, ethnic divisions between the Amerindian (indigenous) population and whites and mestizos, and regional divisions between the north and the south.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****LEG-2.A**

Describe politically relevant social cleavages.

**LEG-2.B**

Explain how political and social cleavages in course countries affect citizen relationships and political stability.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- d. In Nigeria, ethnic divisions among more than 250 ethnic groups (including Hausa-Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo), and religious and regional cleavages between the north (predominantly Muslim) and the south (where Christians and animists are concentrated).
- e. In Russia, cleavages between ethnic Russians, who are more than 80 percent of the population and tend to be Russian Orthodox, and minority, non-Russian populations (including the Chechens in the Caucasus region, who are predominantly Muslim).
- f. In the United Kingdom, ethnic and regional differences between nations such as the Scottish, English, Welsh, and Irish; religious differences between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland; and racial tensions between whites and non-European minorities whose heritage is related to the United Kingdom's colonial history.

**LEG-2.B.1**

Major social and political cleavages differ across course countries and affect voting behavior and party systems as well as informal political networks.

**LEG-2.B.2**

Course countries have responded differently to social cleavages and their political consequences.

- a. Even stable regimes are increasingly dealing with radical/terrorist religious elements that have sprung from long-standing cleavages.
- b. State responses can range from brute repression to recognition of ethnic/religious minorities and creation of autonomous regions and/or representation of minorities in governmental institutions.

**LEG-2.B.3**

Examples of the use of social and political cleavages to strengthen legitimacy and hold onto power can be found in all course countries. Such cleavages may also lead to conflict and undermine legitimacy.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### LEG-2.B

Explain how political and social cleavages in course countries affect citizen relationships and political stability.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### LEG-2.B.4

Social cleavages have different impacts in course countries.

- a. Separatist movements have emerged in China, Iran, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom as a result of the social cleavages.
- b. Other groups demanding autonomy, but not independence, have emerged in Mexico and the United Kingdom.
- c. Ethnicity has played a more significant role in Nigeria than in Mexico because of different colonial histories and a greater diversity and politicization of ethnic/religious identities in Nigeria.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

## 5.C

Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim/thesis.

## TOPIC 3.9

# Challenges from Political and Social Cleavages

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-2**

How governments respond to social and political divisions affects interactions between citizens and long-term regime stability.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-2.B**

Explain how political and social cleavages in course countries affect citizen relationships and political stability.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-2.B.5**

Challenges governments face in securing stability in multinational states include:

- Conflicting interests and competition among groups and political parties
- Perceived lack of governmental authority and legitimacy
- Pressure for autonomy/secession, intergroup conflict, terrorism, and civil war
- Encroachment of neighboring states that sense government weakness and vulnerability

**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT 4**

**Party and  
Electoral Systems  
and Citizen  
Organizations**



**13–18%**  
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



**~18/~9**  
CLASS PERIODS

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The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue computer monitor icon.

Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

### **Personal Progress Check 4**

**Multiple-choice: ~15 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Comparative Analysis
- Argument Essay
- Conceptual Analysis

# Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations



## Developing Understanding

### BIG IDEA 1

#### Power and Authority PAU

- How do different electoral systems encourage or discourage citizen influence?

### BIG IDEA 3

#### Democratization DEM

- Why are election rules different for different regimes?

### BIG IDEA 4

#### Internal/External Forces IEF

- Why would an authoritarian regime open up political access to interest groups and citizen organizations?
- Why would a democratic regime restrict political access to interest groups and citizen organizations?

Individuals and groups use various ways to gain influence and power within a government and its political institutions. This unit breaks down the larger concepts about political institutions studied in Unit 2 and considers how individuals, parties, and citizen organizations influence power. The exercise of political power in the six course countries occurs in a variety of ways. For example, the rules of electoral systems, both formal and informal, have a profound impact on citizen participation. Studying how and why a regime grants or limits access to sources of power helps students understand and explain how this control ultimately impacts policy making in a global context.

## Building the Disciplinary Practices

2.C 4.C

In this unit, students compare countries with both similar and different political concepts and processes in order to identify problems, analyze policy making, and ultimately explain implications of these policy decisions. While students often find it easy to make direct comparisons between countries, they struggle with analyzing the implications of how those similarities, or differences, can impact institutions, policies, and behavior.

As students continue to read and analyze text-based sources, it is important for them to begin to connect the implications of the author's argument to a course country's political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. Furthermore, students should have the opportunity to read, analyze, and interpret the interplay of several text-based sources related to the course countries.

## Preparing for the AP Exam

Although there is not a free-response question focused on source analysis on the AP Exam, source analysis will be assessed in the multiple-choice questions.

Students should be able to read, analyze, and interpret text-based sources to build the skill of analysis. The author of each source conveys their idea, which is a claim, and they support that claim with evidence. Students should be able to identify the claim and evidence, but they should also be able to explain how the author's argument relates to political elements within and across course countries. Political scientists are asked to make predictions based on evidence and data and students may need assistance directly connecting a source's implication to a predicted outcome.

## UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
DEM-2	<b>4.1 Electoral Systems and Rules</b>	<b>2.A</b> Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	~18/~9 CLASS PERIODS
	<b>4.2 Objectives of Election Rules</b>	<b>4.B</b> Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
PAU-4	<b>4.3 Political Party Systems</b>	<b>3.B</b> Describe patterns and trends in data.	
	<b>4.4 Role of Political Party Systems</b>	<b>2.C</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>different</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
IEF-2	<b>4.5 Impact of Social Movements and Interest Groups</b>	<b>5.D</b> Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.	
	<b>4.6 Pluralist and Corporatist Interests</b>	<b>4.C</b> Explain how the implications of the author’s argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
 Go to <b>AP Classroom</b> to assign the <b>Personal Progress Check</b> for Unit 4. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.			

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	4.2	<p><b>Think-Pair-Share</b></p> <p>This topic hits two challenge areas for students: comparative analysis and political institutions. To practice explaining how election rules serve different regime objectives, ask students to consider ballot access, election wins, and constituency accountability. This strategy allows students to develop initial ideas, test and revise with a partner, and then share with the larger group.</p>
2	4.3	<p><b>Making Connections</b></p> <p>Write terms or concepts related to political party systems and party membership for course countries on index cards and have students choose cards at random. Allow students a couple of minutes to gather and recall information about the terms or concepts. Then pair students and ask them to find and explain the similarities and differences between their terms or concepts. This activity addresses the challenge areas of comparative analysis and political institutions.</p>
3	4.5	<p><b>Quickwrite</b></p> <p>Set aside a short, specific amount of time during a class period for students to perform a quickwrite on social movements and interest groups. As preparation for the free-response question for which students write an argument, have students write claims and explain evidence that supports those claims for various topics, such as how social movements and interest groups affect social and political change in course countries.</p>



### Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to incorporate comparing countries with different political elements and thinking about how sources can impact countries.

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## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Country Comparison

## 2.A

Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCE

- Classroom Resources > [Recent Elections from Around the World](#)

## TOPIC 4.1

# Electoral Systems and Rules

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**DEM-2**

The rules of electoral systems reflect party and legislative control and level of democratization.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**DEM-2.A**

Describe electoral systems and election rules among course countries.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**DEM-2.A.1**

In some regimes, electoral rules and systems are structured to allow for the competitive selection of representatives, while in other regimes rules are frequently changed to advance different political interests.

- The National People's Congress of China selects members indirectly through a series of local and regional elections.
- Iran's Majles members are directly elected in single-member and multimember districts, which sometimes requires a second round of voting; candidates are vetted by the Guardian Council, and the legislative body lacks formal political party structures; a small number of the 290 seats in the Majles are reserved for non-Muslim minorities, such as Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### DEM-2.A

Describe electoral systems and election rules among course countries.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- c. Mexico's Congress of the Union has two chambers: the Chamber of Deputies, which has 300 members directly elected in single-member districts by plurality and an additional 200 members elected by a proportional representation, party list system; and the Chamber of Senators, which has 96 members elected in three-seat constituencies and 32 by proportional representation; gender quotas in the party list system have helped increase female representation in the legislature.
- d. Members of the Nigerian House of Representatives are directly elected in single-member districts with representatives from each of Nigeria's states; the number of representatives elected from each state is based on population size, whereas the Senate has three members directly elected from each of Nigeria's 36 states; two major parties have alternated control of the National Assembly.
- e. Changes to state Duma elections in Russia have returned it to a system in which half of the representatives are directly elected from single-member districts and the other half are chosen through elections that use proportional representation with a threshold.
- f. The United Kingdom's House of Commons members are directly elected under single-member district, first-past-the-post rules.

### DEM-2.A.2

Proportional representation relies on multimember districts that promote multiparty systems.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Source Analysis

## 4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

## TOPIC 4.2

# Objectives of Election Rules

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**DEM-2**

The rules of electoral systems reflect party and legislative control and level of democratization.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**DEM-2.B**

Explain how election rules serve different regime objectives regarding ballot access, election wins, and constituency accountability.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**DEM-2.B.1**

Proportional representation can result in an increase in the number of political parties represented in national legislatures, as well as an increase in the election of minority and women candidates.

**DEM-2.B.2**

Single-member district plurality systems tend to promote two-party systems. They provide voters with strong constituency service and accountability because there is a single representative per district, and they ensure geographic representation.

**DEM-2.B.3**

Different presidential election systems have different rules for determining election winners; some systems employ second-round or runoff elections to obtain a majority vote, while others decide elections based on a plurality of most votes cast among candidates in the race.

- a. Mexico's president is elected by a plurality of the national popular vote, not an absolute majority.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### DEM-2.B

Explain how election rules serve different regime objectives regarding ballot access, election wins, and constituency accountability.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- b. Presidential candidates in Nigeria must win the most votes and secure at least 25 percent of the vote in two-thirds of Nigeria's states, reflecting the federal characteristic of this regime.
- c. Presidential candidates in Iran and Russia must win an absolute majority of the popular vote in either the first or second round of national voting. If no candidate wins an absolute majority in the first round, the second round is conducted between the top two vote earners in the first round.
- d. Majoritarian rules in Iran, Nigeria, and Russia provide the winners with a national mandate.

### DEM-2.B.4

Different political systems use electoral regulatory organizations to set various rules about ballot access and competition.

- a. Iran's Guardian Council excludes reform-minded candidates or those who do not support Islamic values from the ballot, which limits the number of candidates and reduces electoral competition and representation.
- b. As part of their democratic transition, Mexico and Nigeria have created independent election commissions that attempt to reduce voter fraud and manipulation and enhance electoral competition.

### DEM-2.B.5

Some regimes use an appointment system for membership in legislative bodies to promote a diversity of viewpoints, while other regimes use it to advance the political agenda of governing elites.

- a. Appointments for the United Kingdom's House of Lords are approved by the monarch with recommendations made by the prime minister and an independent commission.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****DEM-2.B**

Explain how election rules serve different regime objectives regarding ballot access, election wins, and constituency accountability.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- b. Half of Iran's Guardian Council members are selected by the Supreme Leader, and half are nominees from the judiciary with Majles approval.
- c. The appointment process for positions in Russia's Federation Council is done by regional governors and the regional legislature. The creation of nine federal districts (with the annexation of Crimea) has reasserted federal power under the Russian president by allowing him to appoint presidential envoys to the districts, and allowing regional legislatures to forgo elections and appoint a governor from a list of candidates approved by the president.

**DEM-2.B.6**

Election rule changes affect the representation of different religious, ethnic, and socioeconomic groups.

**DEM-2.B.7**

The timing of legislative elections across the six countries can vary among systems based on term-limit policies.

## TOPIC 4.3

**Political Party Systems**

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis**3.B**

Describe patterns and trends in data.

**Required Course Content****ENDURING UNDERSTANDING****PAU-4**

The power, influence, and strength of political parties and the degree of competition between parties reflect the values of the regime or type of government.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-4.A**

Describe characteristics of political party systems and party membership.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****PAU-4.A.1**

Party systems and membership differ among course countries, ranging from dominant party systems to multiparty systems.

**PAU-4.A.2**

China has rules that allow only one party, the Communist Party of China, to control governing power to maintain the values of centralism and order, while allowing eight other parties to exist to broaden discussion and consultation.

