AP US Government and Politics Syllabus

2018/ 2019

**The Course**

**Syllabus 2018 - 2019 - AP® United States Government and Politics**

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**Curricular Requirements (edit page #s)**

1. **CR1**  The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs). - See page 7, 8, 9, 14
2. **CR2**  The course includes the Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs). - See page 6, 8, 9, 11, 12
3. **CR3**  The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs). - See page 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16
4. **CR4**  The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs). - See pages 6, 9, 12, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21
5. **CR5**  The course includes the Political Participation Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs). - See page 11, 18, 19, 20, 21
6. **CR6**  The course integrates public policy within each unit. - See pages 3, 6, 12, 17, 18, 20
7. **CR7**  The course addresses the big ideas by connecting enduring understandings across one or more units. - See pages 9, 12, 18, 20, 21
8. **CR8**  The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts. - See pages 6, 9, 12, 18, 20
9. **CR9**  The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret quantitative data to explain what the data implies or illustrates about political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors. - See pages 11, 12, 18, 21
10. **CR10**  The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts. - See pages 6, 8, 9, 12, 20, 21
11. **CR11**  The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret visual information to explain how the elements of the visual illustrate or relate to political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors. - See pages 12, 21
12. **CR12**  The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios. See pages 6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21
13. **CR13**  The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework*. - See pages 9, 11
14. **CR14**  Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* that culminates in a presentation of findings. - See pages 6
15. **CR15**  Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* and connect them to other non-required landmark cases. - See pages 5, 9, 15, 16, 21
16. **CR16**  Students and teachers have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook. • See page 5

**SECTION A: OVERVIEW OF THE COURSE AND THE AP EXAM**

**A.1 - Introduction to AP U.S. Government and Politics**

AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level year-long course that not only seeks to prepare students for success on the AP Exam in May, but also provide students with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that are currently shaping American politics and society. It is important to note that this course is not a history course; it is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system and the behaviors and attitudes that shape this system and are the byproduct of this system.

AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices through the use of a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, by the end of the course, students will be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well- reasoned, thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

This year-long course will meet for 85 minutes every other day for 1st, 2nd, 4th, 6th, or 7th periods and 45 minutes every day for 3rd period. The course is organized around the following required units of study:

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy (begins in Qtr. 2 and ends just before Winter Break)

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government (begins after Winter Break and continues on through Qtr. 3)

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (begins at beginning of Qtr. 4 and is taught after the Judicial Branch sub-topics of Unit 2)

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (begins at the beginning of Qtr. 1 and ends midway through Qtr. 1)

Unit 5: Political Participation (begins about halfway into Qtr. 1 and ends right after the General Election in November)

Please note, because of the election cycle, I present units 4 and 5 first, followed by the other three. Per CR6, all units include public policy topics integrated throughout.

The course also consists of:

* student grades are reported quarterly, with each quarter’s graded work consisting of:
  + class participation grades;
  + current events research and discussion grades;
  + grades for required homework readings and associated vocabulary logs;
  + grades for short daily activities related to particular lesson topics;
  + 1 or more individual and/or group projects; and
  + 1 or more in-class exams to access mastery of unit knowledge (over the course of the year 8 to 10 tests will check for understanding of the five unit topics).
* three full class days for 85-minute periods and five to six class days for 45-minute periods of cumulative course review prior to the AP Exam in May.
* two to three class days for 85-minute periods and four to six class days for 45-minute periods of ***State Government Research and Comparison with Similar Federal Government Processes and Institutions*** after the AP Exam.

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

**A.2 - Overview of the AP Exam and Keys to AP Exam Success**

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

A one hour and 20-minute long section of ***multiple-choice questions (worth 50% of the overall exam score)***. There are 55 questions and students are asked to:

* Analyze and compare political concepts
* Analyze and interpret quantitative, text-based, and visual sources
* Apply course concepts, foundational documents, and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of hypothetical and real-world scenarios

A one hour and 40-minute long section of ***free-response questions (worth 50% of the overall exam score)***. There are 4 questions where students are asked to:

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

As the breakdown of the AP Exam highlights, success in this course and on the AP Exam requires far more than the memorization of political knowledge. Success in this course and on the AP Exam requires connection-making with the aim of being able to analyze political information, regardless of the format the information is presented, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned opinion regarding this information. The different pieces of the course fit together in pursuit of this aim through course content and big ideas, reasoning processes, and disciplinary practices. These topics are discussed below.

