

# **AP<sup>®</sup> United States Government and Politics**

## **Teacher's Guide**

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# Welcome Letter from the College Board

Dear AP<sup>®</sup> Teacher:

Whether you are a new AP teacher, using this AP Teacher’s Guide to assist in developing a syllabus for the first AP course you will ever teach, or an experienced AP teacher simply wanting to compare the teaching strategies you use with those employed by other expert AP teachers, we are confident you will find this resource valuable. We urge you to make good use of the ideas, advice, classroom strategies, and sample syllabi contained in this Teacher’s Guide.

You deserve tremendous credit for all that you do to fortify students for college success. The nurturing environment in which you help your students master a college-level curriculum—a much better atmosphere for one’s first exposure to college-level expectations than the often large classes in which many first-year college courses are taught—seems to translate directly into lasting benefits as students head off to college. An array of research studies, from the classic 1999 U.S. Department of Education study *Answers in the Tool Box* to new research from the University of Texas and the University of California, demonstrate that when students enter high school with equivalent academic abilities and socioeconomic status, those who develop the content knowledge to demonstrate college-level mastery of an AP Exam (a grade of 3 or higher) have much higher rates of college completion and have higher grades in college. The 2005 National Center for Educational Accountability (NCEA) study shows that students who take AP have much higher college graduation rates than students with the *same* academic abilities who do not have that valuable AP experience in high school. Furthermore, a Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS, formerly known as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study) found that even AP Calculus students who score a 1 on the AP Exam are significantly outperforming other advanced mathematics students in the United States, and they compare favorably to students from the top-performing nations in an international assessment of mathematics achievement. (Visit AP Central<sup>®</sup> at [apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com) for details about these and other AP-related studies.)


For these reasons, the AP teacher plays a significant role in a student’s academic journey. Your AP classroom may be the only taste of college rigor your students will have before they enter higher education. It is important to note that such benefits cannot be demonstrated among AP courses that are AP courses in name only, rather than in quality of content. For AP courses to meaningfully prepare students for college success, courses must meet standards that enable students to replicate the content of the comparable college class. Using this AP Teacher’s Guide is one of the keys to ensuring that your AP course is as good as (or even better than) the course the student would otherwise be taking in college. While the AP Program does not mandate the use of any one syllabus or textbook and emphasizes that AP teachers should be granted the creativity and flexibility to develop their own curriculum, it is beneficial for AP teachers to compare their syllabi not just to the course outline in the official AP Course Description and in chapter 3 of this guide, but also to the syllabi presented on AP Central, to ensure that each course labeled AP meets the standards of a college-level course. Visit AP Central<sup>®</sup> at [apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com) for details about the AP Course Audit, course-specific Curricular Requirements, and how to submit your syllabus for AP Course Audit authorization.

As the Advanced Placement Program<sup>®</sup> continues to experience tremendous growth in the twenty-first century, it is heartening to see that in every U.S. state and the District of Columbia, a growing proportion of high school graduates have earned at least one grade of 3 or higher on an AP Exam. In some states, more

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than 20 percent of graduating seniors have accomplished this goal. The incredible efforts of AP teachers are paying off, producing ever greater numbers of college-bound seniors who are prepared to succeed in college. Please accept my admiration and congratulations for all that you are doing and achieving.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcia L. Wilbur".

Marcia Wilbur  
Director, Curriculum and Content Development  
Advanced Placement Program

# Equity and Access

In the following section, the College Board describes its commitment to achieving equity in the AP Program.

## Why are equitable preparation and inclusion important?

Currently, 40 percent of students entering four-year colleges and universities and 63 percent of students at two-year institutions require some remedial education. This is a significant concern because a student is less likely to obtain a bachelor's degree if he or she has taken one or more remedial courses.<sup>1</sup>

Nationwide, secondary school educators are increasingly committed not just to helping students complete high school but also to helping them develop the habits of mind necessary for managing the rigors of college. As *Educational Leadership* reported in 2004:

The dramatic changes taking place in the U.S. economy jeopardize the economic future of students who leave high school without the problem-solving and communication skills essential to success in postsecondary education and in the growing number of high-paying jobs in the economy. To back away from education reforms that help all students master these skills is to give up on the commitment to equal opportunity for all.<sup>2</sup>

Numerous research studies have shown that engaging a student in a rigorous high school curriculum such as is found in AP courses is one of the best ways that educators can help that student persist and complete a bachelor's degree.<sup>3</sup> However, while 57 percent of the class of 2004 in U.S. public high schools enrolled in higher education in fall 2004, only 13 percent had been boosted with a successful AP experience in high school.<sup>4</sup> Although AP courses are not the only examples of rigorous curricula, there is still a significant gap between students with college aspirations and students with adequate high school preparation to fulfill those aspirations.

Strong correlations exist between AP success and college success.<sup>5</sup> Educators attest that this is partly because AP enables students to receive a taste of college while still in an environment that provides more support and resources for students than do typical college courses. Effective AP teachers work closely with their students, giving them the opportunity to reason, analyze, and understand for themselves. As a result, AP students frequently find themselves developing new confidence in their academic abilities and discovering their previously unknown capacities for college studies and academic success.

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1. Andrea Venezia, Michael W. Kirst, and Anthony L. Antonio, *Betraying the College Dream: How Disconnected K-12 and Postsecondary Education Systems Undermine Student Aspirations* (Palo Alto, Calif.: The Bridge Project, 2003), 8.

2. Frank Levy and Richard J. Murnane, "Education and the Changing Job Market." *Educational Leadership* 62 (2) (October 2004): 83.

3. In addition to studies from University of California–Berkeley and the National Center for Educational Accountability (2005), see the classic study on the subject of rigor and college persistence: Clifford Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1999).

4. *Advanced Placement Report to the Nation* (New York: College Board, 2005).

5. Wayne Camara, "College Persistence, Graduation, and Remediation," *College Board Research Notes* (RN-19) (New York: College Board, 2003).

### Which students should be encouraged to register for AP courses?

Any student willing and ready to do the work should be considered for an AP course. The College Board actively endorses the principles set forth in the following Equity Policy Statement and encourages schools to support this policy.

The College Board and the Advanced Placement Program encourage teachers, AP Coordinators, and school administrators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs. The College Board is committed to the principle that all students deserve an opportunity to participate in rigorous and academically challenging courses and programs. All students who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses. The Board encourages the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP courses for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the AP Program. Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population.

The fundamental objective that schools should strive to accomplish is to create a stimulating AP program that academically challenges students and has the same ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic demographics as the overall student population in the school. African American and Native American students are severely underrepresented in AP classrooms nationwide; Latino student participation has increased tremendously, but in many AP courses Latino students remain underrepresented. To prevent a willing, motivated student from having the opportunity to engage in AP courses is to deny that student the possibility of a better future.

Knowing what we know about the impact a rigorous curriculum can have on a student's future, it is not enough for us simply to leave it to motivated students to seek out these courses. Instead, we must reach out to students and encourage them to take on this challenge. With this in mind, there are two factors to consider when counseling a student regarding an AP opportunity:

#### **1. Student motivation**

Many potentially successful AP students would never enroll if the decision were left to their own initiative. They may not have peers who value rigorous academics, or they may have had prior academic experiences that damaged their confidence or belief in their college potential. They may simply lack an understanding of the benefits that such courses can offer them. Accordingly, it is essential that we not gauge a student's motivation to take AP until that student has had the opportunity to understand the advantages—not just the challenges—of such course work.

Educators committed to equity provide all students in a school with an understanding of the benefits of rigorous curricula. Such educators conduct student assemblies and/or presentations to parents that clearly describe the advantages of taking an AP course and outline the work expected of students. Perhaps most important, they have one-on-one conversations with the students in which advantages and expectations are placed side by side. These educators realize that many students, lacking confidence in their abilities, will be listening for any indication that they should not take an AP course. Accordingly, such educators, while frankly describing the amount of homework to be anticipated, also offer words of encouragement and support, assuring the students that if they are willing to do the work, they are wanted in the course.

The College Board has created a free online tool, AP Potential™, to help educators reach out to students who previously might not have been considered for participation in an AP course. Drawing upon data based on correlations between student performance on specific sections of the PSAT/NMSQT® and



performance on specific AP Exams, AP Potential generates rosters of students at your school who have a strong likelihood of success in a particular AP course. Schools nationwide have successfully enrolled many more students in AP than ever before by using these rosters to help students (and their parents) see themselves as having potential to succeed in college-level studies. For more information, visit <http://appotential.collegeboard.com>.

Actively recruiting students for AP and sustaining enrollment can also be enhanced by offering incentives for both students and teachers. While the College Board does not formally endorse any one incentive for boosting AP participation, we encourage school administrators to develop policies that will best serve an overarching goal to expand participation and improve performance in AP courses. When such incentives are implemented, educators should ensure that quality verification measures such as the AP Exam are embedded in the program so that courses are rigorous enough to merit the added benefits.

Many schools offer the following incentives for students who enroll in AP:

- Extra weighting of AP course grades when determining class rank
- Full or partial payment of AP Exam fees
- On-site exam administration

Additionally, some schools offer the following incentives for teachers to reward them for their efforts to include and support traditionally underserved students:

- Extra preparation periods
- Reduced class size
- Reduced duty periods
- Additional classroom funds
- Extra salary

## 2. Student preparation

Because AP courses should be the equivalent of courses taught in colleges and universities, it is important that a student be prepared for such rigor. The types of preparation a student should have before entering an AP course vary from course to course and are described in the official AP Course Description book for each subject (available as a free download at [apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com)).

Unfortunately, many schools have developed a set of gatekeeping or screening requirements that go far beyond what is appropriate to ensure that an individual student has had sufficient preparation to succeed in an AP course. Schools should make every effort to eliminate the gatekeeping process for AP enrollment. Because research has not been able to establish meaningful correlations between gatekeeping devices and actual success on an AP Exam, the College Board **strongly discourages** the use of the following factors as thresholds or requirements for admission to an AP course:

- Grade point average
- Grade in a required prerequisite course
- Recommendation from a teacher
- AP teacher's discretion

## Equity and Access

- Standardized test scores
- Course-specific entrance exam or essay

Additionally, schools should be wary of the following concerns regarding the misuse of AP:

- Creating “Pre-AP courses” to establish a limited, exclusive track for access to AP
- Rushing to install AP courses without simultaneously implementing a plan to prepare students and teachers in lower grades for the rigor of the program

### How can I ensure that I am not watering down the quality of my course as I admit more students?

Students in AP courses should take the AP Exam, which provides an external verification of the extent to which college-level mastery of an AP course is taking place. While it is likely that the percentage of students who receive a grade of 3 or higher may dip as more students take the exam, that is not an indication that the quality of a course is being watered down. Instead of looking at percentages, educators should be looking at raw numbers, since each number represents an individual student. If the raw number of students receiving a grade of 3 or higher on the AP Exam is not decreasing as more students take the exam, there is no indication that the quality of learning in your course has decreased as more students have enrolled.

### What are schools doing to expand access and improve AP performance?

Districts and schools that successfully improve both participation and performance in AP have implemented a multipronged approach to expanding an AP program. These schools offer AP as capstone courses, providing professional development for AP teachers and additional incentives and support for the teachers and students participating at this top level of the curriculum. The high standards of the AP courses are used as anchors that influence the 6–12 curriculum from the “top down.” Simultaneously, these educators are investing in the training of teachers in the pre-AP years and are building a vertically articulated, sequential curriculum from middle school to high school that culminates in AP courses—a broad pipeline that prepares students step-by-step for the rigors of AP so that they will have a fair shot at success in an AP course once they reach that stage. An effective and demanding AP program necessitates cooperation and communication between high schools and middle schools. Effective teaming among members of all educational levels ensures rigorous standards for students across years and provides them with the skills needed to succeed in AP. For more information about Pre-AP® professional development, including workshops designed to facilitate the creation of AP Vertical Teams® of middle school and high school teachers, visit AP Central.

Advanced Placement Program  
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# Participating in the AP Course Audit

## Overview

The AP Course Audit is a collaborative effort among secondary schools, colleges and universities, and the College Board. For their part, schools deliver college-level instruction to students and complete and return AP Course Audit materials. Colleges and universities work with the College Board to define elements common to college courses in each AP subject, help develop materials to support AP teaching, and receive a roster of schools and their authorized AP courses. The College Board fosters dialogue about the AP Course Audit requirements and recommendations, and reviews syllabi.

Starting in the 2007-08 academic year, all schools wishing to label a course “AP” on student transcripts, course listings, or any school publications must complete and return the subject-specific AP Course Audit form, along with the course syllabus, for all sections of their AP courses. Approximately two months after submitting AP Course Audit materials, schools will receive a legal agreement authorizing the use of the “AP” trademark on qualifying courses. Colleges and universities will receive a roster of schools listing the courses authorized to use the “AP” trademark at each school.

## Purpose

College Board member schools at both the secondary and college levels requested an annual AP Course Audit in order to provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements that must be in place for AP courses and to help colleges and universities better interpret secondary school courses marked “AP” on students’ transcripts.

The AP Course Audit form identifies common, essential elements of effective college courses, including subject matter and classroom resources such as college-level textbooks and laboratory equipment. Schools and individual teachers will continue to develop their own curricula for AP courses they offer—the AP Course Audit will simply ask them to indicate inclusion of these elements in their AP syllabi or describe how their courses nonetheless deliver college-level course content.

AP Exam performance is not factored into the AP Course Audit. A program that audited only those schools with seemingly unsatisfactory exam performance might cause some schools to limit access to AP courses and exams. In addition, because AP Exams are taken and exam grades reported after college admissions decisions are already made, AP course participation has become a relevant factor in the college admissions process. On the AP Course Audit form, teachers and administrators attest that their course includes elements commonly taught in effective college courses. Colleges and universities reviewing students’ transcripts can thus be reasonably assured that courses labeled “AP” provide an appropriate level and range of college-level course content, along with the classroom resources to best deliver that content.

## For more information

You should discuss the AP Course Audit with your department head and principal. For more information, including a timeline, frequently asked questions, and downloadable AP Course Audit forms, visit [apcentral.collegeboard.com/courseaudit](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/courseaudit).

# Preface

I would like to welcome all Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) United States Government and Politics teachers who use this Teacher’s Guide. I think you’ll see that the AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum is exciting, dynamic, and applicable to students’ lives. Students taking the course will be able to apply their new knowledge to the outside world in a practical manner. As you follow the core curriculum, you’ll find that the material naturally lends itself to a student-centered pedagogical approach. You will be able to use hands-on lessons to engage your students in the learning process while simultaneously preparing them for success on the AP Exam.

Information in this Teacher’s Guide goes well beyond what is presented in a typical test preparation manual because it comes from the College Board. The guide is primarily designed to help teachers prepare and teach the course for the first time—though it should also be of use to veteran teachers looking for new ideas—and to provide an overview of the AP Program. The content includes discussion of:

- new themes and trends in scholarship and teaching about U.S. government and politics;
- key concepts that students should know and skills they should learn;
- pacing your course and creating a syllabus;
- how the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam is written and graded;
- tips for preparing students for the exam;
- exam format and administration;
- how to become an AP Exam Reader;
- resources for teaching the course, including books, periodicals, videos and DVDs, and Web sites;
- professional development resources available from the College Board, including different types of workshops;
- and much more.

In short, this book is a “how to succeed” guide for teachers.

If you are a new teacher, you will find it useful to read each chapter as you begin to plan your course. If possible, read the guide three to six months prior to the start of the course so that you have plenty of time to select a workshop to attend, choose your resources, and write your syllabus. You may want to reread chapter 4 as the AP Exam approaches in May—especially the sections on helping your students review for the exam.

If you are a veteran teacher, you may find it useful to peruse the chapters to get fresh ideas and information on new programs or resources, or to gain a new perspective. If you are looking for teaching ideas, you’ll find some excellent lesson plans in chapter 3, “Course Organization.” This chapter includes syllabi and teaching strategies from high school and college instructors. You may also notice that there are a variety of new resources available through the College Board at AP Central® ([apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com)), including the frequently updated Teachers’ Resources area, which provides reviews of good resources for this course.

Whether you are a new or veteran teacher, I hope this Teacher's Guide will help you feel more comfortable with the curriculum and assist you in bringing good, effective ideas into the classroom. The guide contains many of the tools needed for competent and dynamic teaching of AP U.S. Government and Politics. You will learn that you can meet the objectives of the curriculum while engaging your students in the topics covered. Although this is a challenging course, it's also fun for both teachers and students. I truly believe that you and your students will find AP U.S. Government and Politics to be a rewarding course. I wish you a productive and successful experience.

## **Rebecca Small**



*Rebecca Small is a teacher at Herndon High School in Herndon, Virginia, and a former member of the AP United States Government and Politics Development Committee. She is a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) and received the “Outstanding Teacher of the Gifted Award” for Fairfax County Public Schools in 2005.*



# Chapter 1

## About AP<sup>®</sup> United States Government and Politics

### Overview: Past, Present, Future

by Kathleen Bratton  
Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Louisiana State University

What trends are emerging in scholarship and teaching about United States government and politics? The material taught in college-level introductory U.S. government and politics classes continues to follow a well-established format, covering time-honored subject areas and drawing on established themes of democracy, representative government, political incentives and motivations, and stability and change. There are, however, two clearly identifiable modifications that are under way. First, there is a recognition that we need to address the remarkable changes that are taking place in contemporary American politics. These changes include increased diversity at the elite and mass levels, growing interest in national security and civil liberties as pressing political issues, and marked advances in technology. Second, there is a greater awareness that students must understand not only facts but also the causes and consequences of political phenomena. Our goal as teachers is to help students develop critical thinking skills that they can apply outside of the classroom.

These trends can be seen in scholarship and teaching of political behavior, civil rights and liberties, and political institutions. How successful have we been as scholars and teachers in meeting these goals? It is clear that we are incorporating the changes in contemporary politics into our curriculum. Moreover, many of our texts are explicitly designed to help students think critically about political phenomena.

### Political Behavior: Voting and Public Opinion

One clear trend in our teaching and research is increased recognition of our changing society, and specifically of the importance of racial, gender, and ethnic diversity in society. Most United States government textbooks identify and discuss gender and racial gaps in public opinion, partisanship, voting turnout, or vote choice. Increasingly, scholars and teachers are turning their attention to other types of diversity, such as the political behavior of Hispanic/Latino individuals. This emerging area of research is particularly exciting given the increasing ethnic diversity in the country, the rise in the number of Hispanic/Latino elected officials, and the diversity among Hispanics/Latinos as a political group. Many textbooks, such as Ginsberg, Lowi, and Weir's *We the People: An Introduction to American Government* (2003) and Greenberg and Page's *The Struggle for Democracy* (2003), discuss in detail public opinion and participation among Hispanics/Latinos. Berman and Murphy's *Approaching Democracy* (2003) includes a series of instructional boxes titled "Approaching Diversity" that discuss, among other issues, the efforts of the two major parties to reach out to Hispanic/Latino voters. Both the research and the curriculum

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have been limited in two important ways, however. First, public opinion among and participation by individuals of other ethnic or racial groups, such as Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Arab Americans, have received little attention in research and in the introductory curriculum. Research and teaching that centers on issues of sexual diversity is likewise limited, though it is on the rise (Cook 1999). Second, the textbook treatment of public opinion and participation across groups sometimes fails to go beyond the descriptive. Some textbooks merely define and describe gender and racial gaps in public opinion and behavior but fail to discuss the various reasons why such gaps might exist and whether we can expect these gaps to change over time. In part, these limitations reflect limitations in the research in the field—we as scholars do not have definitive explanations of why racial and gender gaps exist in opinion and behavior. At its best, the introductory curriculum acknowledges those scholarly debates and, by doing so, helps our students to develop critical thinking skills.

A second significant trend in our teaching and research about public opinion and participation is advancing technology. For example, polling has received increasing attention as an important political phenomenon. Virtually all textbooks contain some discussion of polling and many devote several pages to it; in addition, several of the companion Web sites to introductory course texts include links to polls and polling data. When addressing polling, the introductory curriculum addresses not only the substance of the research in political science but also some of the methods we use to draw our conclusions. The more effective discussions of polling in the newer textbooks move beyond merely describing how polls are crafted and conducted to assess the weaknesses and strengths of polling methods, as well as the possibility that polls shape, not just measure, public opinion. For example, O'Connor and Sabato's *American Government: Continuity and Change* (2002) includes a thorough discussion of the Voter News Service's role in the 2000 election, the shortcomings of exit polling, and online election forecasting. In such discussions, bridges are built between political science research, political science methods, contemporary politics, and the introductory curriculum.