**PAU-4.A.3**

Rules ensuring one-party dominance in Russia include increasing party registration requirements, allowing only legally registered parties to run for office, using selective court decisions to disqualify candidates, limiting the ability of political opposition to present their viewpoints in the media, increasing threshold rules to limit party access to the ballot, and eliminating gubernatorial elections.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-4.A**

Describe characteristics of political party systems and party membership.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE****PAU-4.A.4**

Rules that facilitate Mexico's transition away from one-party dominance include eliminating *el dedazo*, privatizing state-owned corporations to decrease patronage, decentralizing and reducing one-party power at the subnational level, and establishing and strengthening the National Electoral Institute (IFE).

**PAU-4.A.5**

The degree of competition within multiparty systems can influence representation and formal political participation by citizens.

- a. Nigeria's multiparty system includes 30 registered political parties, with two strong parties, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress of Nigeria (APC), and a third party having a degree of electoral success.
- b. The United Kingdom's party system features competition primarily between two major parties, the Conservative and Labour parties, which control the legislature and executive (with first-past-the-post election rules favoring the major parties). But minor parties with regional representation are also able to win some legislative representation.

**PAU-4.A.6**

Catch-all political parties can earn support from groups with different characteristics, attracting popular support with ideologically diverse platforms.

**PAU-4.A.7**

Some legislatures, such as the United Kingdom's House of Commons, are highly organized by political parties, with voting based on strict party discipline that influences policy making.

## TOPIC 4.4

# Role of Political Party Systems

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Country Comparison**2.C**

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *different* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**PAU-4**

The power, influence, and strength of political parties and the degree of competition between parties reflect the values of the regime or type of government.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**PAU-4.B**

Explain how political party systems and memberships link citizen participation to policy making.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**PAU-4.B.1**

Party systems vary across the course countries in terms of rules governing elections, party structure, and laws regulating political parties, as represented by:

- In China, one party (Communist Party of China) has controlled the government (and military) since 1949, while minor parties have limited power to fill minor political offices.
- Iran lacks formal political party structures; parties operate as loosely formed political alliances with questionable linkage to constituents.
- In Mexico, a multiparty system is dominated by National Action Party (PAN), the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), and the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI); parties are allowed to form coalitions to nominate candidates for any particular election.
- In Nigeria, multiple parties with ethnic quotas affect representation in the country's federal legislature.

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****PAU-4.B**

Explain how political party systems and memberships link citizen participation to policy making.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- e. In Russia, one party has been dominating recent elections; diminished representation of smaller parties occurs because of changing threshold rules; the elimination and then reinstatement of single-member districts has affected regional parties and the representation of independent candidates.
- f. In the United Kingdom, two large parties (Labour and Conservative) dominate the House of Commons.
- g. In the United Kingdom, single-member district plurality elections diminish minor-party representation.
- h. In the United Kingdom, single-member districts allow regional parties to win legislative seats.

**PAU-4.B.2**

Party systems across the course countries vary in how they affect and are affected by citizen participation.

TOPIC 4.5

# Impact of Social Movements and Interest Groups

SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

5.D

Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

IEF-2

Strong and varied citizen organizations and movements foster and are reinforced by democratization.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

IEF-2.A

Explain how social movements and interest groups affect social and political change.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

IEF-2.A.1

Social movements involve large groups of people pushing collectively for significant political or social change.

IEF-2.A.2

Interest groups are explicitly organized to represent and advocate for a specific interest or policy issue, while social movements represent multiple groups and individuals advocating for broad social change.

IEF-2.A.3

Social movements across course countries have put pressure on the state to promote indigenous civil rights, redistribute revenues from key exports such as oil, conduct fair and transparent elections, and ensure fair treatment of citizens of different sexual orientations, including:

- a. The Green Movement in Iran that protested corruption in the 2009 election
- b. Zapatistas or Chiapas uprising in Mexico in response to socioeconomic inequality and the negative impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

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**LEARNING OBJECTIVE****IEF-2.A**

Explain how social movements and interest groups affect social and political change.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

- c. Movements in Nigeria (often militant), including the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) and the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), which have emerged to advocate for the rights of an ethnic minority or protest against unjust methods of extraction and distribution of oil in the Niger Delta region
- d. The Boko Haram movement attempting to establish an Islamic state in northern Nigeria
- e. Domestic protests over Russian state Duma's passage of legislation against same-sex couples

**IEF-2.A.4**

Grassroots social movements exert their power up from the local level to the regional, national, or international level.

**IEF-2.A.5**

With limited organizational hierarchies, such movements are difficult for state-run military or law enforcement to suppress, but some social movements also have difficulty in attracting and mobilizing support among fellow citizens or negotiating with governmental representatives.

# TOPIC 4.6

## Pluralist and Corporatist Interests

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Source Analysis*

**4.C**

Explain how the implications of the author’s argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



**AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-2**

Strong and varied citizen organizations and movements foster and are reinforced by democratization.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-2.B**

Describe pluralist and corporatist interest group systems.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-2.B.1**

Pluralism and corporatism are systems of interest group representation.

**IEF-2.B.2**

Pluralist systems promote competition among autonomous groups not linked to the state, whereas in a corporatist system the government controls access to policy making by relying on state-sanctioned groups or single peak associations (SPAs) to represent labor, business, and agricultural sectors.

**IEF-2.B.3**

The state retains more control over citizen input in a corporatist system than it does in a pluralist system.

**IEF-2.B.4**

Interest group systems can change over time, as represented by Mexico’s moving from a corporatist system toward a pluralist system.

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**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**UNIT 5**

**Political and  
Economic  
Changes and  
Development**



**16–24%**  
AP EXAM WEIGHTING



**~20/~10**  
CLASS PERIODS

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The icon consists of a white circle containing a blue square with the letters 'AP' in white. Below the square is a small blue horizontal line with two short vertical lines extending downwards from its center, resembling a computer monitor or a stylized 'A'.

Remember to go to [AP Classroom](#) to assign students the online **Personal Progress Check** for this unit.

Whether assigned as homework or completed in class, the **Personal Progress Check** provides each student with immediate feedback related to this unit's topics and skills.

### **Personal Progress Check 5**

**Multiple-choice: ~25 questions**

**Free-response: 3 questions**

- Quantitative Analysis
- Argument Essay
- Conceptual Analysis

# Political and Economic Changes and Development



## Developing Understanding

### **BIG IDEA 2** *Legitimacy and Stability* **LEG**

- How do nongovernmental groups impact regimes?
- Why do governments change policies in the face of public pressure? How does this impact the balance of power between the citizens and the government?

### **BIG IDEA 4** *Internal/External Forces* **IEF**

- What are the benefits and drawbacks to a country's natural resource endowment?

The interaction of political and economic changes within and across the course countries and how these changes impact political policies and behaviors is particularly important for students to understand. They need to connect what they learned about the domestic political power structure in previous units with how that structure plays out in an interconnected global context.

Every country studied in this course has had profound economic and political change over the past 30 years. Students will study political changes through the lens of democratization and the relative success or failure of these efforts to take hold. The economic impact of globalization on local citizens, relationships between countries, and the response to challenges presented in this economic reality are the focus of the unit.

## Building the Disciplinary Practices

**3.E 5.D**

In previous units, students practiced data analysis and looked at what data communicates. As students build on that skill in this unit, they confront the possible limitations of data and need to determine what information is missing. What does the data *not* tell us about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors? Data analysis is a challenge area for students, so regular practice will help. Have students search for credible data sources that might help create a more robust understanding of a political system, principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior from within or across course countries.

In earlier units, students also began building their arguments, which incorporated a defensible claim, relevant evidence, and a line of reasoning. In this unit, they continue to use those skills but now also use refutation, concession, or rebuttal when they respond to opposing perspectives. By offering the rebuttal, but succinctly stating for the reader why their claim/thesis is more effective, they develop a high-quality argument.

## Preparing for the AP Exam

The argument essay on the AP Exam asks students to respond to an opposing or alternate perspective or demonstrate a complex understanding of the topic. It is not enough for students to simply identify an opposing or alternate perspective, they should demonstrate a correct understanding of the perspective by briefly describing it and then refute, concede, or rebut that perspective. They may demonstrate a complex understanding in multiple ways: (1) qualify or modify an argument by considering diverse or alternate views or evidence, (2) explain the nuance of an issue by analyzing multiple variables, or (3) explain relevant or insightful connections across required course countries.

This task is often difficult for students. Many students can identify an opposing or alternate perspective, but they struggle to explain why the other perspective is incorrect or why the other perspective may be more correct than their own.

## UNIT AT A GLANCE

Enduring Understanding	Topic	Suggested Skills	Class Periods
			~20/~10 CLASS PERIODS
IEF-3	<b>5.1 Impact of Global Economic and Technological Forces</b>	<b>3.A</b> Describe the data presented.	
	<b>5.2 Political Responses to Global Market Forces</b>	<b>2.C</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>different</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>5.3 Challenges from Globalization</b>	<b>1.D</b> Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.	
	<b>5.4 Policies and Economic Liberalization</b>	<b>3.D</b> Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
LEG-3	<b>5.5 International and Supranational Organizations</b>	<b>4.B</b> Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>5.6 Adaptation of Social Policies</b>	<b>2.B</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with <i>similar</i> political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
	<b>5.7 Impact of Industrialization and Economic Development</b>	<b>5.D</b> Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.	
LEG-4	<b>5.8 Causes and Effects of Demographic Change</b>	<b>3.E</b> Explain possible limitations of the data provided.	
LEG-5	<b>5.9 Impact of Natural Resources</b>	<b>4.C</b> Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	
 Go to <b>AP Classroom</b> to assign the <b>Personal Progress Check</b> for Unit 5. Review the results in class to identify and address any student misunderstandings.			

## SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The sample activities on this page are optional and are offered to provide possible ways to incorporate instructional approaches into the classroom. Teachers do not need to use these activities and are free to alter or edit them. The examples below were developed in partnership with teachers from the AP community to share ways that they approach teaching some of the topics in this unit. Please refer to the Instructional Approaches section beginning on p. 129 for more examples of activities and strategies.

Activity	Topic	Sample Activity
1	5.1	<p><b>Close Reading</b></p> <p>Students often struggle with the differences between international economic institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. Present students with readings about these organizations (charters, newspaper or magazine articles) and ask them to highlight country-specific words and passages in order to then connect them to political policies, behaviors, and culture.</p>
2	5.5	<p><b>Guided Discussion</b></p> <p>This umbrella strategy allows you to use multiple techniques with students in a lesson. For this topic, use brainstorming and quickwrite as strategies during a guided discussion to help students understand how international and supranational organizations influence domestic policymakers and national sovereignty. This will help students see the big picture of stability (enduring understanding LEG-3).</p>
3	5.7	<p><b>Self/Peer Revision</b></p> <p>By this point in the course, students should have had multiple opportunities to practice their argumentative essay writing. This strategy employs students to act as reviewers of their peers to provide feedback on essay components. This topic offers an opportunity for students to practice using refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives regarding the impact of industrialization and economic development.</p>
4	5.9	<p><b>Fishbowl</b></p> <p>This strategy requires students to be, at different times, active participants and listeners. It also asks students to bring textual evidence to their discussions to support their opinions. Using secondary sources about course countries and their natural resource endowments, ask students to discuss how these natural resources affect political and economic development. You may wish to focus on rentier states and the “resource curse.”</p>



### Unit Planning Notes

Use the space below to plan your approach to the unit. Consider how you want to pace your course and methods of instruction and assessment.

.....

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## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis

## 3.A

Describe the data presented.

## TOPIC 5.1

# Impact of Global Economic and Technological Forces

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-3**

Economic globalization and economic liberalization have positively and negatively affected political policies and behaviors.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-3.A**

Explain how global economic and technological forces influence political policies, behaviors, and culture.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-3.A.1**

Economic globalization—including economic networks that are growing more interconnected, a worldwide market with actors unconstrained by political borders, and a reduction in state control over economies—has deepened cross-national connections among workers, goods, and capital and has caused challenges for regime and cultural stability.

**IEF-3.A.2**

State membership in the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) has promoted economic liberalization policies.

- China and Nigeria have enacted economic liberalization policies and a majority of respondents in recent studies have said that they expect children in their countries to be better off than their parents.
- In Mexico, in part as a result of these policies, the number of people in the middle class has grown.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### IEF-3.A

Explain how global economic and technological forces influence political policies, behaviors, and culture.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### IEF-3.A.3

Multinational corporations (MNCs) increasingly dominate global markets and pose challenges to, and sometimes conflict with, domestic economic policies regarding labor, the environment, land rights, taxation, and the budget.

