

SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

The guide contains the following information:

Curricular Requirements

The curricular requirements are the core elements of the course. A syllabus must provide explicit evidence of each requirement based on the required evidence statement(s).

The Unit Guides and the “Instructional Approaches” section of the *AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description (CED)* may be useful in providing evidence for satisfying these curricular requirements.

Required Evidence

These statements describe the type of evidence and level of detail required in the syllabus to demonstrate how the curricular requirement is met in the course.

Note: Curricular requirements may have more than one required evidence statement. Each statement must be addressed to fulfill the requirement.

Clarifying Terms

These statements define terms in the Syllabus Development Guide that may have multiple meanings.

Samples of Evidence

For each curricular requirement, three separate samples of evidence are provided. These samples provide either verbatim evidence or descriptions of what acceptable evidence could look like in a syllabus.

Curricular Requirements

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|------------|--|-----------------------|
| CR1 | The teacher and students have access to a college-level comparative government and politics textbook and news media sources from multiple perspectives. | <i>See page:</i> 3 |
| CR2 | The course is structured to incorporate the big ideas and required content, including the six selected countries, outlined in each of the units described in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED). | <i>See page:</i> 4 |
| CR3 | The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 1: Concept Application and make connections to at least one big idea. | <i>See page:</i> 5 |
| CR4 | The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 2: Country Comparison and make connections to at least one big idea. | <i>See page:</i> 6 |
| CR5 | The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 3: Data Analysis and make connections to at least one big idea. | <i>See page:</i> 7 |
| CR6 | The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 4: Source Analysis and make connections to at least one big idea. | <i>See page:</i> 8 |
| CR7 | The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 5: Argumentation and make connections to at least one big idea. | <i>See page:</i> 9 |

Curricular Requirement 1

The teacher and students have access to a college-level comparative government and politics textbook and news media sources from multiple perspectives.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must cite the title, author, and publication date of a college-level comparative government and politics textbook.
- AND
- The syllabus must include examples of news media sources from multiple perspectives.

Samples of Evidence

1. The syllabus includes a course materials section that lists the following:
 - College-level textbook (e.g., Hauss, *Comparative Politics: Domestic Responses to Global Challenges*, 10th edition, 2018).
 - News articles from sources such as BBC, Al Jazeera, and *The Washington Post* for current events.
 - Additional sources such as CIA World Fact Book, UNDP Human Development Report, Corruption Perception Index, Freedom House, and World Bank.

2. The syllabus lists the required textbook as well as the chapter and page assignments from that textbook in each unit:

- *Cases in Comparative Politics* (AP Edition), 6th ed. O’Neil, Fields, and Share. WW Norton, 2017.

The syllabus lists required readings from supplementary news media:

- “‘Soft’ Nationalism and China,” Andrew Jacobs, *Christian Science Monitor*, February 4, 2016.
- “Mexico’s President: Leading from Behind,” *The Economist*, November 23rd, 2013.
- “Russia: Putin’s Plan,” *PBS Frontline*, 2016.

3. The syllabus includes a college-level comparative government and politics textbook citing the author(s), title, and publication date such as Almond, G.A., et al. (2004). *Comparative Politics Today: A World View* (8th Edition). Pearson.

The syllabus also includes a variety of supplemental resources such as:

- News articles from sources such as BBC, Al Jazeera, *The New York Times*, and *The Economist* for current events and policy discussions.
- Selected articles from Annual Editions: Comparative Government.
- College Board Briefing Papers: Democratization, Globalization, Mexico, Iran, and Nigeria.
- Additional sources such as: CIA World Fact Book, UNDP Human Development Report, Corruption Perception Index, Freedom House, and World Bank.
- Videos such as “Inside’s Putin’s Russia,” “Africa: States of Independence,” “Rick Steves’ Iran,” etc.

Curricular Requirement 2

The course is structured to incorporate the big ideas and required content, including the six selected countries, outlined in each of the units described in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must include an outline of course content by unit title or topic using any organizational approach to demonstrate the inclusion of required content and associated big idea(s).
- All five big ideas and the six selected countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom) must be included.

Note: If the syllabus demonstrates a different approach than the units outlined in the *AP Comparative Government and Politics Course and Exam Description (CED)*, the teacher must indicate where the content, including the six selected countries, and big ideas of each unit in the CED will be taught.

Samples of Evidence

1. The AP Comparative Government and Politics course is organized around the five units and six required countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom) in the AP Course and Exam Description.