**A.3 Course Content and Big Ideas**

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

* Constitutionalism (CON)
* Liberty and Order (LOR)
* Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD)
* Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI)
* Methods of Political Analysis (MPA)

**A.4 - Reasoning Processes**

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

* + Definition/Classification: Demonstrating knowledge of course concepts
  + Explain - Process: Explaining political processes
  + Explain - Causation: Explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors
  + Explain - Comparison: Explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors

**A.5 - Disciplinary Practices**

The disciplinary practices are the tasks students will apply to the course content using the reasoning processes. Becoming proficient in these disciplinary practices gives students the tools to analyze political information, regardless of the format, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned argument or opinion about an issue related to American government and politics. The disciplinary practices in this course include:

* Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context
* Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions
* Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics
* Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources
* Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Every AP Exam question fuses course content, reasoning processes, and disciplinary practices. Thus, in-class and outside of class assignments will focus on the acquisition of course content and the application of course content to disciplinary practices using reasoning skills.

**A.6 - Overview of Required Course Texts and Additional Resources Textbook and Online Resources**

Each student will check out a copy of the following textbook at the beginning of the course: **American Democracy Now**, 5th Edition, by Harrison, Harris, and Deardorff **[CR16]**

Additionally, students will have access to the following free online resources:

* [*AP United States Government and Politics reading skills lessons*](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-united-states-government-and-politics/classroom-resources)– This resource contains all of the required Supreme Court cases and foundational documents, along with close reading and discussion questions and activities.
* [*Oyez*](https://www.oyez.org/)– This online database provides succinct and accessible overviews for all Supreme Court cases.
* [*The National Constitution Center’s Interactive Constitution*](https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution)– This online resource is an annotated U.S. Constitution that includes essays from multiple perspectives that frame the debates underlying key clauses and provisions of the U.S. Constitution. The National Constitution Center also has a blog that applies constitutional principles to current events.

**A.7 Required Supreme Court Cases [CR15: Supreme Court cases]**

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

1. Marbury v. Madison (1803)
2. McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
3. Schenck v. United States (1919)
4. Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
5. Baker v. Carr (1961)
6. Engel v. Vitale (1962)
7. Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)
8. Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)
9. New York Times Company v. United States (1971)
10. Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)
11. Roe v. Wade (1973)
12. Shaw v. Reno (1993)
13. United States v. Lopez (1995)
14. McDonald v. Chicago (2010)
15. Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC) (2010)

For each of these cases, the facts, issues, holdings, and reasoning underlying the majority and dissenting opinions can be found through the Oyez database online. Oyez also has an app that can be downloaded to smartphones. Students will be required to complete multiple assignments analyzing and comparing these cases with other non- required cases. **[see the CR15 activity in Unit 3]**

The list above is not an exhaustive list of the Supreme Court cases that will be analyzed and discussed in this course. Additionally, students may also investigate the majority/dissenting opinion excerpts for cases that complement the required cases, such as:

* Gonzales v. Raich (2005) to go along with the analysis of McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
* Heart of Atlanta Motels v. United States (1964) to go along with the analysis of United States v. Lopez (1995)
* Obergefell v. Hodges (2015) to along with Unit 3 Civil Rights and Liberties.
* Zelman v. Simmons-Harris (2002) to go along with the analysis of Engel v. Vitale (1962)

Morse v. Frederick (2007) to go along with the analysis of Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)

**[CR15]** — Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* and connect them to other non-required landmark cases.

For each of these cases, the facts, issues, holdings, and reasoning underlying the majority and dissenting opinions can be found through the Oyez database online. Oyez also has an app that can be downloaded to smartphones. Students will be required to complete multiple assignments analyzing and comparing these cases with other non- required cases. **[CR15 Activity] The court cases listed above are known as landmark cases. This means that, at least according to the College Board, they are ones that influenced others. As a part of this unit students will be paired and randomly assigned a court case from the above list. The next step will be to detail the circumstances and backgrounds of each case. Once this had been done, each pairing will have to detail three (3) other Supreme Court cases that relate and why.**

**A.8 - Required Foundational Documents [CR10: foundational documents]**

This course will incorporate the analysis and discussion of nine required foundational documents to help understand the context and beliefs of the founders and their critics and the debates surrounding the writing and ratification of the U.S. Constitution:

1. The Declaration of Independence
2. The Articles of Confederation
3. *Federalist No. 10*
4. *Brutus No. 1*
5. *Federalist No. 51*
6. The Constitution of the United States
7. *Federalist No. 70*
8. *Federalist No. 78*
9. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