### IEF-3.A.4

Globalization and neoliberalism can provoke conflicts within states, including:

- a. Increased demands being placed on governments by civil society groups
- b. Protests by students and disenfranchised groups
- c. Arrests of protesters and imposition of social media restrictions
- d. Empowerment of once-marginal, nationalist, and populist groups that blame the government for changes in culture and economic conditions

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Country Comparison

## 2.C

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *different* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

## TOPIC 5.2

# Political Responses to Global Market Forces

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

## IEF-3

Economic globalization and economic liberalization have positively and negatively affected political policies and behaviors.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

## IEF-3.B

Compare political responses to global market forces.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

## IEF-3.B.1

In response to market forces, course countries continue to experiment with policies regarding private ownership of industry and capital, including:

- a. Special economic zones along the coast of China
- b. Privatization and increased competition in Mexico's oil industry (Pemex)
- c. Nigeria's state-owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) collaborating with foreign companies in joint ventures to extract and produce oil
- d. Putin's re-nationalization of oil/natural gas industries and imposition of foreign investment limitations

## IEF-3.B.2

Course countries allow varying degrees of private control of natural resources, with the United Kingdom allowing the most private control of natural resources and China allowing the least.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### IEF-3.B

Compare political responses to global market forces.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### IEF-3.B.3

Governments respond to global market forces in order to:

- a. Improve domestic economic conditions
- b. Respond to domestic demands
- c. Control or influence domestic political debates to maintain or increase their own power
- d. Extend national influence regionally and internationally

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Concept Application

## 1.D

Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.

## TOPIC 5.3

# Challenges from Globalization

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**IEF-3**

Economic globalization and economic liberalization have positively and negatively affected political policies and behaviors.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**IEF-3.C**

Explain how globalization creates challenges to regime sovereignty.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**IEF-3.C.1**

Many aspects of globalization can challenge regime sovereignty, including:

- Foreign direct investment and multinational corporations from originating regimes can pose a challenge to a government's foundational economic and political ideas and principles.
- Cultural influences (often Western) that accompany investment and trade with a given regime can provoke a domestic backlash.
- Increased economic development can cause environmental degradation and accompanying health issues that alienate citizens.
- Foreign governments can bring political and economic pressures (including treaty reversals, public condemnation at intergovernmental organizations like the United Nations, and economic sanctions) to bear on countries whose actions (including human rights violations) offend them.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### IEF-3.C

Explain how globalization creates challenges to regime sovereignty.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### IEF-3.C.2

In response to global market forces, governments frequently strive to respond to internal demands for domestic reform. Governments also work to control domestic policy debates and attempt to extend their influence regionally to deflect criticism and improve economic conditions.

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 *Data Analysis*

**3.D**

Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

**TOPIC 5.4**

**Policies and Economic Liberalization**

**Required Course Content**

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING**

**IEF-3**

Economic globalization and economic liberalization have positively and negatively affected political policies and behaviors.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

**IEF-3.D**

Describe economic and political liberalization policies.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE**

**IEF-3.D.1**

Economic liberalization occurs when a state reduces its economic role and embraces free market mechanisms such as eliminating subsidies and tariffs, privatizing government-owned industries, and opening the economy to foreign direct investment.

**IEF-3.E**

Explain the adoption of and consequences associated with economic liberalization policies.

**IEF-3.E.1**

Political-economic systems in the course countries can be compared by measuring levels of economic development, economic growth, human development, wealth, and inequality.

**IEF-3.E.2**

Course countries of all regime types adopt economic liberalization policies with the goals of remedying undesirable domestic circumstances, such as rising unemployment and reduced productivity, and undesirable external situations, such as trade deficits with other states and decreasing demand for raw materials like petroleum, natural gas, and rare-earth metal.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### IEF-3.E

Explain the adoption of and consequences associated with economic liberalization policies.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### IEF-3.E.3

Neoliberal economic policies (referring to the removal of barriers and restrictions on what internal/external economic actors can do) have had mixed effects, including reduction in inflation and increases in national income, as well as growing inequality in wealth distribution, persistent political corruption, and the exacerbation of existing social tensions as governments attempt to balance economic freedom with policies that promote economic and political equality.

### IEF-3.E.4

Economic prosperity tied to liberalization policies has affected the power of ruling political parties among course country political systems.

### IEF-3.E.5

While often stimulating growth, economic liberalization has contributed to environmental pollution, urban sprawl, and uneven economic development in course countries, as a result of:

- a. Increased consumption and use of automobiles and other engines using fossil fuels
- b. Poor infrastructure and lack of government regulation
- c. Regional migration patterns (including east/west in China; north/south in Mexico; rural/urban in both)

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Source Analysis

## 4.B

Explain how the author's argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Professional Development >
- ♦ Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources
- ♦ Writing from Challenging Primary Sources

## TOPIC 5.5

# International and Supranational Organizations

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

## LEG-3

A government bolsters regime stability by adapting its policies to environmental, political, economic, and cultural conditions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

## LEG-3.A

Explain how international and supranational organizations influence domestic policymakers and national sovereignty.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

## LEG-3.A.1

International organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank exert great influence through preconditions for financial assistance; countries that receive IMF assistance often must agree to structural adjustment programs requiring privatization of state-owned companies, reduced tariffs, and reduced governmental subsidies of domestic industries.

## LEG-3.A.2

To bolster their own developing industries, some countries pass import substitution industrialization (ISI) policies aimed at reducing foreign dependency by raising tariffs and encouraging local production of industrialized products.

## LEG-3.A.3

Supranational organizations such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the European Union (EU), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have sovereign powers over the national governments that are member states and can apply pressure on policymakers to reduce tariffs and otherwise liberalize trade.

# TOPIC 5.6

## Adaptation of Social Policies

**SUGGESTED SKILL**

 Country Comparison

**2.B**

Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with *similar* political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.

### Required Course Content

#### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-3**

A government bolsters regime stability by adapting its policies to environmental, political, economic, and cultural conditions.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-3.B**

Explain how governments adapt social policies to address political, cultural, and economic changes.

#### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-3.B.1**

In response to political, cultural, and economic changes, governments create new social policies, including gender equity, health care, and education policies, as represented by:

- a. Gender equity rules in Iran with voting, the election of Majles, and appointment to cabinet positions
- b. Disputes in Iran about female access to certain university degree programs and attendance at and participation in sporting events
- c. Varied abortion policies in Mexico's local and state governments
- d. Gender quotas in Mexico
- e. Unequal gender access to education in the north and south of Nigeria

**LEG-3.B.2**

Governments implement social welfare policies to reduce poverty, increase literacy, and improve public health, both to improve citizens' lives and to maintain or bolster political legitimacy.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Argumentation

## 5.D

Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.

## TOPIC 5.7

# Impact of Industrialization and Economic Development

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-3**

A government bolsters regime stability by adapting its policies to environmental, political, economic, and cultural conditions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-3.C**

Explain how rapid industrialization and economic development have produced radical changes in governmental policies.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-3.C.1**

Rapid industrialization and increasing dependence on energy from fossil fuels have created a variety of environmental and political problems that governments must address to protect citizens. Such government solutions include:

- a. Physically moving factories, implementing green technologies with subsidies for industry compliance, and engaging in increased infrastructure development and environmental regulation
- b. Passing laws that require nationwide conversion to hybrid and battery-powered autos to address air pollution problems in major cities from auto and industrial emissions
- c. Developing infrastructure and other mechanisms to respond to health crises related to systemic pollution

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### LEG-3.C

Explain how rapid industrialization and economic development have produced radical changes in governmental policies.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

### LEG-3.C.2

Trade liberalization affects the growth of domestic and foreign business, the amount of direct foreign investment, foreign exchange rates, population movement, and often the quality of the environment. Reducing tariffs may lower consumer costs at the expense of domestic industry, while increasing tariffs may protect domestic industry against foreign imports but at the expense of higher consumer prices.

### LEG-3.C.3

Governments concerned with budget deficits resulting from world market fluctuations often must adopt austerity measures, which result in funding cuts to state programs.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Data Analysis

3.E

Explain possible limitations of the data provided.

## TOPIC 5.8

# Causes and Effects of Demographic Change

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

**LEG-4**

Demographic changes have political causes and consequences, and they can present challenges to a government's legitimacy.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

**LEG-4.A**

Explain political causes and consequences of demographic changes.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

**LEG-4.A.1**

Growing populations, changing land use and values, and economic opportunities motivate internal and external population movements (including when populations shift from rural to urban areas or when net migration rates change) and the corresponding demographic changes pose significant challenges to governmental resources.

**LEG-4.A.2**

Government policies and employment opportunities can draw workers to different geographic regions or influence positive or negative migration rates, often deepening preexisting class and regional differences and taxing government resources:

- a. China's shifting emphasis from agriculture to industry, the creation of special economic zones, the encouragement of foreign direct investment, and fewer government restrictions and regulations of the economy have led to migration from rural to urban areas and west to east (interior to coast), creating a growing population whose rising incomes allow them to pursue work and educational opportunities abroad.

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### LEG-4.A

Explain political causes and consequences of demographic changes.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- b. Highly skilled or well-educated individuals have left home countries such as Iran and Nigeria to escape government policies or practices that are perceived as limiting, corrupt, or repressive.
- c. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and other economic liberalization policies (such as removing agricultural subsidies), maquiladora zones, and foreign direct investment patterns prompted migration from rural to urban areas and from southern to northern Mexico, and contributed to greater economic development in the north than in the south, as well as other regional disparities.
- d. A positive net migration of immigrants into countries like the United Kingdom has resulted in social and political tensions.

### LEG-4.A.3

Shifting migration patterns have political and social consequences, including:

- a. Increased crime stemming from higher population density
- b. The concentration of highly skilled individuals in certain areas and their absence in other areas
- c. Increased use of existing infrastructure and housing and demands for new and expanded infrastructure and housing
- d. The growth of new political parties that stand against immigration and supranational organizations that challenge the government's legitimacy

### LEG-4.A.4

The political leadership of the United Kingdom is facing increasing constituent demands to reduce the rising costs of health care, exacerbated by an aging population and a declining working-age population faced with increased tax burdens to fund the universal health care system.

### LEG-4.A.5

States respond to demographic pressures with different actions or policies that influence citizen behavior, including policies encouraging or discouraging the birth of children or actions promoting or discouraging discrimination against religious minorities.

## SUGGESTED SKILL

 Source Analysis

## 4.C

Explain how the implications of the author's argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.



## AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- Professional Development >
- ♦ [Close Reading of Challenging Primary Sources](#)
- ♦ [Writing from Challenging Primary Sources](#)

## TOPIC 5.9

# Impact of Natural Resources

## Required Course Content

### ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

## LEG-5

Natural resource endowments can have positive and negative effects on political stability and economic development.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

## LEG-5.A

Explain how natural resources affect political and economic development.

### ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

## LEG-5.A.1

Rentier states (including Iran, Nigeria, and Russia) that obtain a sizable percentage of total government revenue from the export of oil and gas or from leasing the resource to foreign countries, have been able to raise standards of living and fund governmental programs based on their huge reserves.

## LEG-5.A.2

Political and economic outcomes related to rentier state status, often referred to as the “resource curse” when petroleum is involved, include:

- a. Lack of economic diversification
- b. Concentration of governmental resources on developing the one profitable export industry to the exclusion of other types of industries
- c. Severe revenue fluctuations based on world market pricing
- d. The overvaluation of currency and trade imbalances
- e. The increasing disparity between rich and poor

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## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

### LEG-5.A

Explain how natural resources affect political and economic development.

## ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE

- f. A lack of incentive to modernize the economy or cooperate with international judicial bodies
- g. Increased governmental corruption
- h. A lack of governmental accountability to citizens when not relying on citizens for taxes
- i. The absence of democracy

### LEG-5.A.3

Resources are nationalized in China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, and Russia to provide government revenue, consolidate government control, and reduce political influence of foreign governments and multinational corporations (MNCs), all of which can reinforce political legitimacy. The degree of central government control in these states differs, as represented by:

- a. The Mexican government's decision to allow private investment in Pemex
- b. The political control exercised by foreign MNCs that underwrite Nigeria's oil production
- c. The high degree of centralized control over natural resource companies under Russian President Putin that has resulted in wealth concentration

### LEG-5.A.4

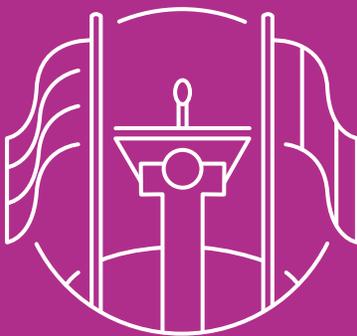
Privatized ownership of natural resources decreases government control, increases wealth inequality, and results in the potential loss of sovereignty.