The units are:

- Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments (big ideas: PAU, LEG, MPA)
 - Political Institutions (big idea: PAU)
 - Political Culture and Participation (big ideas: LEG, DEM, IEF)
 - Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations (big ideas: PAU, DEM, IEF)
 - Political and Economic Changes and Development (big ideas: LEG, IEF)
2. The course is organized by country. All five big ideas are included in the following units of study for each country (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom):
 - Political Regime
 - Political Institutions: Government and Frameworks for Decision-Making
 - Political Culture and Participation
 - Parties, Electoral Systems, and Citizen Organizations
 - Political and Economic Changes and Development
 3. The syllabus includes a course outline and identifies where the content and corresponding big ideas within each of the five AP units are taught. For example, the following concepts are introduced in Unit 1:
 - Intro to Comparative Politics (AP Unit 1; big ideas: PAU, LEG, MPA)
 - Sovereignty, Authority, Power (AP Unit 1; big ideas: PAU, LEG, MPA)
 - Citizen, Society, and the State (AP Units 3, 4; big ideas: LEG, DEM, IEF)
 - Political Institutions (AP Unit 2; big idea: PAU)
 - Public Policy (AP Unit 5; big ideas: LEG, IEF)
 - Political and Economic Change (AP Unit 5; big ideas: LEG, IEF)

The content in each of the five AP units is then studied further through in-depth case studies focused on each of the required countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom).

Curricular Requirement 3

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 1: Concept Application and make connections to at least one big idea, as outlined in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of one or more instructional approaches (e.g., activity or assignment) in which students apply political concepts and processes in authentic contexts.
- The description(s) must be labeled with Disciplinary Practice 1 and the corresponding big idea(s).

Samples of Evidence

1. For one of the six AP countries, students will write a 2–3 page paper describing and analyzing the election system for the executive and the legislative branches of government. Students will: 1) describe the system; 2) explain how the electoral practices in the country impact the power afforded to the executive and legislative branches; and, 3) compare to a country with a different electoral system to determine how each electoral system may strengthen or weaken policy-makers and voters. **(Practice 1: Concept Application, big ideas: PAU & LEG)**
2. Students summarize the views of the major political parties in Great Britain and compare and contrast these parties' positions on current policy issues such as the European Union, the global financial crisis, and devolution. After watching recent Prime Minister's Question Hour from (CSPAN), students will represent both front- and back-bench members of the Labour Party, the Conservative Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, or Scottish National Party in a mock Question Time in class. **(DP 1; PAU)**
3. Students apply course political concepts and processes to course countries. In this case, there are readings and poll data on citizen support for theocracy in Iran, which are linked to a discussion on regime stability and legitimacy.
 - **Reading:** "Iran's Theocracy Is on the Brink", Mark Dubowitz, *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 1, 2018; and "Theocracy vs. Democracy in Iran", Farhad Rezaei, *The Atlantic*, July 2017.
 - **Discussion:** How is religion losing legitimacy as a basis for government in Iran? Using the assigned articles and poll data, analyze how theocracy as a foundation for government is losing support from the citizens of Iran. **(Practice 1, LEG and MPA)**

Curricular Requirement 4

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 2: Country Comparison and make connections to at least one big idea, as outlined in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of one or more instructional approaches (e.g., activity or assignment) in which students compare political concepts and processes between two or more course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom).
- The description(s) must be labeled with Disciplinary Practice 2 and the corresponding big idea(s).

Samples of Evidence

1. **After units on Russia and China, the syllabus includes the following in-class writing assignment:**

Choose one political or economic reform in post-communist Russia and contemporary China. How are they similar? How do they differ? In what country do you think the government has been more effective in establishing legitimacy through that reform? **(Practice 2: Country Comparison; BI: DEM, LEG)**

2. **Practice 2: Country Comparison Example Assignment:** In a small group discussion, students describe and compare powers afforded to the executive in the United Kingdom, Russia, and Mexico. How much influence does tradition and rule-of-law have in each case? **(PAU)**

3. The syllabus describes a project to create a table comparing the structure, power, and changes in local/state/regional governments since 2000 in three course countries with federal systems: Mexico, Nigeria, and Russia.

- Topic: Federalism, Asymmetric Federalism, and the Illusion of Federalism
- Project: Create a chart making a side-by-side comparison of the federal structures of Mexico, Nigeria, and Russia showing selection system, constitutional powers, and changes in all three since 2000.
 - ♦ How well does each federal system reflect the cleavages and culture in the country?
 - ♦ Are the changes in the federal structure of each country since 2000 structural (constitutional) or simply custom/traditional?
- How have the changes in federal structure affected the power and legitimacy of the local and national governments? **(Practice 2, big ideas: PAU, LEG, IEF)**

Curricular Requirement 5

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 3: Data Analysis and make connections to at least one big idea, as outlined in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of one or more instructional approaches (e.g., activity or assignment) in which students analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and/or infographics.
- The syllabus must identify the source of the data used for the activity/assignment.
- The description(s) must be labeled with Disciplinary Practice 3 and the corresponding big idea(s).

Samples of Evidence

1. Class activity for unit on Political Development: Examine the UN's Human Development Scores, Freedom House Index, and UN Gender Equality Index for the six countries we are studying. Which countries rank highest/lowest in each category? Describe the relationship among these factors and what patterns emerge. **(Practice 3: Data Analysis, BI: MPA)**
2. Students will use electoral data from the BBC for the last two elections to draw conclusions about the impact of the single-member district plurality system in the UK. In groups, students create charts to show the distribution of seats based on the current system and what the distribution would be if Proportional Representation was applied. They will develop an argument about the impact of the electoral system based on the data. **(Practice 3 and big ideas DEM and MPA)**
3. The syllabus describes a project to create a table comparing HDI and GDP in all six course countries and using inductive reasoning to draw conclusions about political regime type, stability, and legitimacy from the given data.