**[CR10]** — The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.

To aid in the analysis of these foundational documents, students will also have access to the AP United States Government and Politics reading skills workbook. This online reader contains strategies for analyzing the required foundational documents and a sampling of related readings, including:

* Excerpts from Locke’s *Second Treatise of Civil Government* to go along with the analysis of the Declaration of Independence
* “Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican I” to go along with the analysis of the Articles of Confederation
* Essays from the National Constitution Center’s “Matters of Debate” series (Interactive Constitution resource) to go along with the analysis of the Tenth Amendment

**SECTION B: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECT [CR6][CR12][CR8][CR10]**

The civic engagement project in this course will involve students using the various Enduring Understandings (hand out available on the Canvas site) to follow the major events of the day/ week and creating a class presentation. This course is incredibly important in that it helps us to understand what it is that is going on and why it is happening. The Enduring Understandings per unit are detailed in the sheet. What each student will do is to find a news story and relate it to one of the units (randomly assigned) on a biweekly basis. They will then have to detail the story and explain why/ how it is applied to the understanding.

**[CR6] –** The course integrates public policy within each unit

**[CR12] –** The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios.

**[CR8] –** The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts

**[CR10] –** The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts

**SECTION C: COURSE OUTLINE**

This section provides a breakdown of each of the course’s five units. Included in each breakdown is an overview of unit topics, big ideas, learning objectives, key terms, and connections to the required foundational sources and required Supreme Court cases. Each breakdown also includes a sampling of activities and assignments used during the unit and the Civic Engagement Project tasks that fall under the unit.

**Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy [CR1] (19 instructional days)**

**[CR1]** — The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**a - Essential Questions:**

1. How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety?
2. How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system?
3. How does the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.?

**B – Lessons:**

**Topic 1.1**: Ideals of Democracy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-1.A)  
Key Terms: Limited Government, Natural Rights, Popular Sovereignty, Republicanism, Social Contract Foundational Documents: The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States

**Topic 1.2**: Types of Democracy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-1.B)  
Key Terms: Participatory Democracy, Pluralist Democracy, Elite Democracy Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 10* and excerpts from *Brutus No. 1*

**Topic 1.3**: Government Power and Individual Rights  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-1.A)  
Key Terms: Faction, Federalist, Anti-Federalist, Federalism, Checks and Balances, Separation of Powers Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 10* and excerpts from *Brutus No. 1*

**Topic 1.4**: Challenges of the Articles of Confederation  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-1.B)  
Key Terms: Articles of Confederation, Shays’s Rebellion Foundational Documents: Excerpts from the Articles of Confederation

**Topic 1.5**: Ratification of the U.S. Constitution  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-1.C)  
Key Terms: Great Compromise, Electoral College, Three-Fifths Compromise, Amendment Process Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 1.6**: Principles of American Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-1.A)  
Key Terms: Congress, the President, Federal Judiciary, Checks and Balances, Separation of Powers Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 51*

**Topic 1.7**: Relationship Between the States and the Federal Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-1.B) Key Terms: Checks and Balances, Separation of Powers

**Topic 1.8**: Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-2.A)  
Key Terms: Federalism, Concurrent Powers, Federal Revenue Sharing, Mandates Categorical Grants, Block Grants

**Topic 1.9**: Federalism in Action  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-2.B)  
Key Terms: Federalism, Tenth Amendment, Fourteenth Amendment, Commerce Clause, Necessary and Proper Clause, Enumerated Powers, Implied Powers, Separation of Powers, Policymaking Required Cases: McCulloch v. Maryland (1819), United States v. Lopez (1995)

**C.1.b - Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 1**

**Sample 1: Philosophers in Founding Documents**

* **Framing Question**: To what extent did the ideas of philosophers influence the founding documents of the United States?
* **Activity Summary**: As a part of the foundations unit, we have discussed the primary political philosophers (Montesquieu, Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes) that influenced the government of the United States. Students will take a look at the Virginia Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the U.S. Constitution and under the structure of philosophers, the students will be looking for examples of the main ideas:

**Consent of the governed, inalienable rights, natural rights, separation of powers, equality under the law, limited government, republican government, social contract, and rule of law**

When each student has identified an example of the above concepts in each of the three primary documents, they are to identify which philosopher(s) are responsible for that idea and how it applies/ basis of the concept. Once this has been done, the students will analyze the results and attempt to draw a conclusion as to which philosopher was most influential and which idea was most prevalent. Then, see whether there was correlation and if so, why? Ex: a passage describing popular elections in a representative government could be pinpointed as an example of ‘consent of the governed’. The student will then have to identify which philosopher(s) are responsible for that idea. After they have identified the philosopher, the next step will be to identify portion of the text that relates to the concept and identify the purpose behind the concept. [CR1][CR2][CR3][CR10]

* **Additional Sources:** Students will be given a copy of the Virginia Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution of the United States. [CR10]
* **Learning Objective Alignment:** CON-3, LOR-2.A, LOR-2.A.2

[CR10] - The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.