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**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

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# Instructional Approaches



# Selecting and Using Course Materials

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Using a wide array of source material helps students become proficient with the disciplinary practices and develop a conceptual understanding of the course country governments and their interactions. In addition to using a college-level textbook that will provide required course content, students should have regular opportunities to examine primary and secondary source material in varied forms, as well as other types of political science scholarship. Rich, diverse source material gives teachers more flexibility in designing learning activities that develop the habits of thinking like a comparative political scientist that are essential for student success in the course.

## Textbooks

The AP Comparative Government and Politics course requires the use of a college-level textbook. Also, because the disciplinary practices are fundamental to the course, a textbook that focuses on skill instruction is useful.

While nearly all college-level comparative government textbooks address the five units of the AP Comparative Government and Politics course, they do not always do so in a balanced fashion. In that case, it will be important for teachers to identify other types of secondary sources and supplement the textbook accordingly to ensure that each of the five topic areas receives adequate attention. Some textbooks review historical contexts of significant political and governmental events. Since this is a political science course rather than a history course, it helps to focus on how those debates or movements shaped or relate to the present-day governments of the course countries. Ultimately, it is best to select a textbook that closely aligns with the course framework and the disciplinary practices.

An [example textbook list](#) of college-level textbooks that meet the AP Course Audit resource requirements is found on AP Central.

## Text-Based Qualitative Sources (Primary and Secondary Sources)

Political science writing differs from writing in other fields. It focuses on what influences political behavior and attitudes (e.g., voting, party identification, candidate support) and how political ideas and policies are developed and implemented.

Students in this AP course are required to analyze primary and secondary source material, including arguments written by political scientists and others, in order to deepen their understanding of the key concepts addressed by the textbook and to engage in the required disciplinary practices. Students are not expected to conduct original research, but they should be introduced to scholarly political science research articles.

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Students will find it useful to analyze primary source material regularly to deepen their understanding of the learning objectives and develop the required disciplinary practices. While publishers are increasingly including primary source material within the textbook, it is important to introduce students to a wide variety of source material in order to provide opportunities to analyze historical and contemporary evidence from diverse sources. These sources need to include written documents as well as images, such as photographs, cartoons, and works of art. The ancillary materials and website sources that accompany most of the recently published textbooks may have high-quality primary source documents, artwork, charts, and other sources of data that are linked to the topics and themes addressed in the textbook. If the textbook doesn't provide ample primary sources, or the sources are too brief, teachers can supplement the course with document readers that provide lengthier selections or online compilations of primary sources related to particular topic areas.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Student success in the course also depends on exposure to, and analysis of, multiple secondary sources in which political scientists present and explain their arguments. The most common secondary sources students should encounter include editorials, journal articles, news media articles, and essays and books by political scientists. The course framework includes suggested supplemental readings for many of the topics, but the choice of which secondary texts to use is entirely up to the teacher. It helps to choose a variety of sources that represent different points of view and that will engage students while enhancing learning. Select high-interest readings and add new articles to keep up with rapidly changing events.

## Quantitative Sources

Political science courses require students to engage with data in a variety of ways. The analysis, interpretation, and application of quantitative information are vital skills for students in AP Comparative Government and Politics. New textbooks and publishers' resources often contain quantitative information presented via charts, graphs, or other infographics, but that data may soon become out of date. Research institutions such as the [Pew Research Center](#) are good resources for current data to practice quantitative skills with students.

## Visual Sources

Students will encounter a variety of visual sources on the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam. Some visuals contain data, such as a map showing election results. Other visuals may illustrate political principles, processes, or behaviors. Visual information may also be expressed in a political cartoon or an infographic.

Students should have opportunities to practice with a wide variety of visual sources. The textbook may contain some maps and cartoons, and the following resources provide a wealth of visuals to choose from for bell-ringer exercises and skills practice.

- [Gapminder](#) is a “fact tank” that offers free teaching resources based on statistics culled from universities, the UN, and NGOs.
- [The Economist](#) is a news magazine that broadly covers topics and policies relating to all course countries.
- [Freedom House](#) is an independent watchdog organization that presents analysis on the progress and decline of freedom around the world.

## Evaluating Quality and Credibility of Different Sources and Perspectives

Students have unprecedented access to information, so it is more important than ever to help them determine the credibility of sources. The disciplinary practices require students to evaluate the quality and credibility of different information sources and perspectives and derive supportable conclusions. Teachers might want to provide students with a list of news media websites with different perspectives, such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, The Huffington Post, Al Jazeera, TASS, and *The Christian Science Monitor*. The BBC also offers a wide range of articles each day from different sources on a variety of topics.

The table on the following page explains how teachers might address the credibility and/or reliability of various sources.

Criteria	Considerations	Examples
<b><i>Credibility</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Credibility requires students to obtain information from sources with knowledge and expertise in political science. Sources can be print, online, or expert interviews.</li> <li>▪ Because many students are using the internet or database sources, they should consider the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ The domain name extensions, which indicate who publishes and owns the domain. Commonly used extensions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- .edu (educational organization)</li> <li>- .com (company)</li> <li>- .org (any organization)</li> <li>- .gov (government agency)</li> <li>- .net (network)</li> </ul> </li> <li>♦ The author(s) of the website</li> <li>♦ The credibility of sources cited in the materials as well as any websites they link to</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Students should read past the first slash in the domain name to see if the page might be someone’s personal page. A personal page might be less credible or include a bias that distorts the facts.</li> <li>▪ Finding out who the authors are, their credentials, and the organization(s) they are associated with will help determine whether they are qualified to write about the topic.</li> <li>▪ An article that includes citations of sources is often more credible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design a lesson to help students identify political perspective by comparing the headlines from different news sources, such as BBC and Al Jazeera.</li> <li>▪ Have students examine the language used in the lead stories as well as the pictures that accompany them.</li> <li>▪ Ask students to compare the focus of local news with that of national and international sources and discuss possible reasons certain stories are not covered in the news.</li> <li>▪ Have students synthesize their findings in a short paper examining the role of the media in providing citizens with political information.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Reliability</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students should examine the content of a source (the evidence) to ensure it supports their claims and provides insight and knowledge that relates to the topic. This means that evidence is only relevant when it addresses both the topic in context and the student’s argument.</li> <li>▪ Because students are investigating political processes and institutions that are changing and evolving, it is important for them to consider whether the information being provided is the most current.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ An article about the life of British Prime Minister Theresa May may not be relevant in supporting a claim about a particular decision by Parliament.</li> <li>▪ A public opinion poll from 2008 might not be relevant in 2018.</li> </ul>

# Instructional Strategies

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The AP Comparative Government and Politics course framework outlines the concepts and skills students must master in order to be successful on the AP Exam. In order to address those concepts and skills effectively, it helps to incorporate a variety of instructional approaches into daily lessons and activities. The following table presents strategies that can help students apply their understanding of course concepts.

Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
<b><i>Close Reading</i></b>	Students read, reread, and analyze small chunks of text word for word, sentence by sentence, and line by line.	Develops comprehensive understanding of text.	When students are reading secondary sources, such as a BBC article, have them highlight relevant country-specific words and passages that support the author’s claim.
<b><i>Create Representations</i></b>	Students create tables, graphs, or other infographics to interpret text or data.	Helps students organize information using multiple ways to present data.	Give students a set of data, such as voting patterns by gender and ethnicity, and have them create a graph that best shows the data and the trends.
<b><i>Critique Reasoning</i></b>	Through collaborative discussion, students critique the arguments of others, questioning the author’s perspective, evidence presented, and reasoning behind the argument.	Helps students learn from others as they make connections between concepts and learn to support their arguments with evidence and reasoning that make sense to peers.	Have students critique the argument for learning about Islam using “To the Youth in Europe and North America.” Ask them to examine the author’s perspective and the evidence and reasoning he uses to support his position.
<b><i>Debate</i></b>	Students present an informal or formal argument that defends a claim with reasons, while others defend different claims about the same topic or issue. The goal is to debate ideas without attacking the people who defend those ideas.	Gives students an opportunity to collect and orally present evidence supporting the arguments for or against a proposition or issue.	Have students debate whether policy making is more efficient in a presidential system or a parliamentary system, using evidence and reasoning to support their claims.

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<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b><i>Debriefing</i></b>	Teachers facilitate a discussion that leads to consensus understanding or helps students identify the key conclusions or takeaways.	Helps students solidify and deepen understanding of content.	For complex issues such as civil society, lead students in a debrief to ensure understanding.
<b><i>Discussion Groups</i></b>	Students engage in an interactive small-group discussion, often with assigned roles (e.g., questioner, summarizer, facilitator, evidence keeper) to consider a topic, text, or question.	Helps students gain new understanding of or insight into a text or issue by listening to multiple perspectives.	Assign students to groups to discuss a learning objective, such as <i>Explain the importance of independent judiciaries relative to other political institutions</i> , with a view to helping them gain new understanding by hearing the views of their classmates.
<b><i>Fishbowl</i></b>	Some students form an inner circle and model appropriate discussion techniques while an outer circle of students listens, responds, and evaluates.	Provides students with an opportunity to engage in a formal discussion and to experience roles both as participant and active listener; students also have the responsibility of supporting their opinions and responses using specific textual evidence.	Have students discuss the arguments presented in country-specific secondary sources and how they relate across governments.
<b><i>Graphic Organizer</i></b>	Students use a visual representation for the organization of information.	Builds comprehension and facilitates discussion by representing information in visual form.	Ask students to use a graphic organizer to compare political beliefs, ideologies, principles, and models. Make sure students use the organizer thoughtfully and are not simply “filling in the blanks.”
<b><i>Guided Discussion</i></b>	A guided discussion is an umbrella strategy that allows for the use of different techniques as you guide students through the lesson.	Helps students see the big picture and builds their confidence when dealing with difficult content or new skills.	Use brainstorming and quickwrite as strategies during a guided discussion to help students understand how political culture in a course country affects beliefs about social and economic equality.

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Strategy	Definition	Purpose	Example
<b><i>Jigsaw</i></b>	Each student in a group reads a different text or a different passage from a single text, taking on the role of "expert" on what was read. Students share the information from that reading with students from other groups and then return to their original groups to share their new knowledge.	Helps students summarize and present information to others in a way that facilitates an understanding of a text (or multiple texts) or issue without having each student read the text in its entirety; by teaching others, they become experts.	Use this strategy to facilitate understanding of high-level readings, such as data analysis papers found on <a href="#">V-Dem</a> or Freedom House.
<b><i>Look for a Pattern</i></b>	Students evaluate data or create visual representations to find a trend.	Helps students identify patterns that may be used to draw conclusions.	Using a complex graph (with at least two data sets), such as one showing educational attainment and demographics in the six course countries, have students compare the data to find a trend and draw a conclusion.
<b><i>Making Connections</i></b>	Students are given a concept, term, or document and asked to write what they know about it. Then, students are paired and asked to determine, describe, and explain the connection between the two concepts.	Reinforces the fact that political concepts are often connected and provides the opportunity for students to make and explain connections between and among these concepts.	Write concepts related to one of the course big ideas on cards, place them in a box, and have students pick a card at random. Give students a few minutes to gather and recall information about the term, and then pair students and ask them to find the connection between their concepts. Finally, ask the pairs to write a brief explanation of how the concepts are related.
<b><i>Match Claims and Evidence</i></b>	Students are given sample claims (most of which can be improved on) to evaluate and revise. Then students match their revised claims with pieces of evidence that can be used to support the claims. Once claims and evidence are matched, students write a statement explaining how and why the evidence supports the claim.	Provides opportunities for students to edit existing claims and match those claims with evidence in preparation for writing their own argumentative essays.	In the early stages of practicing argumentation, ask small groups of students to write claims and supporting evidence statements based on a question structured in the same way as free-response question 4. Have groups trade claims and evidence, revise or modify the claims (if necessary), match the claims and evidence, and write statements explaining why the evidence supports the claim.