Some of the best research in political science reflects the sort of questions that everyday citizens, including our students, would identify as important. With respect to public opinion and elections, scholars of American politics have raised questions involving political polarization, political knowledge, political trust, and party affiliation. We know, for instance, that political elites have become increasingly polarized, although scholars continue to debate the consequences of this polarization and the degree to which it is reflected in the mass public (Hetherington 1998, 1999). For decades, scholars have engaged in a debate over whether the mass public is knowledgeable about politics, and indeed over what would constitute an appropriate and rational amount of knowledge with which to make effective political decisions. It is also clear that Americans are increasingly distrustful of political institutions and lack confidence in their elected officials. The research on the causes of this rising distrust is more developed than the research on its effects. It seems clear that such factors as the perceived quality of policy outcomes, perceived health of the economy, assessments of presidential performance, and exposure to television can all affect public trust in government, and that trust in government in turn can affect perceptions of individual institutions and actors, policy preferences, and perhaps even vote choice (Hetherington 1998, 1999). It likewise has been clear for some time that individuals in the American public are less likely to regard themselves as affiliated with a political party, although research on this particular question has decreased in the past five years. Given the well-documented decrease in trust and partisanship, one of the most surprising debates that has emerged recently in the study of American politics centers on turnout. Scholars have argued that while turnout dropped during the early 1970s with the introduction of new voters into the system, it has stayed relatively stable since then.

Our textbooks and teaching material have begun to incorporate this new scholarly material. U.S. government courses almost universally identify and explain dealignment and realignment as important political phenomena. Some (but not all) texts cover knowledge, and some of those effectively describe



the debate among researchers over whether Americans have the knowledge they need and want to make political decisions. Trust is becoming a more prominent topic; Fiorina and Peterson's *The New American Democracy* (2001), for example, discusses political interest, social connectedness, and trust; Welch et al.'s *Understanding American Government* (2004) delves into declining political trust. Political polarization is less universally well covered, and even updated texts sometimes do not yet discuss the debate over whether turnout has declined. To some degree, this reflects a natural lag time between emerging research and incorporation of that research into introductory textbooks.

The study of socialization and political learning has also begun to figure more prominently in the introductory classroom, although its presence is more evident in teaching methods than in the pages of a textbook. In 1985 Timothy Cook argued that the study of political socialization had entered a “bear market” in political science as political scientists increasingly recognized the likelihood of individual change in beliefs and attitudes across a lifetime. The last decade, however, has seen exciting new scholarship on socialization (e.g., Andolina et al. 2002; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Jennings and Stoker 2001; Plutzer 2002) and social capital (e.g., Putnam 2000; Brehm and Rahn 1997). Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995), for instance, identify education, political discussion in the home, and participation in organizations as key factors that lead to later civic participation; Putnam singles out television as contributing to an increasing decline in social capital. Andolina et al. (2002) argue that the field of socialization has become reinvigorated through a shift in focus from children to teenagers and from the family as an agent of socialization to educational institutions.

While U.S. government textbooks almost universally identify the agents of socialization, discuss low levels of participation, and outline the factors that influence participation, they have generally not yet incorporated much of this newer scholarship; that is, within the textbooks, socialization is often treated briefly in a matter-of-fact manner within a larger discussion of public opinion and participation. Nonetheless, political scientists recognize that education is a powerful factor in determining the likelihood of political involvement and clearly have a general sense of (and, in some cases, dismay over) declining civic engagement and increased cynicism among the populace in general and college students in particular. There is a good example of this interest in student political involvement in the opening pages of Bardes, Shelley, and Schmidt's *American Government and Politics Today* (2004): the text is described as one that encourages “active citizenship.” Across our discipline, the study of socialization and political learning has gained prominence in discussions of teaching and learning, in terms of method more than substance. Specifically, political scientists are weighing whether it is part of our role as teachers to encourage civic engagement in the outside political world and, if so, how best we can do that.

Figuring most prominently in these discussions is service learning (Perry and Katula 2001), a teaching method in which students become involved in activities that address community needs and in so doing gain useful skills. General civic education has also been studied and discussed (e.g., Niemi and Junn 1999). Research on outcomes is mixed (Perry and Katula 2001); the effects of service learning seem more pronounced in terms of helping students learn about their community and develop academic skills than in encouraging students to become politically engaged (Hunter and Brisbin 2000; Perry and Katula 2001). Moreover, concerns have been raised that “some educators have sought to jump on the bandwagon without really attempting to learn exactly what these tools entail” (Zook and Gitelson 2004). However, advocates of experiential learning have argued that, when done well, such innovative teaching strategies can encourage students to become more civically engaged (Yates and Youniss 1998), can help them to be a more effective part of a diverse populace, and can improve classroom learning (Hepburn, Niemi, and Chapman 2000). Mary Kirlin (2002), for instance, draws on Verba, Schlozman, and Brady's work to argue that such programs are likely to increase future participation if the activities involved relate to the development of specific skills; others (e.g., Battistoni 1997) argue that such programs are particularly successful when students work as a team and when students have a large degree of control over the service in question.

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In some areas, textbooks have addressed questions before research has. For instance, textbooks provide fairly thorough coverage of post-9/11 events in a variety of sections, including those on public opinion and voting. And while many texts have incorporated sections on the political importance of new forms of political communication, such as the Internet, researchers have only just begun to turn their attention to this subject.

### Civil Rights and Liberties

The trend in teaching and research about civil rights and liberties clearly reflects contemporary politics. Here, too, there is increasing recognition of the importance of diversity issues. Greenberg and Page's *The Struggle for Democracy* (2003) and Welch et al.'s *Understanding American Government* (2004) both incorporate discussions of the treatment of Arab Americans after 2001. Several texts include more thorough discussions of the rights of gay Americans and the political battle over same-sex marriage. Here the emphasis tends to be on public law as expressed in court decisions rather than on legislative action, for two reasons. First, much of the relevant legislative action tends to exist at the state level, whereas most introductory courses focus on policy set at the national level. Second, very little research has been done on legislative action on these issues at either the state or national level.

Discussions of privacy rights in the introductory curriculum reflect both an increased interest in identity politics and changing technology. Privacy rights were once discussed primarily in the context of reproductive rights, but now they are increasingly seen as applicable to a host of issues, including the right to die, sexual behavior, legal restrictions on Internet use, and the balance between privacy rights and security interests. Moreover, scholars continue to assess the effects of the Rehnquist court with respect to such matters as individual rights and federalism.

In some ways, it is in this area of civil rights and liberties that scholarly work is most quickly incorporated into the introductory curriculum. Since debates in the field of public law center on the interpretation of a common set of judicial decisions, the scholarship is more readily available and uses a common set of sources; therefore, it is less fragmented than scholarship in other areas of study. Still, textbooks sometimes fail to go beyond merely describing judicial decisions. At its best, the introductory curriculum assesses trends in the court regarding broad categories of constitutional and statutory law.

### Political Institutions

Generally, both research and curricular material regarding political institutions are more static than that regarding political behavior and public opinion. Nonetheless, many of the same trends that are evident in the study of political behavior are also seen in the study of political institutions. Researchers have increasingly turned their attention to the study of gender, ethnic, and racial diversity within political institutions (Dovi 2002; Mansbridge 1999). Textbooks also discuss gender, ethnic, and racial diversity within political institutions, but too often these discussions are limited to the degree to which the United States Congress is representative without an assessment of whether and why descriptive representation is important.

In recent years, questions regarding the power of interest groups and media over elected officials and the mass public have come to the forefront of the discipline. Both researchers and textbooks have highlighted the media as a powerful force in politics that has a symbiotic relationship with government (e.g., Cook 1998). Textbooks generally continue to acknowledge the agenda-setting power of the media and often discuss media bias. More attention is being turned specifically to the power of television in campaign advertising. With respect to interest groups, textbooks continue to discuss the standard topics of the role of interest groups as linkage institutions and the strategies interest groups adopt to recruit members and

to influence government. More attention is being paid now to corporate scandals and to the role interest groups play in financing campaigns in the context of the 2002 campaign finance reform law.

Textbooks continue to cover the essentials of congressional elections but often fail to incorporate more recent research on the importance of financing, the fate of challengers, and the power of incumbents (e.g., Jacobson 2000). Redistricting may be covered, but too often the discussion is limited to court rulings on the creation of majority–minority districts. Congressional elections and redistricting are of paramount importance in both contemporary politics and political science research, and our introductory curriculum could go further in addressing these issues.

## Conclusion

This essay identified two primary trends in research and curricular development. First, in both published research and teaching material, more attention is being paid to the increasing racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in U.S. politics. Second, there has been an increased recognition on the part of textbook writers that students should be learning not only facts and figures about U.S. government and politics but also critical thinking and analytical skills that they can take with them outside the classroom. One way in which we can help students learn those skills is to incorporate into our teaching more of the debates that take place among those who are at the forefront of political science research. Our record of success in these efforts is mixed. Textbooks have lagged behind scholarship in such areas as political trust, political polarization, and congressional elections. Likewise, scholars should use prominent issues in contemporary politics to help identify important research questions. Our textbook writers have done an excellent job in the introductory curriculum of reflecting some of the enormous changes that have taken place on the political landscape; researchers, too, can learn from contemporary politics.

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## Course Description Essentials

The *AP Government and Politics Course Description* contains the guidelines for the course and a narrative description of the major topics covered in both the AP United States Government and Politics Exam and the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam. Typically, the College Board publishes the Course Description in book format every two years and also makes it available online on AP Central (apcentral.collegeboard.com). New topics may be added, deleted, or revised in each edition of the Course Description, so you should read it carefully for changes in the curriculum each time a new edition is published.

## Curriculum Outline

A key element of the Course Description is the curriculum outline, which summarizes the course specifications. It is reproduced below. Pay close attention to the percentages in the outline, as these numbers indicate approximately what percentage of the multiple-choice section of the exam will come from a particular topic. The free-response section of the exam will test students in some combination of the six major categories outlined below. The outline, though by no means an exhaustive list of topics or the preferred order of topics, should guide your planning for teaching the course.

*Content Area*

*Percentage Goals of Exam  
(multiple-choice section)*

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>I. Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government.....</b>                                   | <b>5–15%</b>  |
| A. Considerations that influenced the formulation and adoption of the Constitution                        |               |
| B. Separation of powers   |               |
| C. Federalism   |               |
| D. Theories of democratic government  |               |
| <b>II. Political Beliefs and Behaviors.....</b>   | <b>10–20%</b> |
| A. Beliefs that citizens hold about their government and its leaders                                      |               |
| B. Processes by which citizens learn about politics   |               |
| C. The nature, sources, and consequences of public opinion  |               |
| D. The ways in which citizens vote and otherwise participate in political life                            |               |
| E. Factors that influence citizens to differ from one another in terms of political beliefs and behaviors |               |

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<i>Content Area</i>	<i>Percentage Goals of Exam (multiple-choice section)</i>
<b>III. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media.....</b>	<b>10–20%</b>
A. Political parties and elections	
1. Functions	
2. Organization	
3. Development	
4. Effects on the political process	
5. Electoral laws and systems	
B. Interest groups, including political action committees (PACs)	
1. The range of interests represented	
2. The activities of interest groups	
3. The effects of interest groups on the political process	
4. The unique characteristics and roles of PACs in the political process	
C. The mass media	
1. The functions and structures of the media	
2. The impacts of media on politics	
<b>IV. Institutions of National Government: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts .....</b>	<b>35–45%</b>
A. The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power	
B. Relationships among these four institutions and varying balances of power	
C. Linkages between institutions and the following:	
1. Public opinion and voters	
2. Interest groups	
3. Political parties	
4. The media	
5. Subnational governments	
<b>V. Public Policy .....</b>	<b>5–15%</b>
A. Policymaking in a federal system	
B. The formation of policy agendas	
C. The role of institutions in the enactment of policy	
D. The role of the bureaucracy and the courts in policy implementation and interpretation	
E. Linkages between policy processes and the following:	
1. Political institutions and federalism	
2. Political parties	
3. Interest groups	
4. Public opinion	
5. Elections	
6. Policy networks	



*Content Area*

*Percentage Goals of Exam  
(multiple-choice section)*

- VI. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties..... 5–15%**
- A. The development of civil liberties and civil rights by judicial interpretation
  - B. Knowledge of substantive rights and liberties
  - C. The impact of the Fourteenth Amendment on the constitutional development of rights and liberties

## Key Concepts and Skills

The College Board does not provide an exhaustive list of key concepts and skills; but with careful review of College Board resources, teachers will be able to recognize concepts that are important. This section will guide you on how to select these concepts. Additionally, I will point out a few key concepts that I have selected to emphasize in my course.

When selecting key concepts and themes to cover in your course, remember that they should be rooted in the Course Description and curriculum outline. Not only will this help you to identify the essential concepts, but focusing this way will enable you to determine what is most important to cover. Look through the outline and pull out the key concepts associated with each topic (recognizing the overlap from topic to topic). With a little experience and careful review of the curriculum outline and Released Exams, you will get a feel for which concepts are the most important. For example, key concepts in topic I of the Course Description, “Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government,” include weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, proposals for a new Constitution made at the Constitutional Convention, adoption of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and federalism. Each of these concepts has appeared in either the free-response section or the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam, or both. For an example of a free-response question from Unit I, see AP Central, 2001: Free-Response Questions, question 1.

I strongly suggest that prior to your first year teaching AP U.S. Government and Politics you review the released free-response questions on AP Central and several released multiple-choice exams. When I teach weeklong summer institutes, I assign the four released multiple-choice exams (1989, 1996, 1999, and 2002) to the participants as homework during the week. After participants have reviewed these exams, many of them comment that they noticed several concepts that were tested on each exam. For example, several of the Released Exams have a question on the War Powers Act. While this topic is not listed specifically in the Course Description, the outline lists “relationships among...four institutions and varying balances of power” as a key concept. The War Powers Act is one example that teachers can use to illustrate the nature of the balance of power between the president and Congress with respect to war, and it is an appropriate example of executive–legislative relations. So it is our responsibility as teachers of this course to determine what specific topics fit under the outline of the Course Description. This will be a challenge but will become easier with experience.

Other important concepts will emerge when you review released free-response questions that are available on AP Central. For example, both the 1998 exam question 2 and the 2004 exam question 2 had a free-response question on interest groups that required students to have some knowledge of the techniques used by specific groups. While the two questions were not exactly the same, they focused on the same topic. This tells us that students not only need to know about interest groups in general (well covered in the textbooks) but also must be familiar with specific interest groups and the tools of each (not so well covered). Teachers must supplement their textbooks with outside examples. To add to your text’s discussion of interest groups, for instance, you might ask students to research techniques and resources of interest groups on the Internet.

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New teachers frequently ask how much time they should spend teaching current events. During the impeachment of President Clinton or the contested 2000 presidential election, many teachers may have wondered, “Will this be on the AP Exam next May? How important is it that I teach this?” Because the exam is written well in advance of its administration, it is not necessary for students to know a great deal about specific current events. Once you have a feel for which concepts are most important, however, current events can be a useful way to teach concepts. For example, President Clinton’s impeachment provided a case study of the constitutional process and the role of politics; the close presidential election of 2000 provided numerous lessons on the electoral college. The term “horserace journalism” (defined as the intense focus of the media on candidates’ standing in the polls instead of the issues) has appeared on the exam; this topic can be easily taught by referencing current events. During election time, teachers can have students test the concept by counting the number of news articles they see that focus on polls versus the number of articles that focus on candidate backgrounds or stances on issues.

Some other questions commonly asked by new teachers of AP U.S. Government and Politics are: What are the important United States Supreme Court cases I should teach? Do students need to memorize the names of cases? How much do students need to know about the key cases? Again, the Course Description provides no list of required Supreme Court rulings that students need to know but indicates instead that we need to teach relationships among the institutions of the national government. “Federalism” and “Civil liberties and civil rights” are also important topics in the Course Description.

When reviewing the multiple-choice section of the Released Exams, you will notice that there are very few questions on specifically named U.S. Supreme Court cases. Upon further review, however, it will become apparent that several questions involve the content or impact of specific Supreme Court rulings without mentioning the name of the case, and more than once a free-response question has required students to know the names of specific court cases (see AP Central, 2001: Free-Response Questions, question 3, and 2005: Free-Response Questions, question 3, for examples). You should cover the U.S. court system in the section on federal courts and most of the significant court cases in your section on civil liberties and civil rights.

To hone in on which cases are important, first review released exams. Consider not just the questions that identify cases by name but also those that involve concepts that arose from Supreme Court rulings, such as “the clear and present danger test.” You can also tap veteran teachers for suggestions by submitting a question to the AP Government and Politics Electronic Discussion Group (EDG). You can join the EDG at AP Central; for a full description of the EDG, see chapter 2. If you attend an AP Summer Institute, the instructor will most likely give you a list of suggested court cases to teach (read about summer institutes in chapters 2 and 5).

I have found that students do not need to know a complete history of the parties involved in the cases they study. Instead, they need to understand the impact of the ruling and perhaps specific parts of the Constitution that were called into question. For example, if you teach *Gitlow v. New York* (1925), students should know that this was the first case that made a part of the Bill of Rights (the First Amendment) binding on state government. It is not necessary to go into a complete history of each highlighted case for students to succeed on the exam.

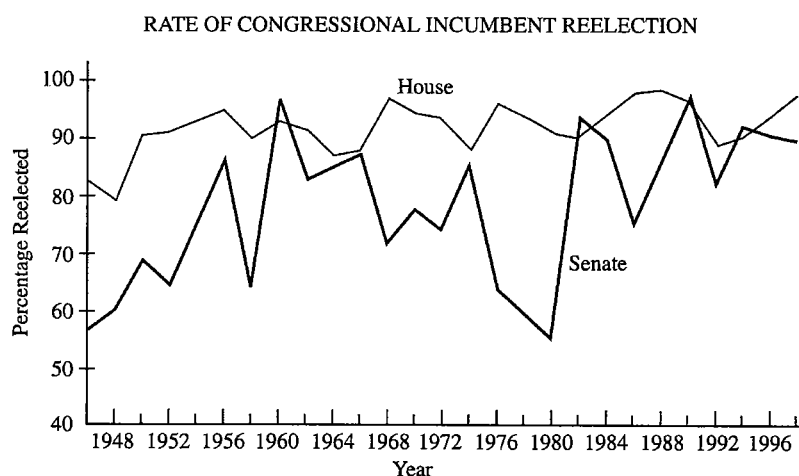
Finally, when teaching Supreme Court cases, is it necessary for students to memorize case names? Knowledge of 20 to 25 cases should be sufficient. Once you narrow down the key cases you will teach, you should require that students be familiar with the content and impact of the rulings as well as the names of the cases. This will prepare students to answer free-response questions that require knowing the names of specific cases.



## Reading and Interpreting Data

The ability to interpret graphs and charts is one of the fundamental skills of a political scientist, and one that students are frequently called on to use in both parts of the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam. As a first step, students need to develop the skill of looking at tables and graphs and figuring out what the numbers, lines, or bars mean. If they cannot read the graph, they will certainly not be able to interpret its implications.

Thus, you should frequently use tables and graphs in class to help students develop the appropriate skills necessary for comprehension and interpretation of data. These particular skills may include knowing the units of measurement on a graph, determining whether the data are presented in raw units or in percentages, knowing what the axes represent on a graph, and being able to differentiate between a data point and a pattern or trend. Students should be able to answer the question, “What story does the data in this chart or table tell?” They may have to use data to make comparisons across space or time, or frequently both. As an example, the 2001 AP United States Government and Politics Exam presented students with the following graph and free-response question.



The graph above shows reelection rates for incumbents in the House and Senate. From this information and your knowledge of United States politics, perform the following tasks.

- Identify two patterns displayed in the graph.
- Identify two factors that contribute to incumbency advantage. Explain how each factor contributes to incumbency advantage.
- Discuss one consequence of incumbency advantage for the United States political process.

It is important for students to identify broad trends when interpreting graphs like this. In answering part (a) of this question, they could note that House incumbent reelection rates are generally higher than Senate incumbent reelection rates. One common mistake that students make in table interpretation questions is focusing on one point or another in the table instead of identifying broad trends. It would be incorrect for a student to identify as a trend that Senate reelection rates in 1960 were higher than House reelection rates (while this information does appear on the table, this is not a trend). Most students will need practice in identifying trends in tables that show information related to U.S. government and politics.