[CR1] – The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs)

[CR2] – The course includes the Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

[CR3] – The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**Sample 2: Assignment – Document Analysis – Factions (Federalist 10 and 15):**

* **Framing Question:** What effect did factions have upon the ratification of the Constitution and what effect do factions have today? Federalist 10 and 15 both touch upon human nature and discuss the positives and negatives of political factions. In Federalist 15, the results of factions are laid bare. It also explains why these factions, on a human nature level, have acted as they did in providing resistance to ratification of the Constitution.
* **Activity Summary:** The role of human nature is one that we have touched upon with the examination of philosophers. Federalist 10 and 15 touch upon human nature and add to it the concept of political factions. The key question in Federalist 10 is what a faction is and what threats do they pose? If they are identified as a threat, can you control them without abusing the powers of government? In Federalist 15, the results of factions are laid bare (similar to in the Declaration of Independence) and why these factions, on a human nature level, have acted as they have in the resistance to ratification of the Constitution.

Each student will be paired with another student. As a pair, they will be given an already annotated version of both Federalist 10 and 15. Within those, there are guiding questions (using the AP recommended chunking method) relating to certain key passages and concepts. The questions will prompt the students to look beyond the initial written statement and delve into why, possibly making a connection to philosophers like Hobbes and his view of human nature.

At the completion, each pair will then be prompted to answer a few summation questions on the material within 10 and 15, itself. Next, the students will take a look at some political news from the day and apply the ideas and thoughts written down to the current situation. What is a faction and do they still exist? They will need to discuss this question and develop their thoughts into an essay form.[CR1][CR3][CR4][CR7][CR8][CR10][CR13]

* **Additional Sources:** Students will be given annotated copies of Federalist 10 and Federalist 15.
* **Learning Objective Alignment:** LOR-1, PMI-1, PMI-4, MPA-3

[CR1] – The course includes the Foundations of American Democracy Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs)

[CR3] – The course includes the Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs)

[CR4] – The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs)

[CR7] – The course addresses the big ideas by connecting enduring understandings across one or more units

[CR8] – The course provides opportunities to analyze and compare political concepts

[CR10] – The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts

[CR13] – The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework*.

**C.2 - Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government [CR2] (34 instructional days)**

**[CR2]** — The course includes the Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**Essential Questions:**

* How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?
* To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the

national government is in the 21st century?

**Topic 2.1**: Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-3.A)  
Key Terms: Senate, House, Chamber Sizes, Constituencies, Term-Lengths in Congress, Enumerated Powers (including Passing a Budget, Raising Revenue, Coining Money, Declaring War, and Maintaining Armed Forces), Implied Powers, Necessary and Proper Clause  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 2.2**: Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-3.B)  
Key Terms: Policy-Making Process, Congressional Standing Committees, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, Party Leadership in Congress, Committee Leadership, Filibuster and Cloture, Holds, Unanimous Consent, Rules Committee, Committee of the Whole, Discharge Petitions, Treaty Ratification, Confirmation, Federal Budget, Discretionary Spending, Mandatory Spending, Entitlement Spending, Tax Revenues, Budget Deficit, Pork Barrel, Logrolling

**Topic 2.3**: Congressional Behavior  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-3.C)  
Key Terms: Party Polarization, Gerrymandering, Redistricting, “One Person, One Vote,” Divided Government, Lame-Duck, Trustee, Delegate, Politico  
Required Cases: Baker v. Carr (1961), Shaw v. Reno (1993)

**Topic 2.4**: Roles and Powers of the President  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-4.A)  
Key Terms: Formal Powers, Informal Powers, Vetoes and Pocket Vetoes, Commander-in-Chief, Treaties, Executive Agreements, Executive Orders, Signing Statements  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 2.5**: Checks on the President  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-4.B)  
Key Terms: Appointments (Cabinet Members, Ambassadors, White House Staff, Federal Judges), Executive Orders  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 2.6**: Expansion of Presidential Power  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-4.C)  
Key Terms: Twenty-Second Amendment, Formal Powers, Informal Powers Foundational Documents: *Federalist No. 70*