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<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b><i>Quickwrite</i></b>	Students write for a short, specific amount of time about a designated topic.	Helps generate ideas in a short time.	As preparation for the free-response question for which students write an argument, have them write claims and explain evidence that supports their claims for various topics, such as the structure of government or political participation.
<b><i>Self/Peer Revision</i></b>	Students work alone or with a partner to examine a piece of writing for accuracy and clarity.	Provides students with an opportunity to edit a written text to ensure the correctness of identified components.	Have students perform self- and peer revisions of their practice argument essays so they have the opportunity to review their practice claims, supporting evidence, sourcing, analysis, and reasoning.
<b><i>Socratic Seminar</i></b>	This is a focused discussion tied to a topic, essential question, or selected text in which students ask questions of one another. The questions initiate a conversation that continues with a series of responses and additional questions.	Helps students arrive at a new understanding by asking questions that clarify; challenging assumptions; probing perspective and point of view; questioning facts, reasons, and evidence; or examining implications and outcomes.	Use an essential question from the start of a unit, such as <i>How does the perceived legitimacy of a government by its citizenry impact how other countries see it?</i> to initiate a discussion in which students can illustrate their understanding of the learning objectives and essential knowledge statements.
<b><i>Think-Pair-Share</i></b>	Students think through a question or issue alone, pair with a partner to share ideas, and then share results with the class.	Enables the development of initial ideas that are then tested with a partner in preparation for revising ideas and sharing them with a larger group.	To practice comparing executive leadership in course countries, ask students to consider structure, function, and change, and have them use think-pair-share to come up with similarities and differences.

# Developing the Disciplinary Practices

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Throughout the AP Comparative Government and Politics course, students will develop skills that are fundamental to the discipline of comparative political science. Since these disciplinary practices represent the complex skills that adept comparative political scientists demonstrate, students will benefit from multiple opportunities to develop these skills in a scaffolded manner.

A college-level comparative political science course will challenge students to put that knowledge into action through various discipline-based practices common to the field. One of the aims of the AP Comparative Government and Politics course is to have students think like political scientists.

The disciplinary practices and their related skills articulated in the course framework equip students to understand, analyze, and apply political information

in a process similar to that followed by political scientists. This process begins with a close analysis of quantitative and qualitative sources and reaches its conclusion when evidence is used effectively to support an argument about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors.

The unit guides feature a suggested skill for each course topic. However, teachers are free to use either that skill or one of their choosing to allow students to practice the skills using course content. It is important to help students develop all the skills throughout the course, and teachers should use their professional judgment to sequence and scaffold them appropriately for their students.

The tables on the pages that follow provide sample activities and instructional strategies for incorporating the skills into instruction.

## Disciplinary Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes in authentic contexts

Students should have ample practice applying their content knowledge. Comparative political scientists practice their discipline by applying their knowledge to different contexts and scenarios and to the current political environment of the six course countries. Students in the AP Comparative Government and Politics course have this same opportunity through this disciplinary practice.

### Disciplinary Practice 1: *Concept Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>1.A:</b> Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe characteristics and traits of terms and concepts.</li> <li>▪ Classify terms and concepts.</li> </ul>	Before students can apply their knowledge, they need to demonstrate understanding by describing and explaining. Before beginning a deeper discussion on the balance of power between governments and its citizenry, have students describe differences between regimes, states, nations, and government. (Topic 1.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>
<b>1.B:</b> Explain political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and describe the steps or stages in a process.</li> <li>▪ Explain how and why a process changes.</li> <li>▪ Explain the significance of a process.</li> </ul>	Ask students to explain the structure, function, and changes of executive leadership in course countries. (Topic 2.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion Groups</li> <li>▪ Making Connections</li> </ul>
<b>1.C:</b> Compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify the relevant, specific categories for comparing similarities and differences.</li> <li>▪ Explain the reasons for the relevant similarities and differences.</li> <li>▪ Explain the relevance, implications, and/or significance of the similarities and differences.</li> </ul>	Make sure students understand that they need to identify relevant and specific similarities and differences. They should compare like factors. Ask students to identify and then explain relevant, specific similarities and differences among social and political cleavages. Have them compare like categories, such as voting behavior or political networks. (Topics 3.8 and 3.9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Look for a Pattern</li> <li>▪ Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>

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## Disciplinary Practice 1: *Concept Application*

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<p><b>1.D:</b> <i>Describe political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors of a course country.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe characteristics and traits of terms and concepts of a course country.</li> <li>▪ Classify terms and concepts of a course country.</li> </ul>	<p>Ask students to describe the electoral systems and election rules in China. (Topic 4.1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Debriefing</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.E:</b> <i>Explain how political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply in a course country.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify and describe the steps or stages in a process in a course country.</li> <li>▪ Explain how and why a process changes in a course country.</li> <li>▪ Explain the significance of a process in a course country.</li> </ul>	<p>Ask students to explain how and why governments adapt social policies, such as Mexico's gender quotas, to address political, cultural, and economic changes. (Topic 5.6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussion Groups</li> <li>▪ Close Reading</li> </ul>

## Disciplinary Practice 2: Compare political concepts and processes among the course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom)

Comparative political scientists seek to understand similarities and differences between states, evaluate political realities, and understand political change. Students can come to understandings about course countries through ample practice comparing the political concepts and processes across these countries.

### Disciplinary Practice 2: Country Comparison

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>2.A:</b> Compare two or more course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify course countries to be compared.</li> <li>Find relevant, specific categories to compare two or more course countries.</li> <li>Using the categories, identify the similarities and differences between the course countries.</li> </ul>	Using at least two of the course countries, ask students to compare institutional relations among parliamentary, presidential, and semi-presidential systems. (Topic 2.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for a Pattern</li> <li>Graphic Organizer</li> </ul>
<b>2.B:</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with similar political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify course countries with similar political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> <li>Find relevant, specific categories to compare two or more course countries with similar political systems, principles institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> <li>Explain the varied implications of similarities and differences among course countries with similar political systems, principles institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> </ul>	Identify at least two of the course countries that have similar political systems, principles institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. Then ask students to explain how the political culture in these course countries relates to citizen behavior and the role of the state. (Topics 3.2 and 3.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graphic Organizer</li> <li>Think-Pair-Share</li> <li>Discussion Groups</li> </ul>
<b>2.C:</b> Explain the implications of the similarities and differences between countries with different political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify course countries with different political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> <li>Find relevant, specific categories to compare two or more course countries with different political systems, principles institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> <li>Explain the varied implications of similarities and differences among course countries with different political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</li> </ul>	Identify at least two of the course countries that have different political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. Then ask students to explain how the political party systems and memberships link citizen participation to policy making. (Topics 4.3 and 4.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graphic Organizer</li> <li>Debate</li> </ul>

## Disciplinary Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics

The analysis, interpretation, and application of quantitative information are vital skills for students in AP Comparative Government and Politics. Analysis skills can be taught using any type of quantitative information, but students should use current data so that they can draw accurate conclusions and apply that knowledge to the enduring understandings and learning objectives in the course.

### Disciplinary Practice 3: Data Analysis

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>3.A:</b> Describe the data presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the data presented?</li> <li>What does the data show?</li> </ul>	Have students collect data from various sources that discuss the political legitimacy of the state, such as Freedom House or V-Dem. Sources of legitimacy can include popular election results, economic growth, and nationalism. (Topic 1.8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Look for a Pattern</li> <li>Create Representations</li> </ul>
<b>3.B:</b> Describe patterns and trends in data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you notice about the data?</li> <li>What trends and patterns can you identify from the data?</li> </ul>	Ask students to describe the patterns and trends they see in data, such as how internal actors enhance or threaten political stability. (Topic 1.10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debriefing</li> <li>Create Representations</li> </ul>
<b>3.C:</b> Explain patterns and trends in data to draw conclusions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why is the data displayed as it is?</li> <li>What does the author of the chart or graph want to show?</li> <li>What conclusions can you draw by comparing the trends you found in the data?</li> <li>What evidence do you have to support that conclusion?</li> </ul>	Challenge students to compare the trends and draw a conclusion about the data. They should also explain their reasoning. Have students look at polling data from course countries to explain how political values and beliefs frame policy choices to address particular political problems. (Topic 3.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Debriefing</li> <li>Guided Discussion</li> </ul>

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### Disciplinary Practice 3: Data Analysis

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<p><b>3.D:</b> <i>Explain what the data implies or illustrates about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What concept or principle does this data remind you of?</li> <li>▪ How does this data relate to a political process?</li> <li>▪ What could political actors learn from this data that would affect how they operate?</li> </ul>	<p>Have students apply this information to a political system, principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior. Students could use this data to explain how political participation in a course country is related to a regime’s use of authority and power. (Topics 3.5 and 3.6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Think-Pair-Share</li> <li>▪ Guided Discussion</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.E:</b> <i>Explain possible limitations of the data provided.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What does this data not tell you?</li> <li>▪ What do you know about the group or organization that provided the data?</li> <li>▪ How does that knowledge influence the conclusions you can draw from the data?</li> </ul>	<p>Lead students to analyze possible limitations of the data that is represented, such as looking at economic liberalization policies without showing a variety of factors (economic development, economic growth, human development, wealth, or inequality) to highlight consequences. (Topic 5.8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Look for a Pattern</li> <li>▪ Create Representations</li> <li>▪ Discussion Groups</li> </ul>

## Disciplinary Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret text-based sources

The AP Comparative Government and Politics course requires students to analyze texts in terms of perspective, conclusions, and supporting evidence and to understand how they illustrate principles and processes of course country governments. In these texts, politicians, activists, political scientists, and other scholars develop their ideas and arguments.

### Disciplinary Practice 4: Source Analysis

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>4.A:</b> Describe the author’s claim(s), perspective, evidence, and reasoning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is the author?</li> <li>What is the author’s perspective?</li> <li>Why did the author write this?</li> <li>What do you know about the author and what the author thinks about government and political principles?</li> <li>What is the author’s argument?</li> <li>What evidence does the author use to support the argument?</li> <li>What reasoning does the author use to justify the argument?</li> </ul>	Lead students on a close reading of the open letter “To the Youth in Europe and North America” by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Ask them to identify the author, his perspective, and his argument. Then ask students to identify what evidence and reasoning is provided in support of his argument. (Topic 5.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Close Reading</li> <li>Critique Reasoning</li> </ul>
<b>4.B:</b> Explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What political system, principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior have we studied that is related to the author’s claim and argument?</li> <li>How is the author’s claim or argument related to that political principle or concept?</li> </ul>	Have students connect Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s argument to global market forces. (Topic 5.2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socratic Seminar</li> <li>Discussion Groups</li> </ul>
<b>4.C:</b> Explain how the implications of the author’s argument or perspective may affect political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would happen if we followed the author’s advice?</li> <li>How does the author’s position affect a political system, principle, process, institution, policy, or behavior?</li> </ul>	Challenge students to determine how Ayatollah Ali Khamenei’s argument in “To the Youth in Europe and North America” affected political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors in Iran, Europe, or North America. (Topic 2.7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self/Peer Revision</li> <li>Socratic Seminar</li> </ul>

## Disciplinary Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Political scientists examine data, evidence, and differing perspectives to develop claims about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors. As they begin to articulate their positions, political scientists use reasoning processes that rely on their awareness of different types of relationships, connections, and patterns within the data, evidence, and perspectives. They then formulate a claim, or thesis, and develop an argument that explains how the claim is supported by the available evidence.

A strong argument also accounts for how some evidence might seem to refute or rebut the claim, addressing alternate perspectives. Students should learn how to create persuasive and meaningful arguments by improving their proficiency with each of these practices in turn.