Students should also expect to use outside knowledge to demonstrate an understanding of trends shown in graphs. For part (b), students could describe how the franking privilege gives members of

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Congress an advantage, or explain that interest groups give political action committee (PAC) money primarily to incumbents, which gives them an advantage over challengers. Students also have to use outside knowledge to answer part (c). Lack of competition in congressional elections and lack of new ideas are both valid points that students could bring to their discussion.

### Learning Vocabulary

United States government and politics has its own vocabulary, and helping students develop vocabulary comprehension skills is vital. Without these skills, students will not understand their readings or the multiple-choice and free-response questions on the AP Exam. Furthermore, students will benefit from understanding the importance of learning the vocabulary associated with a particular field when they attend college. Many textbooks contain lists of words commonly used when discussing government and politics; encyclopedias and dictionaries for these topics can be accessed online. Teachers have different ideas about teaching and assessing vocabulary, so it is important to develop methods that fit your approach and your students' needs (you can solicit suggestions from other AP teachers in the Government and Politics EDG on AP Central). The key point here is that knowledge of the vocabulary of government and politics is crucial.

### Marshalling Evidence/Documentation

Once students have learned how to analyze questions and have retrieved evidence from various sources, they must learn how to use the evidence to document and support their statements. This skill is critical to success on the free-response section of the exam, and it is one of those lifelong skills that will aid students no matter what career path they pursue after high school. Unfortunately, many students simply assert conclusions with little concrete evidence to support their ideas. They often do this—even when they have knowledge of specific support—because they either do not see how important it is to let others know what is in their mind or have trouble marshalling evidence to respond to a specific question. You need to provide many opportunities for students to use specific information and documentation to verify and justify their ideas about U.S. government and politics, as well as to persuade others that their ideas are valid. This is how students demonstrate their understanding of concepts and put into practice the skills discussed earlier. Consider the following free-response question from the 2001 AP Exam:

Explain how each of the political factors listed below makes it difficult for the federal government to enact public policy. Provide one example for each explanation.

- Divided government
- Weak party discipline
- Growth in the number of interest groups and political action committees (PACs)

To prepare students for this type of question, you must go beyond your textbook when teaching key concepts and themes to supply examples that relate to those concepts. For example, students may learn in the public policy unit that divided government had an impact on the outcome of welfare reform under President Clinton. Both Clinton and the Republican Congress promised to reform welfare, but each had different proposals. Clinton vetoed two Republican welfare reform measures and insisted on compromises before a welfare reform bill was passed. Students who have some background in the policymaking process and have studied specific examples of public policies and policy proposals will do well with questions such as this. See scoring guidelines and student samples for this question on AP Central for a better understanding of how students were expected to respond to this prompt.

# Chapter 2

## Advice for AP United States Government and Politics Teachers

### Common Challenges

Teaching AP United States Government and Politics for the first time will be a challenging task for most teachers. Administrators, parents, and AP students expect a quality teacher who knows the discipline well and can prepare students from varying backgrounds and abilities to succeed on the AP Exam. In this chapter we provide advice on how to handle common challenges faced by AP U.S. Government and Politics teachers.

Teachers in different school systems face unique challenges. For example, in some schools AP U.S. Government and Politics is taught as a first semester course, and AP Comparative Government and Politics, economics, or another course is taught in the second semester. In other schools, AP U.S. Government and Politics is a yearlong course. Those who have just one semester are more likely to feel pressure when they are pacing their course and may not be able to review with their students before the AP Exam. Both types of pacing (semester and year) are addressed below.

If you are teaching the course primarily to sophomores, your students may not have had a United States history course recently, and they probably will have less experience with essay writing. You may have to adapt the course outline a bit; for instance, you would spend more time teaching the constitutional underpinnings unit than a teacher whose students have had a high school U.S. history course. I also recommend that all teachers diagnose their students' writing ability in the beginning of the year, as some students may need extra help in developing their writing skills. Look for suggestions on this later in this chapter.

It is important to remember that even when students need extra tutoring, you still must meet the requirements of the curriculum outline, and students still need to tackle challenging assignments in order to do well in the course. Suggestions for activities to keep students motivated and interested appear throughout this Teacher's Guide.

Your school's policy regarding the exam will also have an impact on your teaching. Some schools require that students who take an AP course take the AP Exam at the end of the year, while other schools allow students to decide whether or not to take the exam. Some school systems pay the exam fee while others do not. In Fairfax County, Virginia, where I teach, the county subsidizes the exam fee, and all students enrolled in AP courses are required to take an AP Exam. A half-point (on a 4-point grading scale) is added to a student's grade for the course regardless of the AP Exam grade he or she receives. Students not

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only gain from the experience of taking an AP Exam, but they also have the opportunity to earn credit at the college they want to attend. I also benefit from this policy because the exam grades give me feedback on what my students have (and have not) mastered in my course.

### Ask for Advice

Sixteen years ago a local mentor, Bill Babcock, gave me some wonderful advice about locating resources for this course. He said, “Assume the role of a sponge. Soak up everything that experienced AP teachers are willing to share.” Looking back, Bill hit the nail right on the head. Since that time I have learned much, and I now offer my own tips:

1. Search local high school social studies Web sites to find out who is currently teaching the course within a reasonable driving range.
2. Draw up a list of questions about the AP U.S. Government and Politics course and the AP Program.
3. Contact those individuals, introduce yourself, and ask if they’d be willing to meet or perhaps respond to your questions via e-mail. Follow up with a phone call to thank them.
4. Try to get permission to visit their school and spend a day in their classroom (ideally, at the start of a new year).
5. Locate and sign up for a five-day AP U.S. Government and Politics Summer Institute. If this is not possible, attend a one-day workshop.
6. Become a member of AP Central (it’s free to join). Browse the resources on the AP U.S. Government and Politics Home Page ([apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus)). Join the electronic discussion group (EDG).
7. Monitor the questions and answers on the EDG regularly. Even if you don’t submit questions, you’ll learn a great deal just by reading the questions and answers.
8. Continue to ask for advice as you begin to teach the course. If it is your first AP class, don’t be too hard on yourself. Be patient—it may take a few years before you get your course to a point where you feel very comfortable with it.

Success in this discipline comes from a variety of factors. It’s important to remain curious and consistently apply what you learn. This approach will bring rewards not just when teaching this course but throughout your life.

—Kevin R. Sacerdote, AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Mandarin High School,  
Jacksonville, Florida

## Open Access to AP Courses

My school system, Fairfax County Public Schools, has an open enrollment policy for all AP courses. As a result, the number of students in my class has increased, with the pressure to maintain a high percentage of students achieving an AP Exam grade of 3 or higher (a goal set by the school administration) remaining constant. This can be a challenge because some students have never taken an AP or honors course and may not have developed the requisite study or writing skills. In addition, some students may not have support at home, or may have demanding after-school jobs.

How does an AP teacher deal with this situation? There is no easy answer. We must be persistent in our teaching strategies, remain patient, and not blame ourselves if every goal is not met in one particular year. Here are some approaches to consider:

1. Encourage parents or guardians to become involved in students’ learning. On “back- to-school night,” I encourage parents to talk to their sons or daughters at home about the topics and activities we are working on in class. I contact parents by e-mail or telephone if students are not

doing well in class. If the parents do not speak English, I find someone at school who can help me communicate in the parents' language about their child's progress.

2. Find out which extracurricular activities students are involved in and communicate with their coaches or teachers when necessary. If you have time, attend some of these activities to let students know you are interested in them.
3. Have students keep writing folders so that you can assess which students need to improve in this area (see Pedagogical Methods, below). Work one-on-one with these students.
4. Give quizzes and routine essay prompts. This tells students that they should always come prepared for class.
5. Teach with enthusiasm. Plan field trips, organize guest speakers, and employ student-driven simulations based on the curriculum. This will help motivate your students to succeed in the course.

## Pacing Your Course

AP courses are rigorous in both volume of content and skills required of students. Pacing the course is one of the biggest concerns for all new AP teachers. To get ideas on how to pace your course, refer to the curriculum outline in the Course Description. For example, you will see that constitutional underpinnings will make up 5–15 percent of the multiple-choice section of the AP Exam, but institutions of national government will make up 35–45 percent. When reviewing these percentage guidelines, teachers can make informed decisions about which topics to spend the most time on in order to best prepare students for the exam. For example, in a yearlong course I typically spend four to six weeks on institutions of government and about two weeks on constitutional underpinnings. In a one-semester course I would spend about three weeks on institutions of government and a little over one week on constitutional underpinnings.

## Pedagogical Methods

One common misperception of teaching an AP class is that, since this is a college-level course, the teacher must lecture. High school administrators expect teachers to use alternative teaching methods, and educational research indicates that student-centered learning leads to high achievement. AP U.S. Government and Politics is a course that can be taught well using a variety of methods, including cooperative learning, simulations, debate, and other activities—in addition to the occasional lecture. As long as you keep the content objectives of the AP course in mind and continue to create assessments that mimic the level of difficulty and content of the curriculum outlined in the Course Description, student-centered lessons can be effective. For example, I have students simulate a “constitutional convention” in which they are required to propose changes to the constitution and support their changes with evidence. Students also debate the merits of various federal mandates and engage in small-group discussions of key Supreme Court cases.

I require that students keep a writing folder in the classroom. Each time an in-class writing assignment is completed, I grade students' writing using a rubric (scoring guideline) but make very few comments. Students are required to compare the rubric with their own response to better understand their score. Students place the finished product (writing and rubric) in a folder in the classroom. Those who have difficulty with the writing assignments make an appointment with me to review their folder. I then work one-on-one with them, using the rubrics, and in some cases allow them to complete a rewrite.

The syllabi in chapter 3 offer many creative teaching strategies. Of course, there is no one correct way to teach this course; individual teachers must consider the level of comfort that they have with each method and use their own teaching style to the best advantage.

### The Value of Simulations

Like most teachers, I attended a weeklong training session the summer before I first taught AP United States Government and Politics. My instructor emphasized lecturing as his preferred method of instruction, but this didn't match my teaching style.

Over the eight years that I have been teaching the course, I have incorporated teaching methods I feel more comfortable with, such as simulations, Socratic seminars, and debates. After the AP Exam each year, students always tell me that the simulations helped to pull everything together for them and were more beneficial during the crunch of the exam than readings or lectures. A well-placed simulation can be just as effective as a series of lectures, and maybe even more so.

One such simulation is a United States Supreme Court conference and decision-writing simulation. One year my students argued, decided, and wrote opinions for the then-pending "Pledge of Allegiance" case. I considered it a personal victory when on graduation day, as I circulated among the graduates before the ceremony to congratulate them and wish them well, almost every one of my students couldn't wait to tell me that the decision had been handed down that morning and to fill me in on its details and the Court's rationale. Certainly, when the excitement of my government class can compete with the thrill of graduation, experiential learning has been effective.

—Cathy Ruffing, AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Centerville High School,  
Fairfax County, Virginia

## AP Teachers and Parents

Parents or guardians of AP students are often very involved in their children's education, so you can usually count on them to support your program. I always have a very large turnout on back-to-school night and on parent-teacher conference days. Taking advantage of this time, I suggest to parents that they become involved by opening up a dialogue about the course at home—United States government and politics is a subject that can be discussed at the dinner table. I encourage parents to ask their children what we are working on in class, explaining that this type of dialogue reinforces students' learning, encourages their curiosity, and builds their confidence in the subject matter. Students will be amazed at how much or how little their parents know, and their parents will be impressed when their children teach them about topics covered in the course.

Parents may also be concerned about their child doing well in your class. If their child does not maintain a high grade, parents may want to know why and will expect concrete suggestions on how their child can improve. Some parents simply may not comprehend why their child is not excelling in your course, especially if it is the first AP course that the child has taken. I deal with this by distributing a handout entitled "How to Succeed in My Class" to students on the first day of class. This handout lists the types of assignments that I give (quizzes, writing prompts, tests, etc.) with a corresponding paragraph describing how to prepare for these exercises. If a parent asks me in an e-mail what the student can do to improve, I first refer them to this document, which I explain was distributed on the first day of class, and attach to my e-mail response.

Specifically, I usually suggest that students spend at least half an hour at home each day reviewing the day's lesson in order to reinforce their learning; this is in addition to the time it takes them to complete their other assignments for the class. I also work one-on-one with students on an as-needed basis, primarily helping them with AP writing prompts. I allow students to retake a test or rewrite an AP prompt once per quarter. All of these measures show parents that I am willing to help students; nevertheless, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to perform well enough to receive a higher grade.



My county requires me to maintain a Web site about my course. By accessing this site, parents can find out about due dates for work and upcoming events in my class. If you do not have a dedicated site, you can take advantage of free public sites such as [www.schoolnotes.com](http://www.schoolnotes.com). This site is easy to use and enables teachers to disseminate essential information to students and parents.

### Relations with Other Teachers

If your school has a large AP program, as mine does, you will join a cross-discipline group of AP teachers with similar concerns. One issue at my school is the timing of our final exams. Most AP teachers give either a final exam or a major test right before AP Exam week. Students taking several AP classes could thus have multiple final exams on the same day. Parents have complained about this, prompting AP teachers to hold an annual meeting to determine how to stagger the administration of these major exams.

Another idea to consider is meeting with the AP United States History teacher in your school, if that class is offered, since many of your students may have taken it the previous year. You might ask about the overall strengths and weaknesses of the students in the class, paying special attention to writing ability. You might also want to familiarize yourself with the AP U.S. History Exam and see how it compares to the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam. Students may expect the writing sections of the two exams to be similar, but they are not. Knowing what students did last year will help you address student needs and concerns regarding your course and the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam.

### AP Central

All teachers should use the AP Central Web site ([apcentral.collegeboard.com](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com)) as a resource. You will find a variety of useful resources catalogued by course, including free-response questions from past exams, scoring guidelines, and sample student responses with scores. It is useful to administer the free-response questions to your students for practice; you can also show them the scoring guidelines and student samples to demonstrate how the free-response questions are scored. These are good exam preparation strategies. Students will be better prepared for the type of question format commonly used on the exam, and they will more cognizant of Exam Readers' expectations of their writing if they see how the questions are scored.

#### Practice with Free-Response Questions

What helped me most on the free-response section of the AP Exam was the fact that my teacher gave us many practice free-response questions throughout the semester. They were all real questions from past AP Exams. After responding to each one, we would go over the actual rubric that was used, and I could see what mistakes I made and try not to make them again.

—Veeda Ranjber, Class of 2004,  
Herndon High School,  
Herndon, Virginia

AP Central also hosts a Teachers' Resources area. You can search this database for specific types of resources (books, Web sites, articles, etc.) by topic (the Constitution, elections, public policy, etc.), then read a review of the resource. Reviews summarize the contents and tell the reader how to access or order it.

Finally, teachers may participate in the AP U.S. Government and Politics Electronic Discussion Group (EDG). This group includes both AP U.S. Government and Politics and Comparative Government and Politics teachers from around the country. It serves as a forum for discussion of a wide range of topics, including the difficulty level of the exam, suggestions for class routines, calls for help, good newspaper

## Chapter 2

articles, and more. A teacher can opt to receive the individual e-mails as they are sent or a daily summary of the contents of the discussions. In addition to being useful for informational purposes, these discussions can also lead you to helpful and rewarding networking with other AP teachers across the country.

### Workshops and Institutes

The College Board's regional offices provide many services and resources for AP teachers, including information on professional development opportunities such as AP Summer Institutes and workshops. You may direct any questions about the AP Program to your regional office. Contact information is located on the inside back cover of this guide.

All teachers who do not serve as Exam Readers in a given year should attend a one-day workshop. These sessions typically include discussions of pedagogy and resources, plus a simulation of the scoring of the free-response section of the most recent exam. Workshops will help even the most experienced teachers stay current in their field and better understand how the free-response section of the exam is scored. You can browse a listing of upcoming events and sign up for a workshop at [apcentral.collegeboard.com/events](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/events).

New teachers will benefit from attending a weeklong institute the summer prior to beginning their course. Typically an AP Summer Institute includes helpful advice related to content preparation, pedagogy, pacing, using technology in the classroom, suggestions for resources, and an overview of the scoring of the free-response section of the most recent exam. The beginning teacher will leave with a better grasp of the content, some insights into teaching students how to answer free-response questions, lesson plan ideas, and a better overall understanding of the AP Program. The advanced teacher will leave with information on the most recent Exam Reading and new ideas to take back to the classroom. All teachers benefit from the opportunity to network and share ideas with their colleagues. Read more about the summer institutes and other professional development opportunities offered by the College Board in chapter 5.

Experienced AP U.S. Government and Politics teachers might also want to consider other professional development opportunities such as Street Law's Supreme Court Summer Institute ([www.streetlaw.org](http://www.streetlaw.org)), the Bill of Rights Institute ([www.billofrightsinstitute.org](http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org)), and the We the People Institute ([www.neh.fed.us/wtp](http://www.neh.fed.us/wtp)). While such sessions are not specifically tailored to the AP U.S. Government and Politics course like the workshops and institutes are, you will get a quality presentation and leave with ideas that will help you enrich your course.



# Chapter 3

## Course Organization

### Syllabus Development

There are many things to consider when you create a syllabus. How many school days are available in the term? How many days should you devote to each topic? Does your school system typically miss days in the winter due to bad weather? How many assessments should be given and when? How many students will you be teaching? How well do your students write? What grade level are they? Have they had experience with AP classes before? How prepared are students to handle the reading required in a college-level course and text? These are key factors that vary from school to school and from year to year. I advise each teacher to consider the individual school environment when creating a syllabus and to allow some flexibility in the schedule to account for the unexpected.

If you find that your students do not have good reading comprehension skills, for example, consider requiring that they complete chapter outlines or study guides. In my first years of teaching the course, I assigned study guides consisting of lists of terms, chapter questions, or a combination of each, and I gave students a homework grade for completing them. This type of assignment helps develop the study skills students will need in college. Another approach is to quiz students on the reading before you present the material in class. This will give you some idea of whether the students are able to understand what they have read.

Your goal should be to give at least one in-class writing assignment per week. However, if you have a large number of students, you may decide to require fewer writing assignments. I have had years when I had almost 150 students in my AP U.S. Government and Politics course. If I had assigned one writing project per week, I would never have had the time I needed to complete the grading. If you are teaching multiple sections and have more than 100 students, your students will not benefit if you assign so many writing prompts that you cannot return them in a timely fashion, or if grading them takes so much time away from your planning that the quality of your classroom instruction is diminished. But if you have one section of 30 or fewer students, I think it is reasonable to assign at least one in-class writing exercise per week. Students will benefit from the extra practice of writing essays in class and from receiving timely feedback on their performance.

### Write, Write, Write

How do you handle writing assignments when you teach several sections of AP U.S. Government and Politics? The grading for 90-plus students can be overwhelming. Here are some alternatives that provide students with analytical thinking and writing opportunities but require less grading from you.

- **Write to the prompt:** Using released AP Exam free-response questions, have students practice listing or bulleting only the factual information called for in the questions while keeping the responses in the “a, b, c” format of the question.
- **Short free write:** Give students an essay question and have them write an introduction and then put the rest of the essay in outline format.
- **“Groupthink”:** Give groups of three to four students a released AP Exam question. Have them either write the essay response as a group with one person acting as recorder or design a scoring guideline for the question and then analyze any differences between their scoring guideline and the AP scoring guideline.
- **Free choice:** Assign essays for each unit and then at the end of the term have the students reread all their own essays and choose the one they want you to grade. You can also have them first critique their essays using the scoring guideline and then choose which essay will be graded.

—Susan Shue, AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
AP Coordinator, and Department Chair,  
Woodson High School,  
Fairfax County, Virginia

## Four Sample Syllabi

The best resources to help you write your first syllabus are previously created, model syllabi. This chapter includes three sample syllabi used by experienced AP U.S. Government and Politics teachers from high schools in different parts of the country and one sample syllabus from a university professor of introductory-level political science. Review these syllabi carefully—you are bound to find ideas that will suit your own school environment and teaching style. The syllabi give examples of pacing, resources, assignments, lesson plans, and general teaching philosophy. As you become more comfortable teaching your course, you should revise your syllabus to reflect what you discover works or does not work for you. For example, by the time you have finished two or three years of instruction, you will know which topics take longer and require more attention. You will discover that certain areas are more interesting for you, and that you enjoy spending more time on them.