Carousel Assignment: HDI and GDP comparison table worksheet—What is the difference?

Using the most recent GDP from the World Bank and HDI from the United Nations Development Programme, complete the chart on your assigned country and then make a poster showing your results. These posters will be hung in different areas of the classroom and you will move around the classroom in teams commenting on each poster focusing on the following questions:

- What is HDI? What is GDP?
- Which is a better measure of economic growth? Of social development?
- Rank the countries according to HDI. Rank the countries according to GDP.
- How do these rankings compare? What patterns do you see in these rankings?
- How does HDI and GDP appear to relate to regime type? Stability? Legitimacy? Participation? **(Practice 3; LEG & MPA)**

Curricular Requirement 6

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 4: Source Analysis and make connections to at least one big idea, as outlined in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of one or more instructional approaches (e.g., activity or assignment) in which students analyze and interpret information from text-based primary and/or secondary source(s) to explain how the author’s argument or perspective relates to political principles, institutions, processes, or behaviors.
- The syllabus must identify the source used for the activity/assignment.
- The description(s) must be labeled with Disciplinary Practice 4 and the corresponding big idea(s).

Samples of Evidence

1. Source Analysis Assignment

Students read and discuss Putin’s 2018 “State of the Nation” speech from the Radio Free Europe website and answer the following questions: How does he describe Russia’s political system? What are his priorities for political development? How does Putin’s perspective of Russia correspond with what we have learned from the textbook and other readings? **(Practice 4: Source Analysis/big ideas: PAU and IEF)**

2. **Practice 4:** Students read Chapter 7, Articles 118–129 of the Russian Constitution and examine at least two print-based news sources (e.g., TASS, Al Jazeera, BBC) to determine how the Russian judiciary operates today. Students will write a 2–3 page essay about whether the sources are consistent in how they interpret and present the state of rule of law in Russia. **(big idea: DEM)**

3. The syllabus describes an activity in which students read, analyze, and interpret an article on term limits and the succession process in China, which is linked to a discussion of regime stability and legitimacy. For example:

- **Read:** “The Party’s Over: China’s Endgame,” Gordon Chang, *World Affairs*, March/April 2016.
- **Socratic Seminar:** Succession and Legitimacy in China
- **Be prepared to:**
 - ♦ Analyze the author’s perspective and evidence used for his claims
 - ♦ Discuss how his arguments relate to concepts such as power, legitimacy, and stability
 - ♦ Identify strengths and weaknesses in the author’s reasoning and assumptions

(Practice 4; big ideas: LEG and IEF)

Curricular Requirement 7

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the skills in Disciplinary Practice 5: Argumentation and make connections to at least one big idea, as outlined in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of two or more activities (including at least one argument essay) in which students develop an argument about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and/or behaviors.
- The description(s) must be labeled with Disciplinary Practice 5 and the corresponding big idea(s).

Clarifying Terms

An argument activity can be modeled after AP Free Response Question 4:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning
- Support the argument using specific and relevant evidence
- Use reasoning to explain why the evidence supports the claim or thesis
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective

Samples of Evidence

1. The syllabus describes argument essay assignments (including Free Response Question 4 from AP Classroom) and other activities in which students develop skills in argumentation, such as:

Classroom Debate: Some believe that democratization should be a priority for developing states. Others believe that democratization might cause problems and that countries should focus more on economic development. Based upon evidence from at least two Comparative Government and Politics course countries, which argument do you believe is more persuasive? Be sure to develop your points as best you can, using examples and reasoning to support your position. (**Practice 5: Argumentation; big idea: DEM**)

2. **Activity 1—Practice 5; big ideas IEF & LEG:** Students will write an essay on the Green Movement in Iran. They will prepare by reading a variety of articles and sources to develop their positions on the following prompt: What are the reasons for the failure of the Green Movement and what are the prospects for political change in Iran today?

Activity 2—Practice 5; big idea IEF: In class, debate “Will the United Kingdom leaving the EU strengthen or weaken its global political and economic position?” Students will be prepared to:

- Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning
- Support the argument using specific and relevant evidence
- Use reasoning to explain why the evidence supports the claim or thesis
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective

3. The syllabus describes multiple activities in which students develop and substantiate an argument, including:

Essay Assignment: What has been the impact of economic colonialism on the political legitimacy of the Nigerian government? Write a 725–750 word essay making an argument about the way in which economic colonialism has impacted the ability of the current Nigerian regime to rule. Is economic colonialism still an issue? If so, how? Use evidence from your textbook, as well as data and news sources, to support your claim. **(Practice 5/IEF)**