### Disciplinary Practice 5: Argumentation

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>5.A:</b> <i>Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What positions could you take based on the question and the evidence?</li> <li>What position do you want to take? What claim will you make?</li> <li>What is your purpose (to define, show causality, compare, or explain a process)?</li> <li>What reasons justify your claim and achieve your purpose?</li> <li>What evidence supports your claim and reasoning?</li> <li>What evidence runs counter to your claim and reasoning?</li> <li>Write a defensible claim or thesis statement that reflects your reasoning and evidence.</li> </ul>	<p>Give students a question, such as <i>Are executive term limits advantageous or disadvantageous with regard to promoting stability and effective policies in a country?</i></p> <p>Students should analyze all possibilities and the evidence for and against each position. Have students choose a position and write a defensible claim or thesis that reflects their reasoning and evidence. (Topic 2.4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match Claims and Evidence</li> <li>Quickwrite</li> <li>Debate</li> </ul>
<b>5.B:</b> <i>Support the argument using relevant evidence.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What evidence supports your claim?</li> <li>How does the evidence support your claim?</li> </ul>	<p>Have students identify and explain the evidence that supports their position, with an emphasis on how the evidence supports the claim. (Topic 2.4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match Claims and Evidence</li> <li>Critique Reasoning</li> </ul>

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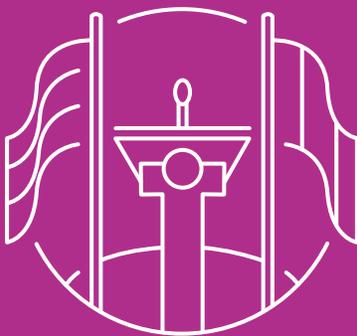
## Disciplinary Practice 5: Argumentation

Skill	Questions/Tasks	Sample Activities	Sample Instructional Strategies
<b>5.C:</b> <i>Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify the claim/thesis.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explain why your evidence supports your claim, using a transition such as <i>because</i> or <i>therefore</i>.</li> <li>▪ Question your reasoning. Does it make sense? Have you provided a solid explanation of your reasoning?</li> </ul>	Ask students to “close the loop” and explain, using reasoning processes, why the evidence supports their claim. (Topic 2.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Match Claims and Evidence</li> <li>▪ Critique Reasoning</li> </ul>
<b>5.D:</b> <i>Use refutation, concession, or rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternate perspectives.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What evidence goes against your claim?</li> <li>▪ What could someone with an opposing view say about your claim based on the evidence?</li> <li>▪ Taking the rebuttal evidence into account, why is your claim still the best?</li> </ul>	Challenge students to identify and explain evidence that refutes or rebuts their claim. A strong essay acknowledges contrary positions and uses other evidence to show why the author’s position is the best choice. (Topic 2.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Critique Reasoning</li> <li>▪ Debate</li> <li>▪ Self/Peer Revision</li> </ul>

**AP COMPARATIVE  
GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

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# Exam Information



# Exam Overview

The AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam assesses student understanding of the disciplinary practices and learning objectives outlined in the course framework. The exam is 2 hours and 30 minutes long and includes 55 multiple-choice questions and 4 free-response questions. The details of the exam, including exam weighting and timing, can be found below.

Section	Question Type	Number of Questions	Exam Weighting	Timing
<b>I</b>	<b>Multiple-choice questions</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Free-response questions</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>90 minutes (recommended timing below)</b>
	Question 1: Conceptual Analysis (4 points)		11%	10 minutes
	Question 2: Quantitative Analysis (5 points)		12.5%	20 minutes
	Question 3: Comparative Analysis (5 points)		12.5%	20 minutes
	Question 4: Argument Essay (5 points)		14%	40 minutes

## The exam assesses content from the five big ideas for the course:

**Big Idea 1:** Power and Authority

**Big Idea 2:** Legitimacy and Stability

**Big Idea 3:** Democratization

**Big Idea 4:** Internal/External Forces

**Big Idea 5:** Methods of Political Analysis

The AP Exam also assesses the five units of the course with the following exam weighting on the multiple-choice section:

<b>Units</b>	<b>Exam Weighting</b>
<b>Unit 1:</b> Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments	<b>18–27%</b>
<b>Unit 2:</b> Political Institutions	<b>22–33%</b>
<b>Unit 3:</b> Political Culture and Participation	<b>11–18%</b>
<b>Unit 4:</b> Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations	<b>13–18%</b>
<b>Unit 5:</b> Political and Economic Changes and Development	<b>16–24%</b>

# How Student Learning Is Assessed on the AP Exam

The AP Comparative Government and Politics disciplinary practices are assessed on the AP Exam as detailed below.

	Multiple-Choice Section	Free-Response Section
<i>Practice 1: Concept Application</i>	<p>Approximately 40–55% of multiple-choice questions assess students' ability to apply political concepts and processes in hypothetical and authentic contexts. Both individual and set-based multiple-choice questions are used to assess Practice 1.</p> <p>Students will need to describe, explain, and compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</p>	<p>Free-response question 1 focuses exclusively on Practice 1. Free-response questions 2 and 3 also assess this practice.</p>
<i>Practice 2: Country Comparison</i>	<p>Approximately 25–32% of multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to compare the political concepts and processes of China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Both individual and set-based multiple-choice questions are used to assess Practice 2.</p> <p>Students will need to compare course countries based on their political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors as well as explain the implications of similarities and/or differences.</p>	<p>Free-response question 3 assesses Practice 2.</p>
<i>Practice 3: Data Analysis</i>	<p>Approximately 10–16% of multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics. Only set-based multiple-choice questions are used to assess Practice 3.</p> <p>Students will need to describe and explain data as well as explain the relationship between the data and political systems, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</p>	<p>Free-response question 2 focuses primarily on Practice 3.</p>
<i>Practice 4: Source Analysis</i>	<p>Approximately 9–11% of multiple-choice questions will assess students' ability to read, analyze, and interpret text-based sources. Only set-based multiple-choice questions are used to assess Practice 4.</p> <p>Students will need to describe and explain claims, evidence, perspective, and reasoning in sources. Additionally, students will need to explain how text-based sources relate to political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.</p>	<p>Practice 4 is not explicitly assessed in the free-response section.</p>
<i>Practice 5: Argumentation</i>	<p>No multiple-choice questions are used to explicitly assess the argumentation practice.</p>	<p>Free-response question 4 focuses exclusively on Practice 5.</p>

## Section I: Multiple-Choice

The first section of the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam includes 55 multiple-choice questions, appearing either as individual questions or in sets of two to three questions each. The following table lays out the different types of questions.

Question Type	Number of Questions	Stimulus Type	Practices Assessed
<i>Quantitative analysis</i>	Three sets: two to three questions per set	Each set includes one of the following quantitative data as a stimulus: line graphs, charts, tables, maps, or infographics.	Practice 3 primarily; also Practices 1 and 2
<i>Text-based analysis</i>	Two sets: two to three questions per set	Each set includes a secondary source passage.	Practice 4
<i>Individual multiple-choice questions</i>	40–44	No stimulus	Practices 1 and 2

## Section II: Free-Response

The second section of the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam includes four free-response questions (FRQs).

### Free-response question 1: Conceptual Analysis

assesses students' ability to define or describe a political concept and explain and/or compare political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors.

### Free-response question 2: Quantitative Analysis

presents students with quantitative data in the form of a table, graph, map, or infographic. This question assesses students' ability to perform the following:

- Describe the data presented
- Describe a pattern, trend, similarity, or difference in the data presented
- Describe relevant course concepts
- Draw a conclusion based on the data and course concepts
- Explain how the data demonstrates political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, or behaviors

### Free-response question 3: Comparative Analysis

assesses students' ability to compare political concepts, systems, institutions, or policies in different course countries:

- Define a political concept, system, institution, or policy
- Describe examples of a political concept, system, institution, or policy in two different course countries
- Compare or explain responses by the two course countries related to the political concept, system, institution, or policy

**Free-response question 4: Argument Essay** assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the question and establishes a line of reasoning
- Provide specific examples of evidence from one or more course countries related to the course concepts in the question prompt
- Use reasoning to explain why the evidence supports the claim
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal

# Task Verbs Used in Free-Response Questions

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The following task verbs are commonly used in the free-response questions:

**Compare:** Provide a description or explanation of similarities and/or differences.

**Define:** Provide a specific meaning for a word or concept.

**Describe:** Provide the relevant characteristics of a specified topic.

**Develop an argument:** Articulate a claim and support it with evidence.

**Draw a conclusion:** Use available information to formulate an accurate statement that demonstrates understanding based on evidence.

**Explain:** Provide information about how or why a relationship, pattern, position, situation, or outcome occurs, using evidence and/or reasoning. Explain “how” typically requires analyzing the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome, whereas explain “why” typically requires analysis of motivations or reasons for the relationship, process, pattern, position, situation, or outcome.

**Identify:** Indicate or provide specific information about a specified topic, without elaboration or explanation.

# Sample Exam Questions

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The sample exam questions that follow illustrate the relationship between the course framework and the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam and serve as examples of the types of questions that appear on the exam. After the sample questions is a table that shows to which skill, learning objective(s), and unit each question relates. The table also provides the answers to the multiple-choice questions.

## Section I: Multiple-Choice

1. If studies demonstrate that countries with higher per capita GDP are more democratic than countries with lower per capita GDP, then the relationship between per capita GDP and democracy is
  - (A) causal
  - (B) correlated
  - (C) normative
  - (D) qualitative
2. Which of the following variables is the best measure of living standards in a country?
  - (A) Gross domestic product (GDP)
  - (B) Per capita gross domestic product
  - (C) Freedom House political rights score
  - (D) Human Development Index (HDI)
3. Which of the following best captures why Nigeria has experienced more coups than Mexico has since 1960?
  - (A) Mexico's economy is more dependent upon the export of natural resources than Nigeria's economy is, so outside corporations and governments take a greater interest in Mexico's stability.
  - (B) Nigeria features sharper ethnic and religious divides than Mexico does, provoking conflict between groups for control of the central government, which has permitted the military to intervene.
  - (C) Nigeria's population is much larger than Mexico's population, providing more opportunities for conflict and a greater need for a powerful military.
  - (D) Mexico's military has historically been a more powerful actor in domestic politics than Nigeria's military has, and it has used its influence to ensure stability.

4. Which of the following pairs of countries have presidential systems?
  - (A) Nigeria and Mexico
  - (B) Mexico and Iran
  - (C) China and the United Kingdom
  - (D) The United Kingdom and Russia
  
5. Which of the following statements about the role and function of executives in each country is most accurate?
  - (A) The British monarch and the Iranian supreme leader are both largely ceremonial positions.
  - (B) The Nigerian president conducts foreign policy, whereas the Russian president relies on the prime minister for foreign policy.
  - (C) Iran has a supreme leader instead of a president, whereas Russia has a president and a prime minister who serve as equals.
  - (D) The Chinese president and the Nigerian president are both commanders in chief of the armed forces.
  
6. Which of the following describes an accurate difference between parliamentary and presidential systems?
  - (A) Parliamentary systems have better rule of law than presidential systems.
  - (B) Parliamentary systems have fewer institutional obstacles to enact policy.
  - (C) Parliamentary systems are unitary, whereas presidential systems are federal.
  - (D) Parliamentary systems have more political parties than presidential systems do.
  
7. Which of the following accurately compares the status of civil liberties and civil rights in democratic and authoritarian regimes?
  - (A) Only democratic regimes encourage elections.
  - (B) Only authoritarian regimes place any restrictions on the media.
  - (C) Only authoritarian regimes restrict citizen access to information about government policy making.
  - (D) Only democratic regimes encourage citizen control of the political agenda by granting civil liberties.
  
8. Which of the following explains how civil society interacts with politics in both Nigeria and Mexico?
  - (A) Nigeria and Mexico both totally repress civil society, which undermines democracy by reducing individual freedoms.
  - (B) Nigeria and Mexico both suffer from a corporatist structure that undermines the power of civil society.
  - (C) Nigeria and Mexico both benefit from an increasingly active civil society, much of which focuses on reducing corruption.
  - (D) Nigeria and Mexico both have civil societies deeply rooted in their long histories of democracy.

9. Which of the following describes contrasting political ideologies?
- (A) In Mexico, the government is limited to the same rules as its citizens, whereas in Russia the government uses the law to reinforce the authority of the state.
  - (B) In Iran, the government is limited to the same rules as its citizens, whereas in Nigeria the government uses the law to reinforce the authority of the state.
  - (C) In China, citizens value rule by law, whereas in Iran citizens value rule of law.
  - (D) In Russia, citizens value rule of law, whereas in the United Kingdom citizens value rule by law.

**Questions 10 and 11 refer to the passage.**

**Source:** Geneive Adbo and Abdalla Hendawy, “Iran’s Latest Revolution Won’t Fade Away,” Bloomberg Opinion, January 19, 2018.

As with any social uprising, the unpredictable factor when trying to gauge the longevity of this particular movement is the strength of the state. . . .