### Important note: The AP Course Audit

The syllabi included in this Teachers Guide were developed prior to the initiation of the AP Course Audit and the identification of the current AP United States Government and Politics Curricular Requirements. These syllabi contain rich resources and will be useful in generating ideas for your AP course. In addition to providing detailed course planners, the syllabi contain descriptions of classroom activities and assignments, along with helpful teaching strategies. However, they should not necessarily be used in their entirety as models that would be authorized under the guidelines of the AP Course Audit. To view the current AP Curricular Requirements and examples of syllabi that have been developed since the launch of the AP Course Audit and therefore meet all of the AP United States Government and Politics Curricular Requirements, please see AP Central.

<http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/courseaudit/resources>

# Sample Syllabus 1

## Karen Waples

Cherry Creek High School  
Greenwood Village, Colorado

## School Profile

Cherry Creek High School is located in a southeastern suburb of Denver, Colorado. It is the largest public high school in the state and has a reputation for excellence. The total student population is 3,653, of which 6.5 percent are Asian or Pacific Islander; 5 percent Hispanic/Latino; and 2 percent African American. The community supports education, and students generally come to school prepared to learn. Cherry Creek offers 25 AP classes. In addition to its excellence in academics, our school is also a top contender in athletics, offering 25 competitive sports. Because it is a big school, Cherry Creek offers wonderfully diverse opportunities in the classroom, in athletics, and in extracurricular activities, including 85 clubs. Ninety-two percent of graduating seniors attend college.

## Personal Philosophy

Teaching government matters. My goal is for students to leave this class as interested and informed citizens. It's easy to energize students with this content because it is in the news every day and relates to their lives. This is a wonderful AP class for students to take because the content appeals to them, and most are willing to work hard to master it. We need an informed and involved citizenry for democracy to work. My greatest joy is when former students come back after they have started college to tell me that they are voting, working on campaigns, and contributing in some way to their communities.

## Class Profile

Cherry Creek High School offers five sections of AP United States Government and Politics taught by three teachers. Each section has 25 to 28 students. The class meets daily during a traditional eight-period day, with 49 minutes per class period.

## Course Overview

This one-semester college-level course is an introduction to the U.S. government and political system. We study government institutions and political processes and examine policy choices. The institutions and policies of the government are considered in light of historical change, constitutional procedures, and comparative perspectives.

## Text and Readings

Edwards, George C., Robert L. Lineberry, and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2003. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. 10th ed. New York: Longman.

Woll, Peter, ed. 2002. *American Government: Readings and Cases*. 14th ed. New York: Longman.

## Course Planner

**Note:** The schedule includes references to media not included in the reading list shown for each unit. See Teacher Resources later in this chapter for information on those media.

## Chapter 3

### Unit 1: Introduction, Constitution, and Federalism

#### Readings

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 1, 2, and 3  
Woll: Roche and Beard articles; *Federalist Papers* 47, 48, and 51  
*Anti-Federalist Papers* packet  
Packet about the No Child Left Behind Act

#### Schedule

Tues. Aug. 26	Introduction to the course and the AP Exam
Wed. Aug. 27	Packet about No Child Left Behind
Thurs. Aug. 28	Lecture: chapter 1 (“Introducing Government in America”)
Fri. Aug. 29	Essay: chapter 1; lecture: chapter 2 (“The Constitution”)
Tues. Sept. 2	Current events; lecture: chapter 2
Wed. Sept. 3	<i>Federalist Papers</i> 47, 48, 51; <i>Anti-Federalist Papers</i>
Thurs. Sept. 4	Lecture: chapter 2
Fri. Sept. 5	Chapter 2 essay; discuss Amendments
Mon. Sept. 8	Debate topics; lecture: chapter 3 (“Federalism”)
Tues. Sept. 9	Current events; lecture: chapter 3
Wed. Sept. 10	Lecture: chapter 3
Thurs. Sept. 11	Roche; Beard
Fri. Sept. 12	Multiple-choice test: chapters 2 and 3
Mon. Sept. 15	Current events; essay: chapter 3

### Unit 2: Public Opinion, Campaigns, and Voting Behavior

#### Readings

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 6, 9, and 10  
Woll: Berelson, “Democratic Practice and Democratic Theory”; Key, “The Responsible Electorate”  
League of Women Voters report  
Excerpt from *Bowling Alone*

#### Schedule

Tues. Sept. 16	Political self-analysis; tolerance questions
Wed. Sept. 17	Lecture: chapter 6 (“Public Opinion and Political Action”)
Thurs. Sept. 18	The gender gap and comparative politics
Fri. Sept. 19	Non-pupil contact day
Mon. Sept. 22	Lecture: chapter 9 (“Nominations and Campaigns”)
Tues. Sept. 23	Socratic seminar: League of Women Voters report and <i>Bowling Alone</i>
Wed. Sept. 24	Woll articles on voting behavior Movie Night: <i>Primary Colors</i>
Thurs. Sept. 25	Lecture: chapter 10 (“Elections and Voting Behavior”)
Fri. Sept. 26	Multiple-choice test: chapters 6, 9, and 10

### Unit 3: Linkage Institutions

#### Readings

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 7, 8, and 11  
Woll: Madison, *Federalist Paper* 10 (pp. 171-76)  
*It’s the Media, Stupid*

**Schedule**

Mon. Sept. 29	Current events; multiple-choice test: chapters 6, 9, and 10
Tues. Sept. 30	Go over test; lecture: chapter 7 (“The Mass Media and the Political Agenda”)
Wed. Oct. 1	Lecture: chapter 7
Thurs. Oct. 2	Socratic seminar: <i>It’s the Media, Stupid</i>
Fri. Oct. 3	Debate: low voter turnout
Mon. Oct. 6	Current events; assign term paper; lecture: chapter 8 (“Political Parties”)
Tues. Oct. 7	Lecture: chapter 8
Wed. Oct. 8	<i>Federalist Paper 10</i>
Thurs. Oct. 9	Essay on chapters 7 and 8; lecture: chapter 11 (“Interest Groups”)
Fri. Oct. 10	Lecture: chapter 11; assign roles for mock Congress
Mon. Oct. 13	Multiple-choice test: chapters 7, 8, and 11

**Unit 4: Congress, Presidency, Bureaucracy, and Budget**

**Readings**

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 12, 13, 14, and 15  
 Woll: Barber, “The Presidential Character”

**Schedule**

Tues. Oct. 14	Current events; go over test; assign mock Congress
Wed. Oct. 15	Lecture: chapter 13 (“The Presidency”)
Thurs. Oct 16	Socratic seminar: “The Presidential Character”
Fri. Oct 17	Lecture: chapter 12 (“Congress”)
Mon. Oct. 20	Current events; mock Congress
Tues. Oct. 21	Mock Congress
Wed. Oct. 22	Lecture: chapter 12
Thurs. Oct 23	Essay on the Congress; lecture: chapter 14 (“The Congress, the President, and the Budget: The Politics of Taxing and Spending”)
Fri. Oct. 24	Debate: presidential power
School closed Oct. 27–31	
Mon. Nov. 3	Current events; lecture: chapter 14
Tues. Nov. 4	Lecture: chapter 14
Wed. Nov. 5	Lecture: chapter 15 (“The Federal Bureaucracy”)
Thurs. Nov. 6	Lecture: chapter 15
Fri. Nov. 7	Essay on the bureaucracy
Mon. Nov. 10	Current events; bureaucratic pathology
Tues. Nov. 11	Debate: Rehnquist Court (period 2)

**Unit 5: The Judiciary, Civil Rights, and Liberties**

**Readings**

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 16, 4, and 5

**Schedule**

Wed. Nov. 12	Lecture: chapter 16 (“The Federal Courts”)
Thurs. Nov. 13	Lecture: chapter 16

## Chapter 3

Fri. Nov. 14	Multiple-choice test: chapters 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16
Mon. Nov. 17	Current events; test corrections; term paper and cases assigned
Tues. Nov. 18	Computer lab B research
Wed. Nov. 19	Current events; lecture: chapter 4 (“Civil Liberties and Public Policy”)
Thurs. Nov. 20	Lecture: chapter 4
Fri. Nov. 21	Current events; present legal cases
Mon. Nov. 24	Present legal cases
Tues. Nov. 25	Computer lab: timed writing on judiciary
Thanksgiving Break	
Mon. Dec. 1	Lecture: chapter 5 (“Civil Rights and Public Policy”)
Tues. Dec. 2	Debate: affirmative action
Wed. Dec. 3	Current events; lecture: chapter 5
Thurs. Dec. 4	Essay on chapters 4 and 5

### Unit 6: Public Policy

#### Readings

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapters 17, 18, and 19

Holly Sklar, Betsy Leondar-Wright, and Chuck Collins: “The Shaky American Dream: The Perils of the Growing American Wealth Gap,” from *Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics*

#### Schedule

Fri. Dec. 5	Lecture: chapter 17 (“Economic Policymaking”)
Mon. Dec. 8	Lecture: chapters 17 and 18 (“Social Welfare Policymaking”)
Tues. Dec. 9	Debate
Wed. Dec. 10	Term paper due; current events; lecture, chapter 18
Thurs. Dec. 11	Lecture: chapter 19 (“Policymaking for Health Care and the Environment”)
Fri. Dec. 12	Lecture: chapter 19
Mon. Dec. 15	Multiple-choice test: chapters 17, 18, and 19
Tues. Dec. 16	Go over test; holiday songs
Holiday Break	

### Unit 7: Foreign and Defense Policy

#### Readings

Edwards, Lineberry, and Wattenberg: Chapter 20  
Weapons proliferation packet

#### Schedule

Mon. Jan. 5	Current events; lecture: chapter 20 (“National Security Policymaking”)
Tues. Jan. 6	Lecture: chapter 20
Wed. Jan. 7	Multiple-choice test: chapter 20
Thurs. Jan. 8	Socratic seminar: weapons proliferation
Fri. Jan. 9	Review for final exam: who wants to be a millionaire?
Mon. Jan. 12	Review for final exam
Wed. Jan. 14	Final exam

## Teaching Strategies

My primary teaching method is a lecture/discussion format that takes place a couple of days per week. Students also read articles and prepare analytical questions in advance as the basis for student-led discussion. Students present current events to the class each week. In addition, they research and debate one issue per semester. Students are also given guided questions prior to difficult readings. In class, they work in groups to complete any questions they can't answer independently. They also draw political cartoons and make charts and graphs on posters, using demographic data. I show a couple of hour-long episodes of *The West Wing* and *Law and Order*. In addition, students may attend optional movie nights where we watch feature-length films.

## Student Evaluation

Students are given 60-question, 45-minute multiple-choice tests following each unit. These questions have five possible responses, as do questions on the AP Exam. Every two weeks, students write a 25-minute essay in class. These are graded according to a rubric. Students also write two term papers each semester. They prepare and present a debate that is weighted as a term paper or major test in the grading. Current events reports are also graded. Occasionally, students are given a pop quiz worth minimal points in order to prove that they did the reading. Those who receive a D or F on a term paper or essay have the opportunity to rewrite their papers, for a maximum grade of C-. Students who receive a D or F on a multiple-choice test must complete an item-by-item analysis of their errors in order to raise their grade one level, for a maximum of C-.

## Teacher Resources

Barber, James David. 1985. *The Presidential Character*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Beard, Charles A. 1957. "The Economic Basis of Political and Related Writings." In *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 15th ed., Peter Woll, Ed., 31–40. New York: Longman, 2004.

Berelson, Bernard R., Paul E. Lazerfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 305-33.

Grover, William F., and Joseph G. Peschek, Eds. 2002. *Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics*. 4th ed. New York: Longman.

Key, V. O. Jr. 1955. "A Theory of Critical Elections." In *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 15th ed., Peter Woll, Ed., 190-99. New York: Pearson Longman, 2004.

Key, V. O. Jr. 1991. *The Responsible Electorate: Responsibility in Presidential Voting 1930–1960*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

McChesney, Robert W., and John Nichols. 2000. *It's the Media, Stupid*. New York: Seven Stories Press.

Putnam, Robert. 2000. *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Roche, John P. 1961. "The Founding Fathers." In *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 15th ed., Peter Woll, Ed., 10–29. New York: Longman, 2004.

Scott, Gregory M., Louis Furmanski, and Randall J. Jones, Jr., eds. 2000. "Nuclear Proliferation." 21 *Debated Issues in World Politics*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.



## Chapter 3

Sklar, Holly, Betsy Leondar-Wright, and Chuck Collins. 1999. *Shifting Fortunes: The Perils of the Growing American Wealth Gap*. Boston: United for a Fair Economy.

Woll, Peter, and Stephen J. Rockwell. 2000. *American Political Ideals and Realities*. New York: Longman.

Woolley, Peter J., and Albert R. Papas. 2002. *American Politics: Core Argument/Current Controversy*. 2nd ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

### Web Sites

*The Anti-Federalist Papers*

[www.wepin.com/articles/afp/intro.html](http://www.wepin.com/articles/afp/intro.html)

Center for Responsive Politics

[www.opensecrets.org/index.asp](http://www.opensecrets.org/index.asp)

Cornell Law School Supreme Court Case Collection

<http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/cases/name.htm>

*The Federalist Papers*

[www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/federal/fed.htm](http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/federal/fed.htm).

Gallup Polling Organization

[www.gallup.com](http://www.gallup.com)

Larson, Krista. *American Voting Process Influenced Turnout Levels*.  
Medill News Service.

[www.yvoteonline.org/noshows2000\\_st\\_foreign.shtml](http://www.yvoteonline.org/noshows2000_st_foreign.shtml)

League of Women Voters

<http://lww.org>

No Child Left Behind Act

[www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=pb](http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml?src=pb)

Women's Election Watch 2000.

The Feminist Majority Foundation.

[www.feminist.org/Election2000/gendergap\\_president.asp](http://www.feminist.org/Election2000/gendergap_president.asp)

### Videos/DVDs

*The American President*. 1995. Rob Reiner, director. Castle Rock Entertainment.

*Law and Order*. "Gun Show." Episode 1106, Season 10. Universal Studios Home Video.

*Primary Colors*. 1998. Mike Nichols, director. Universal Studios Home Video.

*Traffic*. 2000. Stephen Soderburgh, director. USA Films.

*The West Wing*. "Stackhouse Filibuster." Episode 217, Season 2. Warner Home Video.



## Student Activities

### **The Complete Idiot's Guide to *Federalist 10***

**Introduction:** Reading the *Federalist Papers* is difficult for many students. *Federalist Paper 10* can be used in connection with a discussion of the Constitution or in teaching about interest groups. Because *Federalist 10* can be tough for students to understand at first, I developed this student-friendly lesson to make it more comprehensible.

**Objective:** Students will understand and illustrate Madison's arguments in *Federalist 10*.

**Materials Needed:** An original or edited version of *Federalist 10*. This can be found in most readers or on the Internet.

#### **Lesson Plan:**

1. In class, have students take turns reading each paragraph of *Federalist 10* out loud. Stop to define terms after each paragraph (or sooner). At the end of each paragraph, have students summarize Madison's argument. On the board, write each argument and paragraph number, and have students take notes.
2. Tell students that their assignment is to make "A Complete Idiot's Guide to *Federalist 10*" or "*Federalist 10* for Dummies." Fold four sheets of 8 1/2" × 11" paper in half and staple down the fold. Have students make an illustrated cover page with their name and a title. For each paragraph in *Federalist 10*, students are to write a simple sentence explaining Madison's argument and draw an illustration representing the concept.

This strategy of summarizing and illustrating in booklet form should work with any difficult reading if students are guided through the language.

### **In-Class Debates**

**Introduction:** AP U.S. Government and Politics is current-event oriented, which provides an opportunity for students to debate topics of the day. This lesson requires students to research a topic, understand both sides, and support their positions with evidence.

**Materials:** Copies of debate topics, debate rules, and a student score sheet for each student. A teacher score sheet for the instructor.

#### **Procedure:**

1. Distribute debate topics (handout 1) and debate format sheet (handout 2). Tell students to form groups of six (groups as small as four also work) and pick topics. Using a random system, determine which groups will be assigned which topics.
2. After class, review your planning book and figure out when each topic will fit into the curriculum. Develop a schedule for the debates. This strategy holds students' attention.
3. In class the next day, give students the debate schedule.
4. You might want to schedule some class time in the library for research.
5. On the day of each debate, arrange debaters' desks so that they face each other in the middle of the room. Give the rest of the students the student score sheet (handout 3), and instruct them to score

## Chapter 3

one side of the debate. Using the teacher score sheet, grade both teams during the debate. Ask students to submit an annotated bibliography that you can grade after the debate.

6. Debates take about 45 minutes. If time remains in the class period, debaters can take questions from the audience.

**Comments:** These debate topics (see below) have all worked well over time. This is a good lesson to help quiet students develop confidence in their speaking abilities. It also allows kids who do not write well but have good speaking skills to showcase their talents.

## Handout 1

# AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS DEBATE TOPICS

### **Unit 2: Constitutional Underpinnings of American Government**

1. Federalism is no longer necessary because most important issues are either national or global in scope. The United States would be better off if the states served as administrative districts, as in a unitary government.

### **Unit 3: Political Beliefs and Behavior**

2. The United States should follow the pattern of numerous European nations that have enacted a compulsory voting law.
3. Because of political apathy among young people, their issues are not adequately addressed.

### **Unit 4: Political Parties and Interest Groups**

4. Single-issue groups (i.e., Right to Life, NRA, NEA, Greenpeace) play a larger role in shaping public policy than they should.
5. Multiparty political systems more effectively represent citizen interests than does the American two-party system.

### **Unit 5: The Three Branches of Government**

6. The U.S. Supreme Court is too heavily influenced by politics.
7. The United States should reduce its number of regulatory agencies because they generate red tape, raise prices, and reduce competitiveness in the world market.
8. Judicial review is undemocratic. It permits nonelected judges to decide whether or not a law is constitutional. It can frustrate the intentions of democratic governments by overruling the actions of elected officials.
9. The president has become so powerful that there is no longer an effective balance of powers.

### **Unit 6: Civil Liberties**

10. Affirmative action programs are necessary to safeguard equal opportunity in both education and employment for minorities.
11. In the interest of public safety, the Fourth Amendment rights of those under 18 should be severely limited.

## Handout 2

### AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS DEBATE FORMAT

1. Each of you will be placed on a team of three (or more) members. One member is responsible for giving the opening statement. Another member is responsible for giving the closing statement. The third member is primarily responsible for writing questions and cross-examining the other team. All team members may respond to questions.
2. Opening and closing statements are limited to five minutes each.
3. Each side has five minutes for cross-examination.
4. Even though your duties are divided, it is important to work together to avoid contradiction and redundancy.
5. Research your topic thoroughly.
6. Organize your ideas.
7. Be precise.
8. DO NOT read an already-written essay to the class. Speak using note cards or an outline sheet.
9. Define terms to your advantage.
10. Anticipate your opponent's main points.
11. Use quotes from experts, but don't overdo it.
12. Use statistics from experts, but don't overdo this either.
13. Rehearse your presentation and use time accordingly.
14. Be confident and modulate your voice.
15. Dress well and come to class rested.
16. An annotated bibliography, with at least six sources, is due from your team at the beginning of class on the day of your debate. **This is worth 40 percent of your grade.**

## Handout 3

# AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS DEBATE SCORE SHEET

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DEBATE TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM BEING CRITIQUED: \_\_\_\_\_

Positive aspects of opening statement:

How opening could have been improved:

Were the questions clear and focused? Did they challenge the opponent's position?

Did the debaters directly and persuasively respond to questions?

Positive aspects of closing statement:

How closing could have been improved:

How effective was the use of statistics?

How effective was the use of quotations?

What would have improved this debate?

What did these debaters do best?

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### Teacher Score Sheet

#### AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS DEBATE GRADE SHEET

DEBATE TOPIC: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM BEING GRADED: \_\_\_\_\_

QUALITY OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (40 percent of grade):

Opening statement:

Direct examination questions:

Responses to questions:

Closing statement:

Use of statistics:

Use of quotations:

GENERAL COMMENTS:

## Sample Syllabus 2

### **Ethel Wood**

Princeton High School  
Princeton, New Jersey

### **School Profile**

Princeton High School is located in suburban New Jersey about halfway between New York City and Philadelphia. Princeton is a unique university community that includes a wide array of people, including more students than usual with international backgrounds. Many students come from affluent families that encourage their children to do well in school, but a significant minority do not have adequate support at home. Although distinct social groups form, an important environmental characteristic is a high level of tolerance for various lifestyles and values.