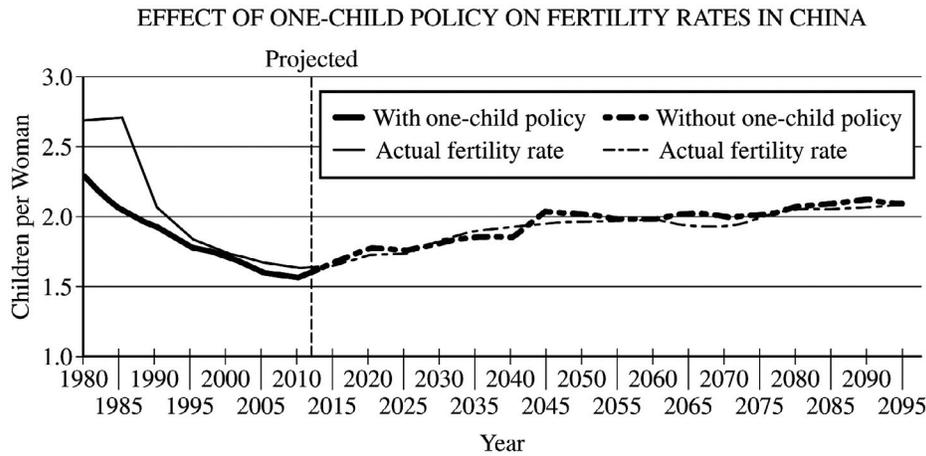
What we are witnessing in Iran now should not be viewed as an isolated outcry, but rather . . . a hybrid momentum that started in 1999 and led by students who later became involved in the Green Movement. They are belatedly joining the current unrest, which is evolving to include new social classes of people who were not at the center of previous protests.

Although this momentum has not been linear, neither were the Arab uprisings in 2011. The Iranian demonstrators’ demands—food subsidies, jobs and lower prices—are perfectly attainable if the regime re-allocates its resources from the military to the economy. The fact that it is highly unlikely to do so, coupled with the demonstrators’ resentment, could inspire more protests in the near future that may forge a broader alliance between the middle class and the working class. It is unlikely that this simmering social movement will wait another decade to rear its head.

10. Which of the following is supported by the main idea of the passage?
- (A) Demonstrators in Iran are unpredictable and unclear in their demands, which will lead them to be crushed by the government.
  - (B) The Arab uprisings in 2011 were the catalyst for the protests in Iran.
  - (C) The Iranian state could meet the demonstrators’ demands and end the uprisings but probably will not.
  - (D) Students were the largest group of protesters in Iran, and their issues were resolved in 2011.
11. Which of the following statements is an implication of the argument presented in the passage?
- (A) Because social movements lack organized hierarchy, it is difficult to meet their demands, and Iran is likely to face continued political instability.
  - (B) It is wrong to conflate the Green Movement, which was about foreign direct investment, with this most recent movement, which is about economic struggle.
  - (C) Iran has a strong state that is able to suppress opposition movements and is able to control all social media posts about political protests.
  - (D) Since the Green Movement was not successful, citizens have stopped believing that protests are an effective means of voicing frustration with the government.

12. Which of the following characteristics best fits a catch-all party?
- (A) Presenting voters with an ideological viewpoint that envisions the role of government in a consistent manner on all issues
  - (B) A singular focus on one political issue that it considers most important and in need of government attention
  - (C) A willingness to change its position on a given issue to encourage more voters to support it in any given election
  - (D) The transnational pursuit of power by presenting a consistent message to voters in multiple countries

Questions 13 and 14 refer to the chart.



Source: BBC News Asia, 2012.

13. Which of the following is accurate according to the chart?
- (A) Between 1980 and 2040, China's actual fertility rate will rise significantly, but the estimated fertility rate would have remained stable without the one-child policy.
  - (B) China's fertility rate would have been much higher prior to 2005 without the one-child policy.
  - (C) Families were refusing to obey the one-child policy as represented by the increased fertility rates between 1990 and 2010.
  - (D) China's fertility rate will be higher in 2005 than it was in 1980.
14. Which of the following is an implication of the chart?
- (A) A two-child policy in the 1980s would have been a more effective response to demographic pressures than the one-child policy was.
  - (B) The fertility rate in China was heavily influenced by the one-child policy, especially between 1990 and 2015.
  - (C) China's one-child policy was an effective response to demographic pressures.
  - (D) China's one-child policy was unnecessary, as the fertility rate would have declined similarly without a policy restricting fertility rates.
15. Economic liberalization policies in Mexico resulted in which of the following?
- (A) Internal migration from the north of the country to the south
  - (B) The removal of maquiladora zones in the north
  - (C) The removal of agricultural subsidies
  - (D) The refusal to sign the North American Free Trade Agreement

## Section II: Free-Response

The following are examples of the kinds of free-response questions found on the exam.

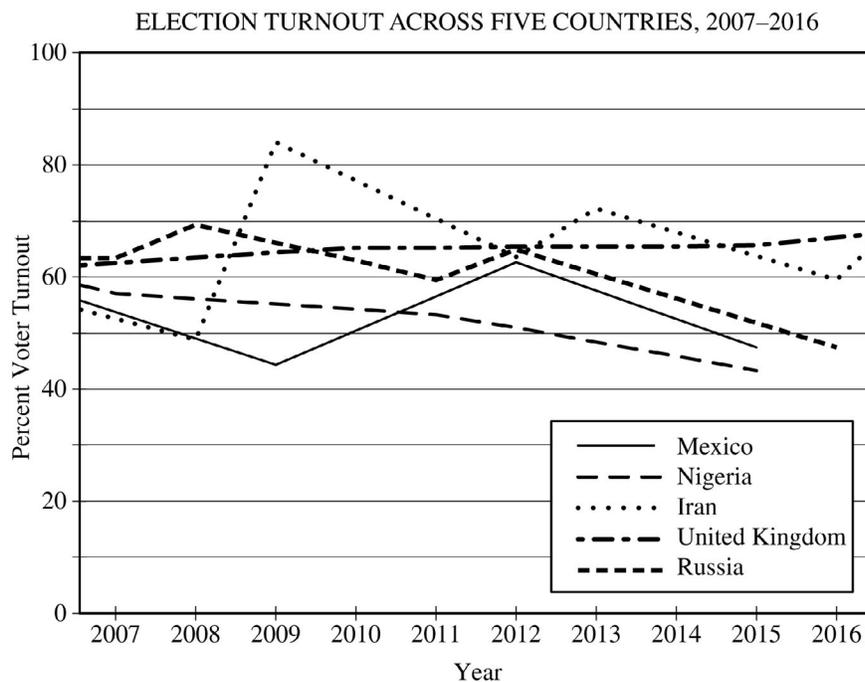
### Conceptual Analysis (Free-Response Question 1 on the AP Exam)

Answer a, b, c, and d.

- (A) Define economic liberalization.
- (B) Describe a measure that a democratic or authoritarian government could use to liberalize its economy.
- (C) Explain one reason a government would choose to liberalize its economy.
- (D) Explain why a decision to introduce economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages.

### Quantitative Analysis (Free-Response Question 2 on the AP Exam)

Answer a, b, c, d, and e.



- (A) Using the data in the graph, identify the country with the highest turnout in a single year.
- (B) Using the data in the graph, describe voter turnout between 2007 and 2015 in Nigeria.
- (C) Describe political efficacy.
- (D) Using your knowledge of political efficacy and the data in the graph, explain the pattern of Iran's political turnout in 2009 and 2013.
- (E) Explain what the data illustrate about political participation in authoritarian regimes.

### **Comparative Analysis (Free-Response Question 3 on the AP Exam)**

Compare how legislative powers can be independent or constrained by other governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries. In your response, you should do the following.

- (A) Define legislative independence.
- (B) Explain how legislative independence is used by governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries.
- (C) Explain why each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in (B) would choose to constrain legislative powers.

### **Argument Essay (Free-Response Question 4 on the AP Exam)**

Develop an argument as to whether democratic or authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country.

Use one or more of the following course concepts in your response:

- Power
- Authority
- Legitimacy

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries. The evidence should be relevant to one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis, using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective, using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

# Answer Key and Question Alignment to Course Framework

Multiple-Choice Question	Answer	Skill	Learning Objective	Unit
1	B	1.B	MPA-1.A	1
2	D	1.A	MPA-1.A	1
3	B	2.C	PAU-1.D, LEG-2.B	1
4	A	2.A	PAU-3.A	2
5	D	2.A	PAU-3.C	2
6	B	1.C	PAU-3.B	2
7	D	1.C	DEM-1.C	3
8	C	2.B	IEF-1.B	3
9	A	2.C	IEF-1.D	3
10	C	4.A	IEF-2.A	4
11	A	4.C	IEF-2.A	4
12	C	1.A	PAU-4.A	4
13	C	3.B	LEG-4.A	5
14	D	3.D	LEG-4.A	5
15	C	1.E	LEG-3.C	5

Free-Response Question	Question Type	Skill	Learning Objective	Unit
1	Conceptual Analysis	1.A, 1.B	IEF-3.C, IEF-3.D	5
2	Quantitative Analysis	1.A, 3.A, 3.B, 3.C, 3.D	DEM-1.B	3
3	Comparative Analysis	1.A, 1.E, 2.A, 2.B	PAU-3.F	2
4	Argument Essay	5.A, 5.B, 5.C, 5.D	PAU-1.D	1

The scoring information for the questions within this course and exam description, along with further exam resources, can be found on the [AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam Page](#) on AP Central.



# Scoring Guidelines

## Question 1: Conceptual Analysis

Answer a, b, c, and d.

- (A) Define economic liberalization.
- (B) Describe a measure that a democratic or authoritarian government could use to liberalize its economy.
- (C) Explain one reason a government would choose to liberalize its economy.
- (D) Explain why a decision to introduce economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages.

## Scoring Guideline for Question 1: Conceptual Analysis

4 points

Learning Objectives: **IEF-3.C** **IEF 3.D**

**(A)** Define economic liberalization **1 point**

**Acceptable definition:**

- Economic liberalization occurs when a state reduces its economic role and embraces free market mechanisms.

**1.A**

**(B)** Describe a measure that a democratic or authoritarian government could use to liberalize their economy. **1 point**

**Acceptable descriptions include:**

- Democratic or authoritarian governments can eliminate subsidies or tariffs to liberalize their economies.
- Democratic or authoritarian governments can privatize government-owned industries to liberalize their economies.
- Democratic or authoritarian governments can open their markets to foreign direct investment to liberalize their economies.

**1.A**

**(C)** Explain one reason why a country would choose to liberalize its economy. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

- A country might choose to liberalize its economy to remedy undesirable domestic circumstances, such as one of the following:
  - rising unemployment
  - reduced productivity
  - trade deficits.
- Liberalizing the economy could take pressure off of the government and satisfy its citizens.
- A country might choose to liberalize its economy due to pressure from other countries and international organizations.
- A country might choose to liberalize its economy because free trade and a liberalized economy helps to develop a middle class.

**1.B**

**(D)** Explain why a decision to introduce economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages. **1 point**

**Acceptable explanations include:**

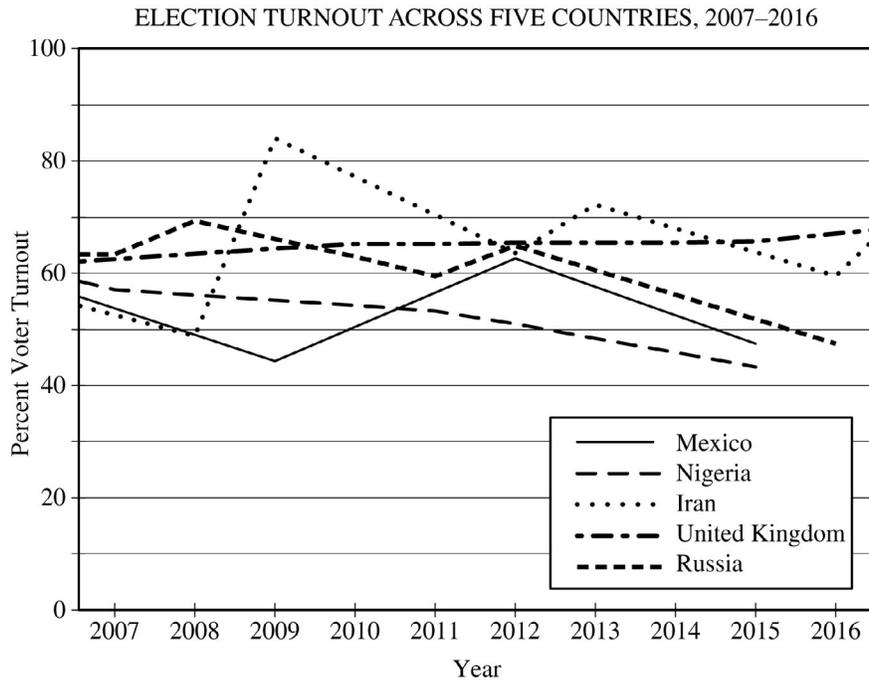
- Economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages because the economic policies often contribute to rising inequality between classes or regions.
- Economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages because the economic policies often contribute to inequalities because a middle class develops, but so do disparities among groups (rich/poor, urban/rural)
- Economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages because less protectionism and freer movement of goods and services may cause tensions with immigration and people looking for work.