Princeton High School is a public, four-year school with about 1,200 students, but the numbers are increasing. About 7–8 percent of the students are African American, and about 5 percent are Hispanic/Latino, although the numbers of the latter group are declining, probably as a result of stricter U.S. immigration policies of the last few years. Another 10 percent of the student body is Asian, with students from mainland China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, and India. A number of students are from Eastern Europe, and a few have families in Africa and the Middle East. A large proportion of parents have college educations, and a significant number have advanced degrees. More than 90 percent of the graduating seniors go on to college, and many are admitted to very selective schools.

### **Personal Philosophy**

Government and politics is a critical field of study for young people. Like many other schools, Princeton High School offers the class as a senior elective. A student's senior year is a perfect time to take this course since most seniors turn 18 during the course of the year and therefore reach the age of voter eligibility. Since a democracy functions best when its citizens understand how and why the government operates as it does, the AP United States Government and Politics course is a vital part of a student's education.

### **Class Profile**

The state of New Jersey does not require students to take a course in government and politics, and my schedule permits me to offer only one section of this class. For the past several years, the enrollment has been 30 students, the maximum number allowed in a class. Over the years the course has gained a reputation for being rigorous, so those who sign up tend to be academically talented, as well as particularly interested in government and politics. In the past, the course has often enrolled more males than females, but in recent years the gender ratio has been better balanced. During the school year 2003-04, the class was almost two-thirds girls. Most students are Caucasian, although a significant number of Asian Americans enroll in the course.

### **Course Overview**

AP U.S. Government and Politics is taught in the fall semester, and AP Comparative Government and Politics in the spring semester. Only about 18 weeks of instruction are available for U.S. Government and Politics.



## Chapter 3

### Text and Readings

Wilson, James Q., and John J. DiIulio Jr. 2002. *American Government: Institutions and Policies*. 7th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Supplemental readings are drawn from many sources (see Teacher Resources below).

### Course Planner

**Note:** Resources included below (other than the primary text) are listed in Teacher Resources later in this chapter.

Weeks 1–2: Constitutional Underpinnings

Reading: Wilson and DiIulio, chapters 1–3; Richard Zweigenhaft and G. William Domhoff, “Diversity in the Power Elite,” in *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*; *Federalist #10*

Weeks 3–5: Political Beliefs and Behaviors

Reading: Wilson and DiIulio, chapters 4–6; Alexis de Tocqueville, “Democracy in America,” in *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*

Weeks 6–8: Political Parties, Elections and Campaigns, Interest Groups, and the Mass Media

Reading: Wilson and DiIulio, chapters 7–10; Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, “Why Americans Still Don’t Vote,” in *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*

Weeks 9–13: Institutions of National Government: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts

Reading: Wilson and DiIulio, chapters 10–14; Irwin Gertzog, “Congressional Women,” in *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*; James Barber, “Presidential Character,” in *The Presidency, a Nexttext Reader*; Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “The Presidential Approval Rating,” in *The Presidency, a Nexttext Reader*

Week 14: Policymaking

Reading: “Public Policy,” in *American Government: A Complete Coursebook*

Weeks 15–17: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Reading: Wilson and DiIulio, chapters 17 and 18; Anthony Lewis, “Gideon’s Trumpet,” in *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*

Week 18: Review and Midterm Examination

### Teaching Strategies

The most commonly used teaching strategy is lecture/discussion, with ample opportunity for the latter. A video that follows the 2000 election campaign of George W. Bush, *Journeys with George*, is shown while studying elections and campaigns. Another commonly used technique is to administer surveys to students, compile the data, and compare them to national results. For example, I administer a questionnaire designed by the University of Michigan to measure political tolerance. The results almost always confirm trends cited in chapter 4 of Wilson and DiIulio’s *American Government*. I also make extensive use of charts, graphs, and cartoons to encourage student discussion of important issues and to develop their data analysis skills.

An Internet site, [www.politicalcompass.org](http://www.politicalcompass.org), is used to help students assess their leanings toward liberalism or conservatism. The students take the online questionnaire on computers brought into the classroom on a cart. Also, instructor-created review materials for all parts of the course are available at <http://athena.prs.k12.nj.us/users/ewood/> as they prepare for tests and essays.

## Student Evaluation

Students are evaluated in several ways:

1. Multiple-choice tests—Questions are garnered from past AP Exams and from *Multiple-Choice and Free-Response Questions in Preparation for the AP United States Government and Politics Examination* (see Teacher Resources).
2. Free-response questions—25-minute questions from the same sources as those listed for multiple-choice tests.
3. Special research project assigned in the middle part of the course—The subject depends on particular current events that occur during the semester. For example, during election years, students may be asked to evaluate the dynamics of one or more presidential debates.
4. Homework assignments—Study questions are assigned on readings. The frequency and intensity of these assignments varies with the maturity and seriousness of the class. Less conscientious students require closer homework supervision.

## Teacher Resources

*Journeys with George*. 2003. Alexandra Pelosi and Aaron Lubarsky, directors. Warner Home Video.

The Political Compass. [www.politicalcompass.org](http://www.politicalcompass.org).

Serow, Ann G., and Everett C. Ladd, Eds. 2003. *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*. 3rd ed. Baltimore: Lanahan Publishers.

Wood, Ethel. 2002. *American Government: A Complete Coursebook*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Wood, Ethel. American Government. Course Web site. <http://athena.prs.k12.nj.us/users/ewood/>

Wood, Ethel. 2002. *Multiple-Choice and Free-Response Questions in Preparation for the AP United States Government and Politics Examination*. 4th ed. Brooklyn, N.Y.: D&S Marketing Systems.

Wood Ethel, Ed. 2001. *The Presidency: A Nexttext Reader*. Boston: McDougal-Littell.

## Student Activity

### Public Opinion Polls

**Time required:** One 45-minute class period

**Objective:** To illustrate the challenge of conducting accurate political opinion polls

**Procedure:** Instruct students to get out a sheet of paper and pen. The point is to make them believe that you are giving a pop quiz without saying so. Tell them that you want them to answer this question: “What effect do you think the Mann Act will have on labor unions in this country?”

## Chapter 3

With a straight face, give them five minutes or so to answer the question. Do not give in to their quizzical looks but carry it off as a serious effort. Collect all papers, put them on your desk, and proceed with a short lecture about required conditions for conducting an accurate political opinion poll:

1. **Random sample.** Define and illustrate with examples of inaccurate polling results that have been based on bad samples. The most famous example is the 1948 election in which the pollsters predicted that Thomas Dewey would defeat Harry Truman for the presidency. The sample was based on random choice from phone books in a time when poor people did not have phones. Research this example, or another one of your choice, and provide as much detail as you have time for.
2. **Wording of questions.** “Loaded” questions that encourage people to respond in a particular way should be avoided. For example, a question that asks opinions about “welfare” will almost certainly result in different responses than a question that asks about “assistance to poor families.”
3. **Providing a “margin of error.”** Explain the importance of establishing a range of accuracy for the sample in reflecting the population measured.
4. **Avoiding putting the interviewee in a position of admitting ignorance about an issue.** Research shows that people will often make up answers to questions in order to “save face” if they don’t know anything about what the interviewer is asking. The results of a survey, then, will be inaccurate. One technique is to add a choice such as “I haven’t thought about it.”

The last point leads to the answers to the question about the Mann Act, which regulated the transportation of women across state lines for illegal purposes. The Mann Act had nothing to do with labor unions, yet if you set up the experiment seriously without giving students the option of pleading ignorance, you should get some pretty interesting made-up answers that “save face.” Some students will be honest, but many will make up creative answers, and some will even admit to not doing their homework. I always read the answers aloud (without giving names of course) and we have fun with it. However, the point is made that saving face is an important dynamic to control in eliciting honest answers to opinion polls.

# Sample Syllabus 3

**Christopher Hailey**  
Lafayette High School  
Williamsburg, Virginia

## School Profile

Lafayette High School, located on the Lower Peninsula of Tidewater Virginia, is a member of the Williamsburg–James City County School Division. James City County, America’s oldest, is among Virginia’s fastest growing counties. Williamsburg was founded in 1699 and is one of America’s first planned cities. While retaining its rural character, the area is quickly becoming suburban, with its own economic base.

The school is a comprehensive high school serving grades 9–12 with a total enrollment of approximately 1,450 students. The student population reflects the full diversity of the county and city, with 21.5 percent of students identified as African American/non-Hispanic/Latino, 2.6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.5 percent Hispanic/Latino, and .3 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native. Lafayette’s students come from families with incomes ranging from below the poverty line to highly affluent. Approximately 83 percent go on to some form of higher education or technical training. Despite the wide disparity in income and experience in the student population, Lafayette has developed a strong reputation as a community of learners.

## Personal Philosophy

Every year a few students say to me, “I didn’t realize that politics was so interesting.” If any course can generate interest and even excitement from students, it is one in government and politics. When you consider the enormous changes in American politics in just the last quarter century, it is clear that this course is a living, breathing organism that changes and evolves very rapidly. The changes have a direct and profound impact on our students as they become citizens and voters, and these changes are certainly not lost on them.

I am fortunate that the subject I teach is both vocation and avocation—I’d be reading all the same books and articles anyway. If I could boil the art of teaching down to a central platitude, it would be that you have to love what you teach and whom you teach. If teachers cannot show genuine concern for their students and enthusiasm for the subject, the chances of failure are high no matter what theoretical demands have been satisfied. Plan, engage, respond, and reflect. But have some fun while you’re at it.

## Class Profile

Lafayette High School operates on a 4 × 4 block schedule in which classes meet daily for 90 minutes over the course of 18 weeks. New classes are formed at the beginning of each semester. Five sections of AP United States Government and Politics and one section of AP Comparative Government and Politics are offered currently. Typically about one-third of the senior class takes AP U.S. Government and Politics, making it one of the two highest-enrollment AP classes in the school.

## Course Overview

AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level course available to highly motivated seniors. The curriculum consists of an introductory study of U.S. government that includes extensive reading

## Chapter 3

assignments, knowledge and use of research tools, production of a research project, problem solving, and evaluation of information sources. Units of study include:

- Foundations of Government
- Institutions of Government
- The Electoral System
- Political Behavior
- The Courts and Our Rights
- Public Policy

### **Text and Readings**

The primary text for the course is:

O'Connor, Karen, and Larry J. Sabato. 2002. *American Government: Continuity and Change*, 6th ed. New York: Longman.

Readings are assigned from:

Serow, Ann G., and Everett C. Ladd, Eds. 2003. *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*. 3rd ed. Baltimore: Lanahan Publishers.

## Course Planner

Unit	Chapter Readings (Primary Text)	Additional Readings (Lanahan refs. are article nos.)	Selected Activities
Unit 1: Foundations of Government 13 class days	Chapter 1: The Political Landscape Chapter 2: The Constitution Chapter 3: Federalism	John Locke, 2nd Treatise <i>Lanahan</i> 1, 4 <i>Federalist</i> #51 <i>Lanahan</i> 11 <i>Federalist</i> #39 <i>Lanahan</i> 20, 22	Bill of Rights analysis Film: <i>Revolution: Are We to Be a Nation?</i> Fun with Federalism!
Unit 2: Institutions of Government 17 class days	Chapter 7: Congress Chapter 8: The Presidency Chapter 9: The Bureaucracy	<i>Lanahan</i> 30, 31 <i>Lanahan</i> 32, 38 <i>Lanahan</i> 40	Film: <i>People and the Power Game</i> Video: <i>The West Wing</i>
Unit 3: The Electoral System 14 class days	Chapter 13: Voting and Elections Chapter 14: The Campaign Process Chapter 15: The Media	<i>Lanahan</i> 71, 77 <i>Lanahan</i> 74, 75 <i>Lanahan</i> 86, 87	Participation problem solving Film: <i>The War Room</i> Film: <i>People and the Power Game</i>
Unit 4: Political Behavior 14 class days	Chapter 11: Public Opinion and Political Socialization Chapter 12: Political Parties Chapter 16: Interest Groups	<i>Lanahan</i> 62, 63 <i>Lanahan</i> 81, 82 <i>Lanahan</i> 69, 70	Political beliefs inventory Party formation game Film: <i>People and the Power Game</i>
Unit 5: The Courts and Our Rights 16 class days	Chapter 10: The Judiciary Chapter 5: Civil Liberties Chapter 6: Civil Rights	<i>Lanahan</i> 45, 46, 47 <i>Lanahan</i> 50, 56 <i>Lanahan</i> 55	Role play: Choosing a justice Debate: Selected religion cases Film: <i>Eyes on the Prize</i> Affirmative action case study
Unit 6: Public Policy 11 class days	Chapter 17: Social Welfare Policy Chapter 18: Economic Policy Chapter 19: Foreign and Military Policy	<i>Lanahan</i> 91, 94 <i>Lanahan</i> 90 <i>Lanahan</i> 96	<i>The West Wing</i> role play Public policy group presentation

## Teaching Strategies

In addition to lectures, class activities in AP U.S. Government and Politics include the following:

- Group inquiry and discussion.
- Simulations—Students take on the roles of interest group members, presidential staff, press, and members of Congress in order to analyze a political problem for a presidential administration dramatized in an episode of *The West Wing*.

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- Paideia seminars—These are carefully crafted, directed discussions of textual material (essays from the *Lanahan Reader*, for example). Students are questioned in a Socratic style and respond and discuss with very limited input from the teacher. See Web links below for details.
- MicroCase computer exercises—*American Government: Using MicroCase ExplorIt* allows students to work with computer databases to draw conclusions about many aspects of American government and politics.
- Debate—Formal debates pitting two teams of three to four students against each other on questions of religious freedom as expressed in U.S. Supreme Court case law.
- Case studies—Students analyze Supreme Court cases as well as other textual material to try to determine how the current justices might vote on a particular issue.

### Student Evaluation

The breakdown of the grades for each nine weeks is as follows:

#### First nine weeks

Three tests	20 percent each
Summer work	15 percent
Quizzes and Internet exercises	15 percent
Participation	10 percent

#### Second nine weeks

Two tests	20 percent each
Paper	25 percent
Quizzes and Internet exercises	15 percent
Group presentation	10 percent
Participation	10 percent

Tests include forty 1-point multiple-choice questions and two 30-point free-response questions (chosen from three possibilities). Students are allowed a first and second choice on the multiple-choice and given half credit if the correct answer is their second choice. This encourages students to eliminate and narrow down their responses, a skill that is useful on the AP Exam. Scoring guidelines for free-response questions are similar to those used by Readers on the AP Exam. Quizzes are open note, based on study guides provided for each text chapter.

### Teacher Resources

Corbett, Michael, and Barbara Norrander. 2003. *American Government: Using MicroCase ExplorIt*. 8th ed. New York: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

CQ Editors. 1999. *Guide to Congress*. 4th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Dolan, Julie, and Marni Ezra. 2001. *CQ's Legislative Simulation: Government in Action*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

National Journal. Weekly magazine on politics and government. [www.nationaljournal.com](http://www.nationaljournal.com)

Nelson, Michael. 2002. *Guide to the Presidency*. 3rd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.



Savage, David G. 2004. *Guide to the U.S. Supreme Court*. 4th ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Stanley, Harold W., and Richard G. Niemi, Eds. 2003. *Vital Statistics on American Politics, 2003–2004*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

### Videos/DVDs

*Eyes on the Prize* and *Eyes on the Prize II*. Blackside, Inc. Broadcast on PBS in 1987 and 1990. PBS Video.

*Liberty! The American Revolution: “Are We to Be a Nation?”* 1997. PBS Video.

*The War Room*. 1994. D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus, directors. Universal Studios Home Video.

*The People and the Power Game*. 1996. Hedrick Smith Productions.

*The West Wing*. Episodes from several seasons are available from Warner Home Video.

### A Few Key Web Sites

Government Resources on the Web

[www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/govweb.html](http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/govweb.html)

Presidents of the United States

[www.presidentsusa.net](http://www.presidentsusa.net)

CongressLink

[www.congresslink.org](http://www.congresslink.org)

Oyez: U.S. Supreme Court Multimedia

[www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org)

Public Opinion Online

[www.pollingreport.com](http://www.pollingreport.com)

Larry J. Sabato’s Crystal Ball

[www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball](http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball)

Project Vote Smart

[www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)

The National Budget Simulation

[www.nathannewman.org/nbs](http://www.nathannewman.org/nbs)

The Atlantic Online

[www.theatlantic.com](http://www.theatlantic.com)

National Public Radio

[www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org)

The National Paideia Center

[www.paideia.org](http://www.paideia.org)

### Student Activities

#### Sample Study Questions

For Chapter 11 of the primary text:

1. What are some reasons that early polling was far less accurate than modern polls?
2. What has changed in recent years about the impact of media on political awareness?
3. Of the nine factors given as agents of political socialization on pages 404-15, rank the top three in your personal experience. That is, which three have had the greatest impact on the political values that you have? Why are these three so important?
4. What is the basic difference between the factors that influence political socialization (discussed on pages 404-16) and the ideas related to “How We Form Political Opinions” on pages 416-18? In other words, why are these two concepts discussed in different sections?
5. Is there any negative consequence to the lack of information most people (especially young people) have about government?
6. What are the most important factors in producing accurate poll results?
7. What are some ways that politicians use polls? Are there any negative consequences to the use of polls in politics?
8. Why are there limits to the accuracy and usefulness of even the most modern, scientific polls?

#### Sample Lesson: Activism or Restraint? A Case Study

The case you are going to analyze, *United States v. Morrison*, was decided in 2000 by the U.S. Supreme Court. In it, principles of federalism are the primary factors in the Court’s decision. Whether the decision in this case represents judicial activism or restraint is a point over which legal scholars disagree. Your job is to analyze this case based on principles discussed in class and found in *Lanahan Reader* articles 45 and 46. This study will require at least a full class period and possibly more. You will receive a quiz grade for your efforts. Part of your work will be in groups and part will be on your own.

##### Part 1 (in groups of two or three)

1. Define judicial activism.
2. Define judicial restraint.

##### Part 2 (still in groups)

Read part 1 of the Supreme Court’s opinion in *United States v. Morrison*. Develop a timeline of legal actions taken in the case prior to its arrival at the Supreme Court. (You may leave out the disciplinary elements at Virginia Tech.) At each stage, tell what decision was made and on what basis.

##### Part 3 (whole class)

What is the constitutional question at the center of this case?

- Actor
- Recipient of action
- Action
- Part of Constitution

Part 4 (individual)

1. Consider your reading of “Brennan v. Rehnquist” by Peter Irons [in the *Lanahan Reader*]. In one paragraph, discuss the decision you think William Rehnquist would make in this case. In a second paragraph, discuss the decision you think William Brennan would have made in this case.
2. Based on your reading of “Storm Center” by David O’Brien [in the *Lanahan Reader*], how do you think the current Supreme Court would have voted in this case? You should name each justice and tell how he or she would have voted. Summarize your reasoning.

Part 5 (whole class)

Discuss the syllabus of the court’s decision. Does their reasoning represent activism or restraint?

**Sample Lesson: The Two-Party System: A Discussion of Alternatives**

*Note to teacher:* This lesson comes at the end of a chapter study of the two-party system. Each of the alternative party systems has been discussed prior to the activity. The same activity might be used in an AP Comparative Government and Politics course.

You have come together as delegates to a national convention whose aim is to discuss potential alternatives to the two-party system. Each group will represent one of the possible approaches to the problem of party politics. The six choices (and there may be others) are:

- Option 1      Our current system of two parties, single-member districts, separation of powers, and a presidential system.
- Option 2      Any formal party structure would be illegal. Candidates for office would be independent and not have party backing, party funding, party organization, or the benefit of any of the current systems of nomination.
- Option 3      A Congress elected proportionally by region rather than by state (to ensure that no state is left with a single member). Each region would consist of a state or group of states that would send representatives in the same proportion as their region’s vote. You might have 30 representatives from a region; if 60 percent of the votes were for Republicans, they would get 60 percent of the seats (18 seats). Smaller parties would be able to win seats.
- Option 4      A two-party parliamentary system in which the majority party forms a government headed by party leaders. As in Great Britain, the leader of the majority party would become the chief executive, and other elective leaders would get cabinet posts. If no party gets a majority of the seats, the largest party would have to find a smaller party with which to form a ruling coalition.
- Option 5      A one-party system. Dissent within the party structure is possible, but organized opposition from outside the party is illegal.
- Option 6      Half the seats would be from single-member districts as we have now. The other half would be allotted proportionally, based on the percentage of the vote for each party. So, one side of your ballot would ask you to vote for a particular candidate in your district, and the other side would ask you to vote for a party. This is sometimes called a mixed electoral system.

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First, list three key weaknesses of the current system.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Next, decide what impact your proposal would have on the following concerns:

1. Diversity of opinion
2. Passage of a coherent legislative plan (a whole set of policies, not a single one)
3. Passage of a single important piece of legislation such as social security reform
4. Election campaigns
5. The impact of individual voters on the governmental process
6. The importance of campaign funds in running a campaign

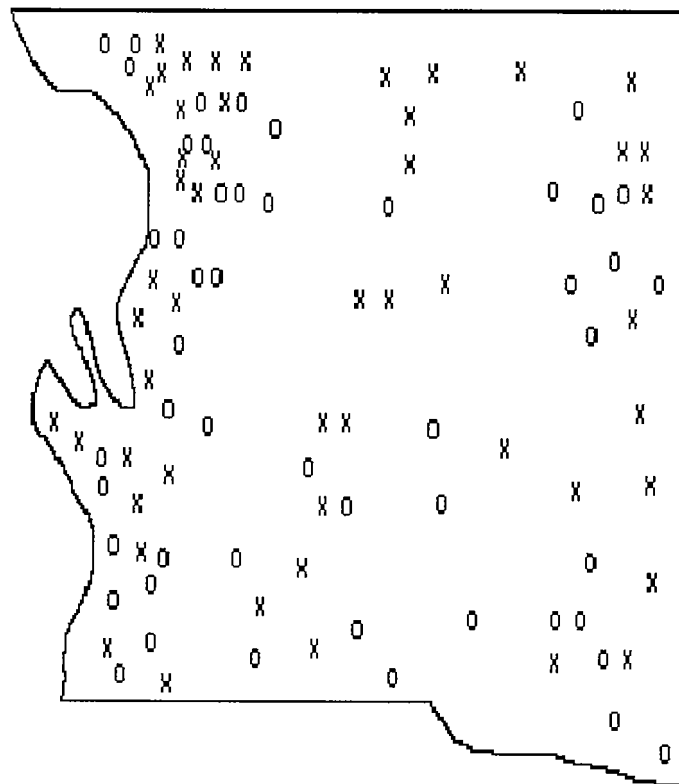
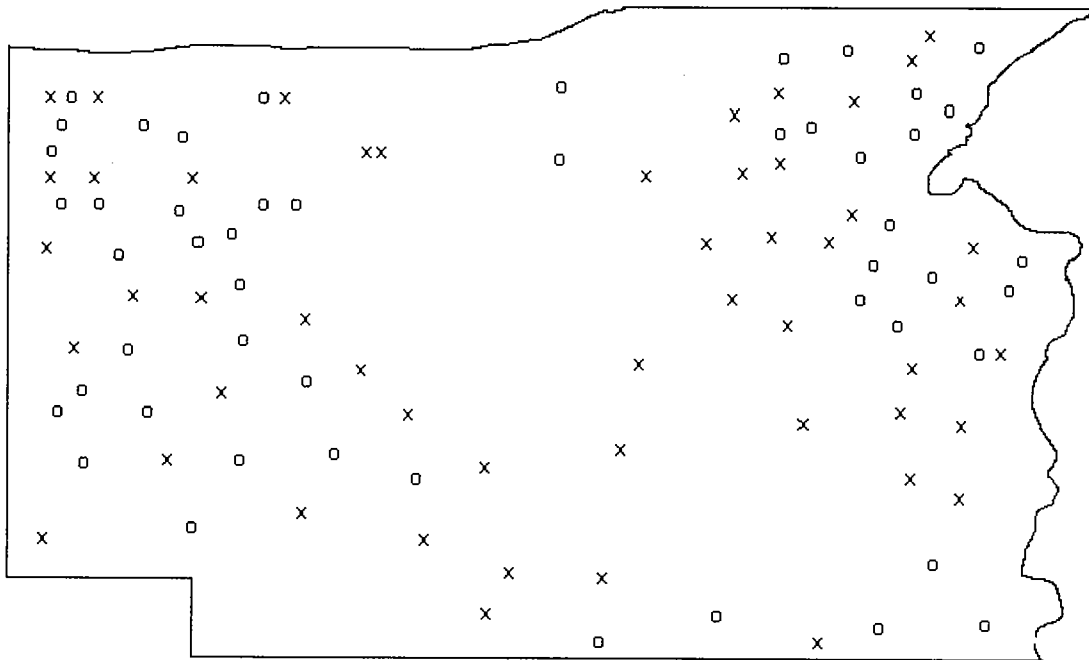
Finally, develop an oral argument in favor of the system you propose. Recognize possible criticisms but counter them with evidence in your favor. Choose two people in your group to present to the class. Choose two others to be researchers and one person to act as recorder. You will have 5–10 minutes to present your proposal to the class and take any questions. Be ready to question (grill? dissect? interrogate?) the other groups.

### **Gerrymandering Simulation**

Here's an easy way to try your hand at gerrymandering a state into legislative districts. All you need is a blank map of two make-believe states. Each state has 50 Xs and 50 Os that can represent any party you choose. Draw lines that encompass 10 sets of any 10 of the letters, thus creating 10 legislative districts. Try making one of the maps as balanced as you can, creating as many 5–5 districts as possible or an even number of X majority and O majority districts. Then try to create as many X majority or O majority districts as you can on the other. You'll get extra credit if you can make as many as 8 of the 10 favor one party.

### **Questions for Group Discussion**

1. What are some techniques you used to create as many Xs or Os as possible?
2. Which of your maps has more compact geographic areas? What difference might that make to voters? To candidates?
3. In your opinion, who should have the power to draw legislative districts? State legislatures? Judges? Bureaucracies? Independent commissions? Explain your answer.



# Creating a Campaign Web Site

## Introduction

Your job is to create a Web site for a fictional candidate for Congress. You will have a choice of five actual congressional districts in which to run. Your candidate can be an incumbent or a challenger, Democrat or Republican, in a safe or marginal district. Whatever the case, the candidate will be presenting himself or herself to the public by way of the Internet. You will be using *FrontPage Express* or Microsoft *Publisher* to create the site in the computer lab, but you must do some of your background work at home.

## Sources of Information

You will be provided with background data from the *National Journal* on five congressional districts, including geography, demographics, economic information, and recent election results. With that background in mind, you will give your candidate a set of beliefs, a set of issue positions, and maybe even a personal history and personality. Other than the information provided, all you need is a few real candidate sites to use for inspiration and a little background knowledge about some political issues.

## Required Elements

Each site must include certain elements, starting with a home page linked to subpages with the following information:

- A fictional biography of the candidate.
- A picture of the candidate, possibly with family. You can use a digital picture of yourself or someone else but not something from the Internet.
- A picture or two representing some part of your district. This may be copied and pasted from Internet sources about the area of the country you are representing.
- A general statement from the candidate about his or her political values, sense of family, love for America, taste for apple pie, etc.
- A set of at least five specific issue positions stated in short paragraphs. Here you may need to do a small amount of digging to make sure your statements are both effective and accurate.

## Key Terms

exit polls  
margin of error  
political ideology  
political socialization  
public opinion  
public opinion polls  
push polls  
random sampling  
sampling error  
stratified sampling  
straw polls  
tracking polls

## Sample Syllabus 4

**Kerry L. Haynie**

Teaching Assistants: Niambi Carter, Monique Lyle, Owen Yeates  
Duke University  
Durham, North Carolina

### School Profile

Duke University is a Category I Research University with a student enrollment of 12,800. Undergraduates make up slightly more than half of the student population. A total of 31 percent of the undergraduates are members of a historically underrepresented racial minority group, and 6 percent are from foreign countries. There are 1,554 tenured or tenure-track professors on the faculty. Public policy, biology, economics, and political science are the most popular majors. AP Exam grades of 4 or 5 are recorded on students' permanent transcripts. Students may use these grades to place into higher-level courses and to satisfy departmental major and minor requirements to the extent allowed by individual departments.

### Department Philosophy

The Duke Department of Political Science describes undergraduate education as a historic strength in the department. The curriculum develops both an understanding of politics and political life and an ability to analyze and critically evaluate political developments from both an observational and theoretical standpoint.

### Personal Philosophy

I approach the study of government and politics from the point of view that “politics” is mostly about conflict. That is, politics occurs because people disagree over what they want their community and society to be and to do. The variety of people and interests that exist in our society makes conflicts a virtual certainty. The main role of government, then, is to manage the various conflicts in society. Although solving conflict is often the goal, governments cannot always accomplish this goal. Thus conflict management is sometimes all that we can hope for.

### Course Profile

This course is a semester-long, introductory-level political science course that is taken by a majority of political science majors. The course is also popular among majors in related disciplines like history, sociology, public policy, and economics. Although the course is open to all undergraduates, freshmen and sophomores comprise more than 80 percent of the enrollment in any given semester. The average enrollment for the course is 100 students. There are two 50-minute lectures and one 50-minute discussion session each week.

### Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for the course.

### Course Overview

This is an introductory course designed to explain the basic structures, processes, and dilemmas of the American political system. Three broad sets of recurring issues serve as the threads that tie several



## Chapter 3

seemingly disparate topics into a coherent course. First, the question of who is and is not a citizen has been a source of conflict throughout American history and in many ways remains unanswered today. Various attempts to definitively answer this question have shaped American government and political thought in interesting and important ways. The second set of issues concerns American values and beliefs. We examine how shared American values and those that are the sources of major political and social conflict affect the design and substance of U.S. politics. The third set of issues has to do with the relationships between the federal government and the various state and local governments. Federalism and dual sovereignty are distinctive features of the U.S. political system and have been and continue to be the sources of controversies and conflicts regarding the control over and responsibility for various domestic programs and policies.

### Required Texts

Jacobson, Gary C., and Samuel Kernell. 2004. *The Logic of American Politics in Wartime: Lessons from the Bush Administration*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Kernell, Samuel, and Gary C. Jacobson. 2003. *The Logic of American Politics*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Kernell, Samuel, and Steven S. Smith, eds. 2004. *Principles and Practice of American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. 2nd ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

These three texts come as a single package and are available at the Duke University Bookstore.

### Course Planner

Jan. 7	Introductions and Expectations
Jan. 12	Theoretical Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 1</li><li>• “The Declaration of Independence” (Kernell and Jacobson, appendix 1)</li><li>• Mancur Olson, “The Logic of Collective Action” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 1-1)</li><li>• Robert Putnam, “The Prosperous Community: Social Capital and Public Life” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 1-4)</li></ul>
Jan. 14–21	Politics, Conflict, and the Constitution <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 2</li><li>• U.S. Constitution (Kernell and Jacobson, appendix 2)</li><li>• John Roche, “The Founding Fathers: A Reform Caucus in Action” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 2-1)</li></ul>
<b>Jan. 19</b>	<b>***M. L. King Jr. Holiday. No Class***</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• James Madison, “Federalist No. 10” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 2-2)</li><li>• James Madison, “Federalist No. 51” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 2-3)</li><li>• James MacGregor Burns, “Showdown: The Election of 1800” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 2-4)</li></ul>
Jan. 26–28	Demographics and American Political Culture No readings

- Feb. 2           Federalism
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 3
  - James Buchanan, “Federalism as an Ideal Political Order and an Objective For Constitutional Reform” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 3-1)
  - Donald Kettl, “Federalism: Battles on the Front Lines of Public Policy” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 3-2)
  - Matthew Wald, “Clean-Air Battlefield” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 3-3)
- Feb. 4–9       Race, Gender, and Civil Rights
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 4
  - Zoltan Hajnal and Elisabeth Gerber, “Minority Rights in Direct Democracy” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 4-1)
  - Martha Daugherty, “Women and the Constitution: Where We Are at the End of the Century” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 4-3)
- Feb. 11–16   Civil Liberties
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 5
  - *Miranda v. Arizona* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 5-3)
  - *Roe v. Wade* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 5-4)
  - Jacobson and Kernell, pp. 29–37
  - Michael Scardaville and Robert Levy, “Competing Views of Civil Rights and the War Against Terrorism” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 5-2)
- Feb. 18       EXAM #1**
- Political Institutions and American Politics**
- Feb. 23–25   Congress
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 6
  - Richard Fenno, “The Senate in Bicameral Perspective” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 6-1)
  - David Mayhew, excerpt from *Congress: The Electoral Connection* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 6-2)
  - Steven Smith, “Congressional Trends” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 6-3)
  - Jacobson and Kernell, pp. 9–19
- Mar. 1–3       The Presidency
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 7
  - Richard Neustadt, excerpt from *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 7-1)
  - Samuel Kernell, excerpt from *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 7-2)
  - Jacobson and Kernell, pp. 1–9
- Mar. 8–12    SPRING BREAK**
- Mar. 15–17   The Federal Judiciary and Public Law
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 9
  - Lee Epstein and Jack Knight, excerpt from *The Choices Justices Make* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 9-1)
  - Simon Lazarus, “The Most Dangerous Branch?” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 9-2)
  - Deborah Sontag, “The Power of the Fourth” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 9-4)

## Chapter 3

- Mar. 22 The Bureaucracy
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 8
  - James Q. Wilson, excerpt from *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 8-1)
  - Terry Moe, “The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 8-2)
  - Jacobson and Kernell, pp. 19–29

Mar. 24 EXAM #2

### Individuals, Groups, and Political Behavior

- Mar. 29 Public Opinion
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 10
  - Herbert Asher, “Analyzing and Interpreting the Polls” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 10-1)
  - James Stimson, Michael MacKuen, and Robert Erikson, “Dynamic Representation” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 10-2)
- Mar. 31–Apr. 5 Voting, Campaigns, and Elections
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 11
  - Samuel Popkin, excerpt from *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 11-1)
  - Gary Jacobson, “Party Polarization in National Politics: The Electoral Connection” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 11-3)
- Apr. 7 Political Parties
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 12
  - John Aldrich, excerpt from *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Kernell and Smith, chapter 12-1)
  - Larry Bartels, “Partisanship and Voting Behavior” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 12-2)
  - L. Sandy Maisel, “American Political Parties, Still Central to a Functioning Democracy?” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 12-3)
- Apr. 12 Interest Groups
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 13
  - E. E. Schattschneider, “The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 13-1)
  - John Wright, “The Evolution of Interest Groups” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 13-2)
  - Kenneth Godwin and Barry Sheldon, “What Corporations Really Want From Government” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 13-3)
- Apr. 14 Mass Media and Politics
- Kernell and Jacobson, chapter 14
  - Michael Schudson, “Is Journalism Hopelessly Cynical?” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 14-1)
  - Thomas Edsall, “The People and the Press: Whose Views Shape the News?” (Kernell and Smith, chapter 14-2)
  - Jacobson and Kernell, pp. 37–46
- Apr. 19 Catch-up day

Apr. 21            Conclusions

Apr. 27            EXAM #3 will be given during the final exam slot for this course.

## Student Evaluation

Final course grades are calculated based on the following:

- three one-hour exams (25 percent each)
- four short-response papers and attendance/participation (25 percent combined)

Exams consist of short-essay and multiple-choice questions.

## Requirements

Attendance is required and recorded for both lecture and small-group meetings. More than two absences from lectures results in the automatic lowering of a student's grade. Absences from discussion sections and exams must be excused with a note from the dean of students. Participation is strongly encouraged in lecture discussions and is required in discussion sections.

## Honor Code

The Duke University Code of Academic Integrity (honor code) is taken seriously in my classes. Violations or suspected violations are reported to the proper authorities. Academic dishonesty includes signing someone else's name on attendance sheets, signing the attendance sheet and not attending class, and both the giving and the receiving of improper assistance on examinations and other graded work. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with what constitutes plagiarism.

## Student Activities

### Response Paper #1

Many scholars and political observers have argued that at times in American history there have been large gaps between the ideals embodied in Americans' core values and the practices of American government. That is, what we say we believe has often been inconsistent with and in conflict with what we actually have done, especially with regard to women, African Americans, and other racial or ethnic minorities. Professor Haynie, in his lecture, had a different view of these so-called gaps and inconsistencies. He suggested that rather than representing gaps in what we say and what we do, the mistreatment of African Americans, Native Americans, and women (among others) actually reflects fundamental American values.

Write a one- to two-page paper in response to the following set of questions:

- Do you agree more with Professor Haynie's position or the conventional wisdom as stated in the first sentence above? Why or why not? You should provide or reference one piece of evidence that can be used to support Haynie's position **and** one piece of evidence that supports the conventional wisdom.
- Do you agree that American government and politics has a fundamental flaw as described by Professor Haynie? Why or why not?

*Your paper should be thoughtful, logical, and concise. You must address each of the questions asked.*

## Chapter 3

### Response Paper #2

Write a one- to two-page paper in response to the following set of questions:

In many ways, federal courts are expected to be apolitical institutions.

- a. In what ways are federal courts and federal court judges/justices shielded from political pressure?
- b. In what ways are they vulnerable to political pressure? Are the federal courts an appropriate place for pressure politics? Why or why not?

### Response Paper #3

Some observers believe that interest groups in America are slowly eroding democracy. That is, they argue that most interest groups are interested only in personal or small group gains and not in the national interest. These critics point out that countries such as Japan and Germany have very few interest groups and thus are able to make decisions more quickly with a view toward broader public interests.

- a. What arguments can you think of in favor of our interest-group driven (pluralist) system?
- b. Discuss two ways in which interest groups might impede democracy.
- c. Which system do you prefer: one with many groups or one with few? Why?

### Response Paper #4

Go to the following Web site: [www.politopia.com/index.htm](http://www.politopia.com/index.htm). Read the “Introduction” link and take the quiz. Write a two-page essay that addresses each of the following questions:

- a. Were you surprised at your rating? Why or why not?
- b. What do you think is the rating of most of the other students in your section? Why?
- c. What do you think is the rating of your teaching assistant? Your professor? Why?
- d. Numerous academic studies have concluded that one’s family has a major influence on one’s political beliefs, attitudes, and values. Using a couple of concrete examples, briefly discuss how you think that your family has helped shape your political ideology.
- e. How has coming to college changed or shaped your political attitudes, values, and/or ideology?

# Chapter 4

## The AP Exam in United States Government and Politics

### Exam Format

The AP United States Government and Politics Exam has two sections. In the first section, students have 45 minutes to answer 60 multiple-choice questions. In the second section, students have 100 minutes to complete four free-response questions. Each section counts for half of the overall score.

### Multiple-Choice Section

AP U.S. Government and Politics multiple-choice questions have five options (labeled A through E) from which students choose. When the exam is scored, students earn one point for each correct answer, minus a quarter point for each incorrect answer. No points are added or subtracted for a blank answer. Since there are 60 questions, the highest possible score on the multiple-choice section is 60; that is, if a student gives 40 correct answers and 20 incorrect answers, his or her score will be  $40 - (20 \times 0.25)$ , or 35. If the 20 incorrect answers had been left blank, the score would have been 40. This ensures that students do not benefit from random guessing. Teachers may wish to use a similar grading scheme during the school year to demonstrate to students the impact of guessing on the exam.

The multiple-choice section is challenging because most of the questions are not simple definitions or identification of facts but rather require students to apply their knowledge. It is likely, for example, that students will have several multiple-choice questions that are based on table interpretation. Students will be asked to interpret the data presented and may need to use outside knowledge to explain what they see.

### Free-Response Section

Students will have 100 uninterrupted minutes to answer four questions on the free-response section of the exam. They are encouraged to budget their time on their own, though the suggested time is 25 minutes per question. The four free-response questions are all weighted equally in determining half of the student's overall score. Some required skills, such as writing answers to free-response questions (discussed below), are unique to this exam. You will want to prepare students for success on this exam, but you should also consider teaching additional skills that will help students in the future. Although I focus primarily on test-taking skills and strategies in this chapter, your course should not exclude the development of other useful skills.