**1.B**

**Total for question 1 4 points**

## Question 2: Quantitative Analysis

Answer a, b, c, d, and e.



- (A) Using the data in the graph, identify the country with the highest turnout in a single year.
- (B) Using the data in the graph, describe voter turnout between 2007 and 2015 in Nigeria.
- (C) Describe political efficacy.
- (D) Using your knowledge of political efficacy and the data in the graph, explain the pattern of Iran's political turnout in 2009 and 2013.
- (E) Explain what the data illustrate about political participation in authoritarian regimes.

## Scoring Guideline for Question 2: Quantitative Analysis

5 points

Learning Objectives: **DEM-1.B**

- (A)** Identify the country with the highest turnout in a single year. **1 point**  
• Iran **3.A**
- 
- (B)** Describe voter turnout between 2007 and 2015 in Nigeria. **1 point**  
**Acceptable descriptions include:** **3.B**  
• Voter turnout in Nigeria declined between 2007 and 2015.  
• In 2007 voter turnout was just under 50 percent, and in 2015 turnout declined to 32 percent.
- 
- (C)** Describe political efficacy. **1 point**  
**Acceptable descriptions include:** **1.A**  
• Citizens have faith and trust in government and believe that they can influence politics.  
• Citizens believe that one’s vote can influence political affairs.
- 
- (D)** Using your knowledge of political efficacy and the data in the graph, explain the pattern of Iran’s political turnout in 2009 and 2013. **1 point**  
**Acceptable explanations include:** **3.C**  
• In 2009 voter turnout was high because voters wanted to elect reformist Musavi to office and remove hardliner Ahmadinejad from office.  
• In 2009, once the candidates were vetted, there was real political competition among candidates, with no guaranteed winner, and citizens believed their votes mattered.  
• Voter turnout in 2013 was lower than in 2009 but still fairly high. It was lower than in 2009 because citizens had less faith in free and competitive elections, and this was the first presidential election since the protests of 2009.
- 
- (E)** Explain what the turnout data illustrate about political participation in authoritarian regimes. **1 point**  
**Acceptable explanations include:** **3.D**  
• Authoritarian regimes often allow citizens to participate to develop and maintain a sense of political legitimacy.  
• Political participation in authoritarian regimes is often mandatory, which often means that turnout in authoritarian regimes is higher than in democratic regimes.

**Total for question 2 5 points**

### Question 3: Comparative Analysis

Compare how legislative powers can be independent or constrained by other governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries. In your response, you should do the following.

- (A) Define legislative independence.
- (B) Explain how legislative independence is used by governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries.
- (C) Explain why each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in (B) would choose to constrain legislative powers.

## Scoring Guideline for Question 3: Comparative Analysis

5 points

Learning Objectives: **PAU-3.F**

**(A)** Define legislative independence.

1 point

**Acceptable definition:**

1.A

- Legislative independence refers to the degree to which a legislature is free to exercise its powers without influence from other branches/institutions.

**(B)** Explain how legislative independence is used by government institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries.

2 points

1.E

**Acceptable explanations include the following (max 1 point per country):**

- In Iran the Majles has power over the budget, confirms and impeaches ministers, and may issue formal questions that the government must answer. The Majles uses this power to check the executive branch.
- In the United Kingdom, the legislature is fused with the executive branch, but the legislature solely is responsible for making decisions on financial bills, such as new taxes.
- During Question Time, members of the United Kingdom legislature can question the prime minister about various policies, and it uses this power to hold the prime minister accountable and open debate.
- In Nigeria, the legislature passes bills into laws, although bills still require the president's signature.
- In Nigeria, the constitution gives the legislature the power to impeach the president as well as oversight, and it uses both powers to remain independent and to check the executive branch.
- In Mexico, the constitution gives the legislature the power to impeach the president, and it uses this power to check the executive branch.

**(C)** Explain why each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in (B) would choose to constrain legislative powers.

2 points

2.A

**Acceptable explanations include the following (max 1 point per country):**

2.B

2.C

- The Iranian government chooses to constrain the Majles to give the Supreme Leader more power.
- The Iranian government constrains the power of the Majles to make sure that all institutions abide by theocratic rules.
- Iran's Expediency Council, which is selected by the Supreme Leader as an advisory committee to resolve disputes between the Majles and the Guardian Council, can constrain the Majles to reduce its power.
- In the United Kingdom, the legislature is constrained by elections. Legislatures constrain the power to maintain a balance of power and to maintain a separation of powers.
- In the United Kingdom, all members of the House of Commons are up for election every 5 years. This constrains lawmakers to work for their constituents.
- In Nigeria the House of Representatives is constrained by the executive branch, because the president wants to have more concentrated power.
- In Mexico the legislature is constrained by elections as a way to maintain stability and prevent corruption.

**Total for question 3**

**5 points**

## Question 4: Argument Essay

Develop an argument as to whether democratic or authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country.

Use one or more of the following course concepts in your response:

- Power
- Authority
- Legitimacy

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries. The evidence should be relevant to one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis, using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective, using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

## Scoring Guidelines for Question 4: Argument Essay

5 points

Learning Objectives: **PAU-1.D** **LEG-1.A** **LEG-1.B**

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row A</b></p> <p><b>Claim/Thesis</b> (0-1 points)</p> <p><b>5.A</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning.</p>
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>		
<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The intended claim or thesis only restates the prompt.</li> <li>The intended claim or thesis does not make a claim that responds to the prompt.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The claim or thesis responds to the prompt rather than restating or rephrasing the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.</li> <li>The response must include a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning about whether democratic or authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country, using one or more of the provided course concepts: power; authority; or legitimacy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Examples that do not earn this point:</b></p> <p><b>Restates the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Democratic regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country.”</i></li> <li><i>“Authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Does not respond to the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Democratic regimes maintain sovereignty by maintaining government legitimacy.”</i></li> <li><i>“Authoritarian regimes maintain sovereignty through unchecked powers.”</i></li> </ul>		<p><b>Examples that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Democratic regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country because they can do so by using less coercive power than authoritarian regimes.”</i></li> <li><i>“Authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country because they can carry out their preferred policies and government actions without taking into account the wishes of citizens.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The claim or thesis must consist of one or more sentences that may be located anywhere in the response.</li> <li>A claim or thesis that meets the criteria can be awarded the point whether or not the rest of the response successfully supports that line of reasoning.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria		
<b>Row B</b> <b>Evidence</b> <b>(0-2 points)</b> <b>5.B</b>	<b>0 points</b>	<b>1 point</b> Provides <u>one</u> piece of specific and relevant evidence from a course country relevant to one of the course concepts in the prompt.	<b>2 points</b> Provides <u>two</u> pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries relevant to one or more of the course concepts in the prompt.
<b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b>			
<b>Responses that do not earn points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not provide any accurate evidence</li> <li>Provide general (not specific) evidence</li> <li>Provide evidence that is not relevant to the course concepts in the prompt</li> </ul> <b>Examples that do not earn points:</b> <p><b>Not specific</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"In democratic countries, officials must follow the rule of law."</li> <li>"In authoritarian countries, officials do not have to follow the rule of law."</li> </ul> <p><b>Not relevant to course concepts in the prompt</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"In Nigeria, the government fights corruption."</li> <li>"In the United Kingdom, they have a free media."</li> <li>"In China, the regime promotes economic growth."</li> <li>"In Iran and Russia, the government controls the media."</li> </ul>		<b>Responses that earn 1 or 2 points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide specific and relevant evidence from required course countries, relevant to the course concepts in the prompt</li> </ul> <b>Examples of acceptable specific and relevant evidence (1 point per example, max 2):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"In the United Kingdom, Mexico, and Nigeria, the government maintains sovereignty through the legitimacy of the citizens."</li> <li>"In the United Kingdom, government officials follow the rules, law, and regulations, which gives the government authority and allows it to maintain sovereignty."</li> <li>"In Mexico and Nigeria, government officials follow the rules and laws set forth in the constitution, which gives the government authority and allows it to maintain sovereignty."</li> <li>"In authoritarian regimes such as China, the state uses coercive power to maintain sovereignty and does not require the consent of citizens."</li> <li>"In China, the Communist Party maintains sovereignty and has complete control over transitions of power and transitions from one government to the next."</li> <li>"Iran uses its armed forces to maintain international and domestic sovereignty, which allows the Supreme Leader to maintain control of the population."</li> <li>"In democratic countries like the United Kingdom and Nigeria, government officials follow the rules and regulations that the constitution provides, which is a source of their authority."</li> </ul>	
<b>Additional Notes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explanations of the relationship between the evidence and the claim or thesis are <u>not required</u> to earn points in Row B.</li> </ul>			

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row C</b> Reasoning (0-1 points)</p> <p><b>5.C</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p>	<p><b>1 point</b> Explains how or why the evidence supports the claim or thesis</p>
	<p><b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b></p>	
	<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include evidence but offer no reasoning to connect the evidence to the claim or thesis</li> <li>• Restate the prompt without explaining how the evidence supports the claim or thesis</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must explain the relationship between the evidence provided and the claim or thesis</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Examples of reasoning that explain how evidence supports the claim or thesis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Democratic regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty by maintaining high levels of legitimacy by acting on citizen input through representative officials.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“As long as the governments follow democratic procedures and written rules of constitutions, they do not need to use coercive power to maintain sovereignty.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“Authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty because they can act more efficiently through the use of coercive power and thus quickly implement policies and make important decisions.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>• The explanation of the relationship between one piece of evidence and the claim or thesis is sufficient to earn this point.</li> </ul>		

Reporting Category	Scoring Criteria	
<p><b>Row D</b></p> <p><b>Responds to Alternate Perspectives (0-1 points)</b></p> <p><b>5.D</b></p>	<p><b>0 points</b></p>	<p><b>1 point</b></p> <p>Responds to an opposing or alternate perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal</p>
	<p><b>Decision Rules and Scoring Notes</b></p>	
	<p><b>Responses that do not earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restate the opposite of the claim or thesis</li> <li>May identify an alternate perspective but do not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective to the provided claim or thesis</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses that earn this point:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must describe an alternate perspective AND refute, concede, or rebut that perspective</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Examples of responses that do not earn the point:</b></p> <p><b>Restates the opposite of the claim or thesis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Although some argue that democratic regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty, they are wrong because it is clear that authoritarian regimes are more effective.”</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Identifies an alternate perspective but does not refute, concede, or rebut that perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“There are some who argue that authoritarian regimes are more effective at maintaining sovereignty because they say that authoritarian regimes have more control over the people and thus can more easily maintain their rule.”</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Examples of acceptable responses to an alternate perspective may include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>“Although democratic regimes are good at maintaining sovereignty in a country, authoritarian regimes may be just as effective at maintaining sovereignty. Authoritarian regimes can maintain sovereignty without consulting representatives or citizens and can make difficult decisions for the good of the country. Therefore, authoritarian regimes can be better at maintaining sovereignty.”</i></li> <li><i>“Although democratic regimes are good at maintaining sovereignty in a country, there are potential problems. Democratic regimes have to incorporate citizen input into decision making, which can lead to counterproductive policies or decisions that are not necessarily good for democracy.”</i></li> <li><i>“Although authoritarian regimes are good at maintaining sovereignty, democratic regimes can also be effective at maintaining sovereignty. Governing with the consent of the people, democratic regimes are good at maintaining sovereignty by maintaining government legitimacy. Having a legitimate and democratic government can be very efficient for maintaining sovereignty.”</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional Notes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To earn this point, the response must have a defensible claim or thesis (earned the point in Row A).</li> <li>Responses that demonstrate an incorrect understanding of the alternate perspective do not earn this point.</li> </ul>		