### Preparing Students

How much time should be spent with students reviewing for the AP Exam? The answer to this will depend on whether you are teaching the course in one semester or one year. I suggest that students review outside

## Chapter 4

of class in a semester course and review for approximately three weeks at the end of the year in a yearlong course. Reviews should include some lectures (either teacher- or student-centered) and practice tests from Released Exams. (In a semester class, students can complete the tests outside of class; in a yearlong course, they can complete them in class.) In addition to review, all students should take a cumulative exam in class that contains both multiple-choice and free-response questions similar to the ones on the AP Exam. When my students study for the cumulative exam I give in class right before the actual AP Exam, they have studied for the AP Exam as well.

One common mistake that new AP teachers may make is not accounting for the time that they will lose during the AP Exam period if their students are taking other AP Exams. For example, the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam is traditionally given during the second week of AP Exams (though this is subject to change on an annual basis). Students taking other exams during the first week of the AP Exam period will be excused from your class. It may be helpful for you to take a survey of your students to see how many you will lose during that first week and to plan accordingly.

To prepare students for the multiple-choice section of the exam, I encourage you to give several multiple-choice tests during the year or semester. When you write your tests, try to mimic the type of multiple-choice questions that are found on the AP Exam. Include questions that require students to choose the “best” answer, as well as questions based on charts or graphs. I also encourage you to go over the difficult items from your tests in class, so that students will fully understand any questions that they missed.

I always explain to my students the formula for scoring the multiple-choice section of the exam (see above), and then I tell them that this system is similar to the scoring of the SAT Reasoning Test™. Since my students have experience with the SAT®, they are able to quickly understand the formula used on the AP US. Government and Politics Exam. It is important that you discuss when it makes sense to leave a question blank: If students cannot eliminate any of the answer choices as incorrect, they should not try to answer the question. Still, I encourage my students not to leave more than one or two questions blank; otherwise they are jeopardizing their chances of earning points.

I strongly recommend that you have your students take Released Exams in a timed setting as practice tests prior to the AP Exam and prior to the cumulative test they take in your class. Several Released Exams can be ordered from the College Board Store. Students will be preparing not only for the types of questions asked on the AP Exam but also for its time constraints. Every year I have one or two students who have difficulty finishing the multiple-choice section in the allotted amount of time, and I work with those students on pacing.

In my yearlong course, I give a review lecture that takes two to three 90-minute class periods. As I review, I ask students to review in groups the free-response questions that they have answered during the year. After this they take at least two multiple-choice sections of Released Exams in class for practice, and then they take one that counts for a grade.

I also dedicate one 90-minute period prior to the AP Exam for students to answer four free-response questions. These are graded primarily in a peer review session that is held later. The review, practice tests, and cumulative test take about three weeks to complete.



### Preparing for the Multiple-Choice Section

What helped me most on the multiple-choice section of the exam was organizing my notes and boiling the material down to the important points. I found that when I had a clear page or two of notes that I could look over easily, I could commit more to memory. It let me get the facts without having to leaf through pages and pages of information.

I enjoyed taking AP U.S. Government and Politics because it can be applied directly to the real world. I think all citizens should have working knowledge of their government in order to understand decisions that will impact their everyday lives.

—Kyle O'Connor, Class of 2004,  
Herndon High School,  
Herndon, Virginia

### Taking Practice Tests

What helped me most on the multiple-choice section of the exam was pretty much the same as what helped on the free-response section—taking practice tests that were from real AP Exams. In class when we graded the tests, our teacher would go over each question and help us figure out why some of the choices that seemed to be correct weren't, and why.

—Veeda Ranjber, Class of 2004,  
Herndon High School,  
Herndon, Virginia

## Writing Skills Needed for the Free-Response Section

Before you begin considering how to prepare your students for the free-response section of the exam, you should take a look at some previously asked free-response questions. These are available on AP Central under “Exam Questions.” You will notice that these questions are very specific in what they require students to do. In many, the main idea or thesis is presented to the student in the question, and students are required to either explain or support the main idea with evidence.

It is important for students to understand that they must clearly identify what the question asks, focus on developing a specific and well-supported response, and write their response clearly and completely. When appropriate, they should use specific examples for support.

Training your students to address the prompt cannot be emphasized enough. When I initially introduce this idea to my students, it seems like common sense to them—until we review numerous free-response questions in class and discuss what type of response is required in each one. It may be useful for you to have students compare similar free-response questions so that they can see what the differences are. Consider the following two questions, the first from the 1998 U.S. Government and Politics Exam and the second from the 2002 exam:

1. Elections in the United States are characterized by low voter turnout. Discuss two demographic obstacles associated with nonvoting and three institutional obstacles associated with nonvoting.



## Chapter 4

2. In the last half of the twentieth century, voter turnout in federal elections has declined. During the same period, voter turnout has been higher in presidential elections than in midterm elections.
  - a. Identify two factors that have contributed to the overall decline in turnout in federal elections and explain how each factor has contributed to the overall decline.
  - b. Identify and explain two reasons why voter turnout has been higher in presidential elections than in midterm elections.

These two free-response questions are similar in that both are about voter turnout. The important difference between the two is that the first asks students to discuss obstacles to voter turnout while the second asks students to identify factors that have contributed to the overall decline in voter turnout. As a result, these questions have different factually correct answers. Obstacles that are correct for the first question include voter registration requirements, absentee ballot requirements, and single-day Tuesday voting, and answers for the second question include expansion of suffrage and an increasingly apathetic electorate. Presenting these two questions along with sample answers provides an opportunity for teachers to emphasize how important it is for students to read the question carefully and answer exactly what is asked. I gave the first question to students on a chapter test and the second on a final exam. Many students were surprised to learn that the correct answer for question one was not a correct answer for the second question. This reinforced the necessity of addressing the prompt.

You can use released free-response questions when preparing your own tests so students can practice responding to the types and level of difficulty of questions asked. However, your overall preparation should focus on the Course Description; if this directs your planning, students will be prepared for the AP Exam. Since exam questions can cover any of the content areas of the course, do not attempt to guess what questions will be included on the free-response section. It is impossible to guess what will be asked—you do students a disservice if you lead them to expect that you or they can. They are much better off understanding that everything on the exam is taken from the Course Description. Of course, there are only so many topics that can be covered by free-response questions, so looking through as many past question prompts as possible will give you good ideas about which general areas to focus on.

### Free-Response Question Tasks

The first priority for students is to understand exactly what tasks a question is asking them to perform. Students should then focus on writing a clear, concise, and well-supported response. When appropriate, they should provide examples to support their responses.

To this end, it is critical that students understand the instructions and action verbs that are often used on the AP Exam. Students may be asked to list, discuss, describe, explain, analyze, and so on. These are not all identical tasks. Furthermore, the question may call for more than one task, such as both identify and explain. Students should realize that some of the tasks are more complex than others. For example, composing a list may not even require a complete sentence, but students, to adequately explain some phenomena, may need to write several paragraphs, including well-developed supporting examples. The following list of commonly used action verbs will help students understand the exact tasks that they will be required to perform.

- **List/Identify.** Listing or identifying is a task that requires no more than a simple enumeration of some factors or characteristics. A list does not require any causal explanations. For example, a student might be asked to list or identify three characteristics presidents consider when making appointments. Such a list, which could be bulleted or numbered, might include party, race, gender, etc.

## The AP Exam in United States Government and Politics

- **Define.** A definition requires a student to provide a meaning for a word or concept. Examples may help to demonstrate understanding of the definition. Students may be instructed to note the term’s significance as part of the definition.
- **Describe.** A description involves providing a depiction or portrayal of a phenomenon or its most significant characteristics. Descriptions most often address “what” questions. For example, if students are asked to describe reasons for the decline in voter turnout, they must do more than simply list facts—they must actually describe the reasons. Students may explain that the expansion of suffrage led to a decline in overall voter turnout because once voting was made available to more individuals, the overall percentage of those voting declined.
- **Discuss.** Discussions generally require that students explore relationships between different concepts or phenomena. Identifying, describing, and explaining could be required tasks involved in writing a satisfactory discussion.
- **Explain.** An explanation involves the exploration of possible causal relationships. When providing explanations, students should identify and discuss logical connections or causal patterns that exist between or among various political phenomena.
- **Compare/Contrast.** This task requires students to make specific links between two or more concepts.
- **Evaluate/Assess.** An evaluation or assessment involves considering how well something meets a certain standard and as such generally requires a thesis. It is important to identify the criteria used in the evaluation. If no criteria are explicitly given in the question, students should take care to clearly identify the ones that they choose to employ. Specific examples may be applied to the criteria to support the student’s thesis. Evaluation or assessment requires explicit connections between the thesis or argument and the supporting evidence.
- **Analyze.** This task usually requires separating a phenomenon into its component parts or characteristics as a way of understanding the whole. An analysis should yield explicit conclusions that are explained or supported by specific evidence or well-reasoned arguments.

### Focus on Key Concepts

When you review with your students, remind them of specific concepts and vocabulary. You can present your own lists or review the lists of terms at the end of chapters in the textbook. Ask students to describe what these concepts are and what the terms mean. If you hear vague explanations of ideas like “separation of powers” or ambiguous definitions of terms like “habeas corpus,” discuss the deficiencies in memory or understanding.

Reorganize what your students know so they can practice thinking about it from a fresh angle. They are going to be confronted with questions on the AP Exam that you didn’t write and that are not specific to their textbook. They need to stay intellectually agile to respond appropriately. If you taught the course primarily through a structural approach (e.g., institutions and organizations), review with an emphasis on process (e.g., policymaking). If you taught the course with only passing reference to developments before 1980, look more at historical antecedents during review.

—Ken Wedding, Retired AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Hopkins High School,  
Minnetonka, Minnesota

# Exam Administration

AP Exams are administered worldwide in May. To avoid any conflict of interest, the actual administration of the exams is performed by a school's AP Coordinator and designated proctors. However, in the months leading up to the exams, AP teachers can assist Coordinators with tasks such as the collection of exam fees from students. Teachers can help their students by familiarizing them with the format and timing of the exam.

Administration is fairly uniform across the exams; specific information regarding exam administration is provided to the AP Coordinators. It is important that all the administration requirements be met exactly as directed in the exam materials.

Your students will have a grueling day if they take both the AP U.S. Government and Politics and AP Comparative Government and Politics Exams, which are usually scheduled on the same day (one in the morning, one in the afternoon). They should have access to food and beverages between the two exams. Since students may have two AP Exams scheduled for the same time, make-up exams are provided. *In no event can schools switch or manipulate test days or times.*

There are, however, contingency plans for emergencies. One year, for example, one of my most outstanding students showed up the day of the exam with his right arm in a sling. He had been injured in a lacrosse game the previous night. I was able to have my guidance department arrange for him to dictate the exam to a counselor. Also, students who are ill on the day of the exam or have other extenuating circumstances may be able to arrange to take the make-up exam. See your school's AP Coordinator about what to do when such problems arise and for any additional details regarding administering the exam.

## After the Exam

### Debriefing Students

When the exam is over, teachers want to know how their students did, and many students want to discuss the test. However, in doing so you must keep specific restrictions in mind.

Begin any post-exam discussion by reminding students of their agreement not to disclose specific multiple-choice questions. Students sign a statement to that effect on their multiple-choice answer sheets before they take an AP Exam. The focus should be on a general discussion of topics on the exam rather than on individual questions. It is perfectly appropriate to ask students how well the course prepared them for topics X, Y, or Z and to discuss areas where students felt especially prepared or unprepared. However, avoid asking questions that would lead students to discuss actual exam questions.

The AP Program reuses a set of multiple-choice “equating” questions each year. These come from a previous AP Exam—not necessarily from the most recent one. (For more detail about the process, see the “Exams” section on AP Central.) If exam questions are disclosed, the AP Program can no longer use those questions in the future. This creates a potential threat to the quality of the scoring process and the fairness and reliability of AP grades.

Students who disclose multiple-choice questions after the exam risk having their exam grades canceled if their activities are discovered. Teachers who share reconstructed multiple-choice questions risk being the targets of legal action by the College Board, and schools may be barred from administering AP Exams. So be very careful when discussing these questions after the exam.

The free-response questions are a different matter—those questions are posted on AP Central and the student section of the College Board Web site 48 hours after the exam, and you can discuss them as much as you like once they are made public. In fact, the free-response questions often become the topic of much conversation on the AP electronic discussion groups. However, free-response questions from exams administered in the late-testing period are not released and may never be discussed or shared.

### Classroom Activities

Many teachers are worried about what to do *after* the AP Exam. Almost every year on the AP electronic discussion group there are multiple suggestions on this topic. It seems to be a good time for some innovative, unusual activities.

What you and your class do depends on how much time remains in the school year and what your particular school system requires as an exam policy. This is an opportunity to show movies that you did not have time for earlier in the school year. Some teachers do Internet activities using a set of specific sites and questions for each student. Other instructors have students engage in several days of intensive in-class debates on controversial subjects. In some systems, state and local government is a required topic; time after the AP Exam can be used to study such state-mandated topics.

I have about one month after the AP Exam, and I use the time to teach lessons mandated by my county and to show a movie; in addition, I usually ask students to complete a project. In recent years I have asked each student to make his or her own Web site that contains links to government institutions, the student's representatives at the state and federal levels, and an analysis of upcoming elections. I allow students to add creative and sentimental anecdotes about their high school experience. Students present their sites on the last day of class.

### Exam Scoring

When students have completed the exam, the AP Coordinator returns the testing materials to ETS, which is contracted by the College Board to score the AP Exams. The multiple-choice section of the exam is machine scored, but the free-response section is scored by Exam Readers in a single session held each June.

Each AP subject has a Chief Reader, a college faculty member with significant substantive expertise in the particular AP subject; this person is responsible for the accurate, reliable, and timely scoring of the exam. Other Readers for AP U.S. Government and Politics include high school teachers who teach the course and college faculty who teach an introductory U.S. government and politics or political science course. The size of the Reading varies with the number of exams to be scored. In recent years, the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam has been scored at the same time and site as the AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam.

When writing the free-response questions, the U.S. Government and Politics Development Committee suggests a possible answer as well as a possible scoring scale for each question. Prior to the AP Reading, a group of experienced Readers (the Chief Reader, Exam Leaders, and Question Leaders) arrive at the Reading site and begin to randomly read student samples, getting a sense of the question as answered by the students. This group then prepares scoring guidelines that outline each score point and what type of response will qualify for a particular score. Examples of past scoring guidelines can be found online at the AP U.S. Government and Politics Course Home Page on AP Central, or at one-day workshops and summer institutes. (During your course, students will benefit from reviewing past scoring guidelines and by practicing scoring exam questions themselves.)

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The Table Leaders, who are also experienced Readers, are next to arrive at the Reading. Each Table Leader is assigned one question, and over the course of two days he or she learns the scoring guidelines and begins to apply them to student samples. When the rest of the Readers arrive, the Table Leaders are responsible for training a table of 6 to 10 Readers. Throughout the course of the Reading, each Reader is carefully monitored to ensure that all responses are scored reliably and accurately. Table Leaders double-check the scores Readers are assigning and use computer-generated data to make certain that each Reader is consistent throughout the weeklong scoring process.

The Chief Reader reviews exam results and sets score numbers that correspond to various grades. These numbers vary from year to year based on the difficulty of the exam, comparison to previous exam grades, and the overall performance of the students on the current exam. As noted earlier in this chapter, 50 percent of the score is based on the multiple-choice section and 50 percent on the free-response section. Perfect exams are not expected, and the raw scores required for earning a final grade of 5 on the exam vary from year to year. A 5 denotes someone “extremely well qualified”; a 4, someone “well qualified”; a 3, “qualified”; a 2, “possibly qualified”; and a 1, “no recommendation.”

Teachers are encouraged to apply to be a Reader after teaching an AP course for three years. Many will attest that being a Reader is the most useful asset for teaching AP U.S. Government and Politics, or any AP course. At Readings, professional development takes place formally and informally as teachers discuss both the question they are assigned to score and the scoring guidelines, as well as best teaching practices. Teachers also discover commonly occurring mistakes by reviewing student responses. Every year Readers modify their course plans based on what they have learned at the Reading.

There are other professional benefits to being a Reader. First, the AP teacher who has been a Reader has more legitimacy in the classroom—he or she can say to the students, “I have been to the Reading, and this is how your writing will be scored.” Students are interested in this process and are more likely to listen to a teacher who has actually done the scoring. Second, the experience will make scoring free-response questions in your own classroom easier as you become more proficient and confident about what constitutes a good response. Finally, the AP Reading provides teachers with a network of other AP teachers with whom they can communicate in the future.

While the week of the AP Reading is very hard work, the camaraderie and professional development make participation well worth the effort.

### The Value of Being an AP Exam Reader

I became an AP Reader after teaching AP U.S. Government and Politics for six years. I wish I had done it sooner. It was hard work reading essay after essay for a week, but nothing helped me more to be a better teacher than that experience.

Being a Reader helped me focus on the AP curriculum more than I had previously. Before I was a Reader, I taught from two different textbooks. I coordinated the reading assignments and activities with the AP curriculum outline, but the textbooks really shaped my course. As a Reader, I learned more about political science and the rationale of the AP curriculum. My learning made it easier for me to plan and organize a course that matched the outline, the textbook, my knowledge and skills, and my students' interests.

Some of this new knowledge came from meeting and talking with members of the Development Committee. Some came from the collegial contacts with people who teach the introductory U.S. government and politics courses at colleges and universities all around the country. Other valuable learning took place in discussions with people who were teaching the same course I was, but doing it in schools very different from my own. AP teachers are frequently the only people doing what they're doing in a school. That isolation can be limiting. Doing the intellectual and pedagogical work necessary to grade thousands of exams in cooperation and coordination with many other people was exciting and enlightening. New ideas flowed back and forth across reading tables and dining tables. (The electronic discussion groups on AP Central grew out of Readers' desire to stay in touch and continue sharing ideas.)

I also learned how to grade written work in an entirely new way. Sometimes it's necessary to grade students' work slowly and in detail, especially when you're trying to help them improve their writing. Other times you want to grade things quickly and return them so the students can analyze your evaluation while the writing is still fresh in their minds. What I learned was to create and use rubrics that facilitated that second kind of grading. Then students could use a rubric to evaluate their own writing and compare it to my evaluation. I think this became the most valuable teaching tool I learned.

Finally, I gained a great deal of confidence in the exam scoring process, and that helped me communicate to my students, to my colleagues, and to the school community the value and legitimacy of AP grades. Before I was a Reader, I had only vague notions of how the answer sheet bubbles and the words in free-response booklets were translated into AP grades. Being part of the process of scoring student papers helped me to see that it is possible to come up with a score that is reliable, and I am now better able to explain that reliability to others.

—Ken Wedding, Retired AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Hopkins High School,  
Minnetonka, Minnesota

## AP Grade Reports

AP grades are reported to students, their schools, and their designated colleges in July. Each school automatically receives an AP Grade Report for each student, a cumulative roster of all students, rosters of all students by exam, an AP Scholar roster for any qualifying students, and a *AP Instructional Planning Report*. (Note: Data for students testing late with an alternate form of the exam are not included in this report.) For a fee, schools may also request their students' free-response booklets.

## Using the AP Instructional Planning Report

Schools receive the *AP Instructional Planning Report* for each of their AP classes in September. The report compares your students' performance on specific topics in the AP Exam to the performance of students worldwide on those same topics, helping you target areas for increased attention and focus in the curriculum. To get the most out of the report, please read the interpretive information on the document. It explains how the data, when used correctly, can provide valuable information for instructional and curricular assessment as well as for planning and development. Contact your school's AP Coordinator for this report.



# Chapter 5

## Resources for Teachers

### How to Address Limited Resources

Teachers in small schools or schools with limited budgets, resources, and/or enrollment face unique challenges in teaching any AP class. The College Board's publication *Building Strong AP Programs at Small Rural Schools* (available in PDF format in the AP Document Library on AP Central) is an invaluable resource. It provides compelling stories and excellent suggestions and resources for meeting some of those challenges.

A good AP United States Government and Politics course does not require a great deal of expensive material. The biggest expense is the textbook. Teachers can and should, regardless of the text, supplement texts with materials on current events that are available for free on the Internet or from libraries.

Many teachers in public schools do not have the luxury of choosing their own texts. If you are able to do so, be sure to research and review a variety of books before making your selection. The College Board does not endorse any one textbook for this course, but it is important to choose a text that is commonly used at the college level and not just in high school classes. (See Tips on Selecting a Textbook, below, for some questions to consider.)

Many textbook companies will give an instructor a free sample copy upon request; visit the publishers' Web sites for more information. You may also consider using a supplemental reader in addition to a textbook. See the resources listed at the end of this chapter or in the syllabi in chapter 3, and the Teachers' Resources area on AP Central, for many textbook and supplemental reader ideas.

Also, remember that the U.S. Government and Politics Home Page on AP Central ([apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus)) is a great, free resource. There you will find:

- The most recent Course Description
- Information on recent changes in the course
- Articles of interest to U.S. Government and Politics teachers
- AP Exam information
- A link to the College Board Store
- The AP U.S. Government and Politics Electronic Discussion Group (EDG)
- Other resources, including tips, syllabi, video conferences, and related Web sites

### Use Online Discussion Boards As a Teaching Tool

Weaving current events into the curriculum is one of the most effective ways to teach AP U.S. Government and Politics. It is challenging to devote the necessary class time while still adequately covering the curriculum and preparing for the AP Exam.

I've had much success using an online discussion board that allows students to continue discussions and explore issues we don't have time to cover in class. For example, during the 2004 election, I set up discussion topics such as presidential debates, a political ad-watch, and areas where Bush, Kerry, and Nader supporters could organize volunteer efforts. I also posted messages containing links to online articles, charts, graphs, and political cartoons to stimulate debate. My students quickly amassed thousands of posts discussing all things political.

There are many free discussion board and blog programs available online. Some of the most popular ones are Blogger, MoveableType, WordPress, Moodle, and phpBB (which I use). They all allow a certain degree of customization so you can alter the look and feel of your discussion board and set security so only registered students can participate. Visit the home page of each to learn more and to obtain installation files and instructions.

Blogs and discussion boards—tools that altered the political landscape of the 2004 election—are changing the way people get their news, participate in politics, and exchange information. These same tools also have the power to transform the way we teach and the way our students learn.

—John Unruh-Friesen, AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Hopkins High School,  
Minnetonka, Minnesota

## Tips on Selecting a Textbook

Most United States government and politics textbooks are remarkably similar in content coverage and format. This should make textbook selection relatively easy—as long as you select a college-level text, you usually can't go very far wrong (remember, the College Board doesn't require a specific text). I have listed at the end of this chapter several texts that are commonly used to teach the course. This list is not exhaustive; there are certainly other books that could work well. When selecting your textbook, review a variety of texts and consider the following questions:

- **Is the textbook college level?**

Make sure that you use a text written for college classes. I have taught AP U.S. Government and Politics Summer Institutes where teachers have told me that their school system will not supply a college-level text. If you are in this predicament, ask a textbook publisher for a complimentary college-level text for yourself and then use it to supplement your lessons. High school-oriented government textbooks simply do not have the level of detail necessary for students to succeed in an AP course, nor do they address all areas of the topic outline. If you have no choice but to use a high school text, you will have to heavily supplement it.

- **Does the textbook address the items on the AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum outline?**

Most of the college-level texts will address the items on the curriculum outline, but it might be useful for you to compare the outline to the chapter titles in the text.

- **Will the textbook be engaging for students to read?**

The question of readability is important because if the text is perceived by students to be too dry or too academic, motivating them to read it will be difficult. To be honest, I find most American government texts to be somewhat dry. I believe the teacher is the hook for the students, not the text. Still, you will want



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to look for a textbook that meets the requirements of the course, is clearly written, and is presented in a format you feel your students will most enjoy.

- **Does the textbook use tables and other visuals to support the reading?**

As discussed earlier, students must have chart interpretation skills to succeed in this course. Virtually all the texts have tables, graphs, and other visuals to highlight the readings. Since you will be using these in class, review them to get a good sense of what the book offers in this area before making a decision.

- **Does the textbook have an electronic database of test questions (test generator)?**

Test generators come in a variety of formats, but each essentially does the same thing. They allow teachers to electronically create a test by selecting test questions from a bank of previously written questions. This saves the teacher a tremendous amount of time and effort. Review the test generator questions before selecting the text. Check to see that there are a variety of multiple-choice questions available to match the readings. You should also look at a few of those questions to see if they appear to be well written and whether you are able to edit them if necessary. Test generator questions are not always perfect—some require heavy reworking. Remember to choose a test generator that is compatible with the type of computer that you have.

- **What types of ancillary materials are available?**

Textbooks differ greatly in the ancillary materials they offer. Some texts have lecture outlines, some have hands-on lesson plans, and others have electronic resources. Review these materials to see which text has materials that best suit your individual needs and preferences.

Finally, when it comes to advice on individual texts, consider using the Teachers' Resources area at AP Central. If you search by "textbook" resource type, you will receive a list of textbooks and a description of each, including a review of the text's strengths and available ancillary materials. Remember, you can also go to a publisher's Web site to request a complimentary textbook for review.

I find it useful to supplement my text with articles from major newspapers such as the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Throughout the school year, I peruse those newspapers for articles that elaborate on class concepts. I also use one or two articles from a supplementary reader to provide additional analysis. If, for example, I give a lecture on how presidential power has expanded over that of Congress, I might have students read an article entitled "The Two Presidencies" in which the author, Aaron Wildavsky, argues that we have a powerful president in foreign affairs and one weak in the area of domestic affairs.<sup>6</sup> Supplemental readings give students added perspective. When you are choosing them, be sure to select those that will best complement your course.

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6. Aaron Wildavsky, "Two Presidencies," *Perspectives on the Presidency*, Aaron Wildavsky, ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1975), 448-61.

### Teaching with “Old” Textbooks

If access to up-to-date textbooks is limited, remember that it’s possible and not unusual for AP students to succeed with textbooks that are a decade old. You, the teacher, will need to stay current on U.S. Supreme Court decisions, congressional leadership, politics, and current issues.

Be sure to request review copies of new textbooks. If you go to the Web sites of textbook publishers, you can often find online forms to request review copies. Publishers are becoming more sophisticated about selling college-level books to high schools, and they know the importance of making you aware of their products.

One of these review copies (probably the newest edition of the textbook your students are using) ought to be in your hands. If you have others, give them to students you can count on to do the reading and offer comments during class discussions about differences between the content of the class textbook (discussed by most students) and the content of the newer text. This requires some flexibility on your part and some sophistication on the students’ part, but it, too, can be done.

—Ken Wedding, Retired AP U.S. Government and Politics Teacher,  
Hopkins High School,  
Minnetonka, Minnesota

## Resources

In addition to the items below, be sure to check the resource listings in the syllabi included in chapter 3. Although references were as up-to-date as possible at the time of publication, contact information occasionally changes and some materials become unavailable. The presence of any item on the list below or elsewhere in this Teacher’s Guide does not imply endorsement by the College Board or the AP Program.

### Commonly Used AP U.S. Government and Politics Textbooks

Burns, James MacGregor et al. 2002. *Government by the People*. 19th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Edwards, George C., Robert L. Lineberry, and Martin P. Wattenberg. 2003. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. 10th ed. New York: Longman.

Janda, Kenneth, Jeffrey M. Berry, and Jerry Goldman. 2002. *The Challenge of Democracy*. 7th ed. Evanston, Ill.: Houghton Mifflin.

Lowi, Theodore J., and Benjamin Ginsburg. 2000. *American Government: Freedom and Power*. 6th ed. New York: W. W. Norton.

O’Connor, Karen, and Larry J. Sabato. 2004. *American Government: Continuity and Change*. 7th ed. New York: Longman.

Schmidt, Steffen W., Mack C. Shelley, and Barbara A. Bardes. 2005. *American Government and Politics Today*. 12th ed. Belmont, Calif.: Thomson Wadsworth.

Welch, Susan et al. 2004. *American Government*. 9th ed. Belmont, Calif: Thomson Wadsworth.

Wilson, James Q., and John J. DiIulio Jr. 2004. *American Government: Institutions and Policies*. 9th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

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### Exam Review Guides

Wood, Ethel. 2002. *Multiple-Choice and Free-Response Questions in Preparation for the AP United States Government and Politics Examination*. 4th ed. Brooklyn, N.Y.: D & S Marketing Systems, Inc.

### Supplementary Readers

Stinebrickner, Bruce. 2005. *Annual Editions: American Government 05/06*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Woll, Peter, Ed. 2005. *American Government: Readings and Cases*. 16th ed. New York: Longman.

CQ Press in Washington, D.C., (publisher of the *Congressional Quarterly*) has an extensive list of titles described as appropriate for the AP U.S. Government and Politics course. (Syllabi contributors Kerry Haynie and Christopher Hailey use some CQ texts in their courses—see chapter 3.) [www.cqpress.com](http://www.cqpress.com)

### Computer Software

Norrander, Barbara, and Michael Corbett. *American Government—Using MicroCase ExplorIt*. 9th ed. 2005. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing. Includes CD-ROM with data sets and worksheets.

### Videos and DVDs

*The American Experience: Democrats* (1991) and *The American Experience: Republicans* (1990). Originally broadcast on PBS, these are available in DVD format.

*America's Political Parties: The Republican Party 1960–1992* and *America's Political Parties: The Democratic Party 1960–1992*. White Star Films. Originally broadcast on PBS, but no longer for sale there. You may be able to find them online or borrow them from a colleague or local library.

*Investigative Reports: The Living Room Campaign*. 2000. A&E. This 50-minute video looks at the history of political commercials on television.

See also the resource listings in the syllabi in chapter 3 for movies and TV shows with U.S. government and politics themes.

### Web Sites

The institutes below offer professional development opportunities for teachers during the school year and over the summer:

Bill of Rights Institute  
[www.billofrightsinstitute.org](http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org)

Street Law's Supreme Court Summer Institute  
[www.streetlaw.org](http://www.streetlaw.org)

We the People Institute  
[www.neh.fed.us/wtp](http://www.neh.fed.us/wtp)

Youth Leadership Initiative of the University of Virginia  
[www.youthleadership.net](http://www.youthleadership.net)  
YLI offers free civic education resources for teachers.

The site below contains political cartoons that you can use in class, along with a teacher's guide and sample lesson plans.

Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonists Index  
<http://cagle.slate.msn.com>

### **Web Sites Listed by Relevant Section of Topic Outline**

#### **Unit I: Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government**

Constitution Center  
[www.constitutioncenter.org](http://www.constitutioncenter.org)

#### **Unit II: Political Beliefs and Behaviors**

SpeakOut  
[www.speakout.com](http://www.speakout.com)  
Online opinion research company.

U.S. Census  
[www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html](http://www.census.gov/main/www/cen2000.html)

#### **Unit III: Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media**

Open Secrets  
[www.opensecrets.org](http://www.opensecrets.org)  
Guide to campaign financing.

Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections  
[www.uselectionatlas.org](http://www.uselectionatlas.org)

Living Room Candidate  
[www.ammi.org/livingroomcandidate](http://www.ammi.org/livingroomcandidate)  
Presidential campaign commercials since 1952.

Federal Election Commission  
[www.fec.gov](http://www.fec.gov)

#### **Unit IV: Institutions of National Government**

Center on Congress  
<http://congress.indiana.edu>

Congress Link  
[www.congresslink.org](http://www.congresslink.org)  
Lesson plans on Congress.

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C-Span

[www.c-span.org](http://www.c-span.org)

Presidents of the United States

[www.potus.com](http://www.potus.com)

Thomas

[http:// thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.html](http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.html)

The official guide to congressional legislation.

Vote Smart

[www.vote-smart.org](http://www.vote-smart.org)

Biographies, positions taken, and key supporters of elected public officials at the national, state, and local levels; the site also has voting records for U.S. Senators and Representatives.

White House

[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

### **Unit V: Public Policy**

Public Agenda

[www.publicagenda.org](http://www.publicagenda.org)

U.S. Government Budget

[www.gpo.gov/usbudget](http://www.gpo.gov/usbudget)

### **Unit VI: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

Findlaw

[www.findlaw.org](http://www.findlaw.org)

Landmark Cases

[www.landmarkcases.org](http://www.landmarkcases.org) and [www.landmarkcases.org/keys](http://www.landmarkcases.org/keys)

Oyez: U.S. Supreme Court Multimedia

[www.oyez.org](http://www.oyez.org)

## Professional Associations

### **National Humanities Center, Teacher Professional Development Program**

[www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/pds/pds.htm](http://www.nhc.rtp.nc.us/pds/pds.htm)

This organization promotes history and literature. Its Web site contains online toolboxes for teachers to use, each specific to a certain period and containing primary documents that help illustrate issues related to that period.

### **National Council for the Social Studies**

[www.socialstudies.org](http://www.socialstudies.org)

The mission of this organization is to provide leadership, service, and support for social studies educators.

## American Political Science Association

[www.apsanet.org](http://www.apsanet.org)

This professional organization for the study of political science serves more than 15,000 members in over 80 countries. APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academe to expand awareness and understanding of politics.

## Professional Development

In the following section, the College Board outlines its professional development opportunities in support of AP educators.

The teachers, administrators, and AP Coordinators involved in the AP Program compose a dedicated, engaged, vibrant community of educational professionals. Welcome!

We invite you to become an active participant in the community. The College Board offers a variety of professional development opportunities designed to educate, support, and invigorate both new and experienced AP teachers and educational professionals. These year-round offerings range from half-day workshops to intensive weeklong summer institutes, from the AP Annual Conference to AP Central, and from participation in an AP Reading to Development Committee membership.

## Workshops and Summer Institutes

At the heart of the College Board's professional development offerings are workshops and summer institutes. Participating in an AP workshop is generally one of the first steps to becoming a successful AP teacher. Workshops range in length from half-day to weeklong events and are focused on all 37 AP courses and a range of supplemental topics. Workshop consultants are innovative, successful, and experienced AP teachers; teachers trained in developmental skills and strategies; college faculty members; and other qualified educational professionals who have been trained and endorsed by the College Board. For new and experienced teachers, these course-specific training opportunities encompass all aspects of AP course content, organization, evaluation, and methodology. For administrators, counselors, and AP Coordinators, workshops address critical issues faced in introducing, developing, supporting, and expanding AP programs in secondary schools. They also serve as a forum for exchanging ideas about AP.

While the AP Program does not have a set of formal requirements that teachers must satisfy prior to teaching an AP course, the College Board suggests that AP teachers have considerable experience and an advanced degree in the discipline before undertaking an AP course.

AP Summer Institutes provide teachers with in-depth training in AP courses and teaching strategies. Participants engage in at least 30 hours of training led by College Board-endorsed consultants and receive printed materials, including excerpts from AP Course Descriptions, AP Exam information, and other course-specific teaching resources. Many locations offer guest speakers, field trips, and other hands-on activities. Each institute is managed individually by staff at the sponsoring institution under the guidelines provided by the College Board.

Participants in College Board professional development workshops and summer institutes are eligible for continuing education units (CEUs). The College Board is authorized by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) to offer CEUs. IACET is an internationally recognized organization that provides standards and authorization for continuing education and training.

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Workshop and institute offerings for the AP U.S. Government and Politics teacher (or potential teacher) range from introductory to topic-specific events and include offerings tailored to teachers in the middle and early high school years. To learn more about scheduled workshops and summer institutes near you, visit the Institutes & Workshops area on AP Central: [apcentral.collegeboard.com/events](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/events).

### Online Events

The College Board offers a wide variety of online events, which are presented by College Board-endorsed consultants and recognized subject-matter experts to participants via a Web-based, real-time interface. Online events range from one hour to several days and are interactive, allowing for exchanges between the presenter and participants and between participants. Like face-to-face workshops, online events vary in focus from introductory themes to specific topics, and many offer CEUs for participants. For a complete list of upcoming and archived online events, visit [apcentral.collegeboard.com/onlineevents](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/onlineevents).

Archives of many past online events are also available for free or for a small fee. Archived events can be viewed on your computer at your convenience.

### AP Central

AP Central is the College Board's online home for AP professionals. The site offers a wealth of resources, including Course Descriptions, sample syllabi, exam questions, a vast database of teaching resource reviews, lesson plans, course-specific feature articles, and much more. Bookmark the information on AP Central about AP U.S. Government: [apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/govpolus).

AP Program information is also available on the site, including exam calendars, fee and fee reduction policies, student performance data, participation forms, research reports, college and university AP grade acceptance policies, and more.

AP professionals are encouraged to contribute to the resources on AP Central by submitting articles or lesson plans for publication and by adding comments to Teacher's Resources reviews.

### Electronic Discussion Groups

The AP electronic discussion groups (EDGs) were created to provide a moderated forum for the exchange of ideas, insights, and practices among AP teachers, AP Coordinators, consultants, AP Exam Readers, administrators, and college faculty. EDGs are Web-based threaded discussion groups focused on specific AP courses or roles, giving participants the ability to post and respond to questions online to be viewed by other members of the EDG. To join an EDG, visit [apcentral.collegeboard.com/community/edg](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/community/edg).

### AP Annual Conference

The AP Annual Conference (APAC) is a gathering of the AP community, including teachers, secondary school administrators, and college faculty. The APAC is the only national conference that focuses on providing complete strategies for middle and high school teachers and administrators involved in the AP Program. The 2007 conference will be held July 11 to 15 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Conference events include presentations by each course's Development Committee, course- and topic-specific sessions, guest speakers, and pre- and postconference workshops for new and experienced teachers. To learn more about this year's event, please visit [www.collegeboard.com/apac](http://www.collegeboard.com/apac).

AP professionals are encouraged to lead workshops and presentations at the conference. Proposals are due in the fall of each year prior to the event (visit AP Central for specific deadlines and requirements).



## Professional Opportunities

### College Board Consultants and Contributors

Experienced AP teachers and educational professionals share their techniques, best practices, materials, and expertise with other educators by serving as College Board consultants and contributors. They may lead workshops and summer institutes, sharing their proven techniques and best practices with new and experienced AP teachers, AP Coordinators, and administrators. They may also contribute to AP course and exam development (writing exam questions or serving on a Development Committee) or evaluate AP Exams at the annual AP Reading. Consultants and contributors may be teachers, postsecondary faculty, counselors, administrators, and retired educators. They receive an honorarium for their work and are reimbursed for expenses.

To learn more about becoming a workshop consultant, visit [apcentral.collegeboard.com/consultant](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/consultant).

### AP Exam Readers

High school and college faculty members from around the world gather in the United States each June to evaluate and score the free-response sections of the AP Exams at the annual AP Reading. AP Exam Readers are led by a Chief Reader, a college professor who has the responsibility of ensuring that students receive grades that accurately reflect college-level achievement. Readers describe the experience as providing unparalleled insight into the exam evaluation process and as an opportunity for intensive collegial exchange between high school and college faculty. (More than 8,500 Readers participated in the 2006 Reading.) High school Readers receive certificates awarding professional development hours and CEUs for their participation in the AP Reading. To apply to become an AP Reader, go to [apcentral.collegeboard.com/readers](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/readers).

### Development Committee Members

The dedicated members of each course's Development Committee play a critical role in the preparation of the Course Description and exam. They represent a diverse spectrum of knowledge and points of view in their fields and, as a group, are the authority when it comes to making subject-matter decisions in the exam-construction process. The AP Development Committees represent a unique collaboration between high school and college educators.

### AP Grants

The College Board offers a suite of competitive grants that provide financial and technical assistance to schools and teachers interested in expanding access to AP. The suite consists of three grant programs: College Board AP Fellows, College Board Pre-AP Fellows, and the AP Start-Up Grant, totaling over \$600,000 in annual support for professional development and classroom resources. The programs provide stipends for teachers and schools that want to start an AP program or expand their current program. Schools and teachers that serve minority and/or low income students who have been traditionally underrepresented in AP courses are given preference. To learn more, visit [apcentral.collegeboard.com/apgrants](http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apgrants).

## Our Commitment to Professional Development

The College Board is committed to supporting and educating AP teachers, AP Coordinators, and administrators. We encourage you to attend professional development events and workshops to expand



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your knowledge of and familiarity with the AP course(s) you teach or that your school offers, and then to share that knowledge with other members of the AP community. In addition, we recommend that you join professional associations, attend meetings, and read journals to help support your involvement in the community of educational professionals in your discipline. By working with other educational professionals, you will strengthen that community and increase the variety of teaching resources you use.

Your work in the classroom and your contributions to professional development help the AP Program continue to grow, providing students worldwide with the opportunity to engage in college-level learning while still in high school.