**Topic 2.7**: Presidential Communication  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-4.D) Key Terms: State of the Union, Bully Pulpit

**Topic 2.8**: The Judicial Branch  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-5.A)  
Key Terms: Judicial Review  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States of America, *Federalist No. 78*, Marbury v. Madison (1803)

**Topic 2.9**: Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-5.B)  
Key Terms: Life Tenure, Precedent, Stare Decisis, Appointment and Confirmation

**Topic 2.10**: The Court in Action  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-5.B) Key Terms: Judicial Review, Judicial Activism, Judicial Restraint

**Topic 2.11**: Checks on the Judicial Branch  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-5.B, CON-5.C)  
Key Terms: Constitutional Amendments, Appointment and Confirmation, Court Jurisdiction, Implementation of Court Rulings

**Topic 2.12**: The Bureaucracy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-2.A)  
Key Terms: Regulations, Fines, Congressional Testimony, Issue Network, Iron Triangles, Political Patronage, Civil Service, Merit System

**Topic 2.13**: Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-2.B) Key Terms: Bureaucratic Discretion, Rule-Making, Policy Implementation

**Topic 2.14**: Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-2.C) Key Terms: Oversight (Committee Hearings and Power of the Purse)

**Topic 2.15**: Policy and the Branches of Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-2.E)

**C- Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 2**

**Sample Assignment 1: The Constitutionality of the 2010 Texas Redistricting Plan:**

* **Framing Question**: Develop an argument regarding whether the 2010 Texas redistricting plan is constitutional.
* **Secondary Framing Question**: Explain the implications of gerrymandering.
* **Activity Summary**: Students will begin by analyzing *The Washington Post* infographic on gerrymandering to distill a conceptual definition of the term. Students will then analyze and compare the Supreme Court rulings in Baker v. Carr (1961), Shaw v. Reno (1993), and Shelby County v. Holder (2013) to determine the constitutional basis of court challenges over redistricting and identify and describe the constitutional rules and parameters for redistricting. Students will then apply these rules and the rules discussed in the article accompanying the infographic to the Texas 2010 redistricting map and data (linked below) to develop an argument regarding whether the 2010 Texas redistricting plan is constitutional. After engaging in a discussion around this question, students will write an essay in which they develop their argument about the constitutionality of the redistricting scheme and explain the potential implications that this debate has on congressional decision-making and the incumbency advantage phenomena. **[CR10: activity] [CR12] [CR13] [CR15: activity]**
* **Additional Sources**: *The Washington Post* Gerrymandering Infographic (“This is the Best Explanation of Gerrymandering You Will Ever See”), Texas Congressional District Data Showing Overall Population and Latino Population by District (“Mapping the Latin Electorate by Congressional District”), Texas 2010 Congressional Redistricting Maps from GovTrack.us.
* **Learning Objective Alignment**: CON-3.C, PRD-2.C

**[CR10]** — The course provides opportunities to analyze and interpret qualitative sources (primary and secondary sources including the nine required foundational documents) to explain how they relate to political concepts.

**[CR12]** — The course provides opportunities to apply course concepts and Supreme Court decisions in real-world contexts or scenarios.

**[CR13]** — The course provides opportunities to develop an argument in the form of an essay, supported by relevant evidence, about a concept described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework*.

**[CR15]** — Students are provided opportunities to analyze the 15 required Supreme Court cases as described in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Curriculum Framework* and connect them to other non-required landmark cases.

**Sample Assignment 2: Framing Question:** The President has the ability to start a war, but he cannot declare war. If this is the case, where are the administrative lines drawn? Does the President have unlimited power?

* **Activity Summary:** This is an activity designed to allow the student to interact with four primary documents that examine: the President’s ability to start and continue a war; how the President’s power is checked by Congress; and war-making powers reserved for the Senate alone.
* Students will spend approximately one 45-minute class period participating in a jigsaw where one student from a group becomes an expert on one article then shares that the main points of that article the rest of his or her group. After they each share out all their information (and others collect it in a worksheet), they each will answer two analytical questions that require them to apply the information from the various sources and draw a conclusion about the relationship between the Executive and the Legislative Branch when it comes to war powers.
* **Additional Sources:**

1. **Kellman, Laurie. “Congress Tests Bounds of Its War Power.” *AP Online*,** [**www.highbeam.com/doc/1Y1-102659470.html?refid=easy\_hf**](http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1Y1-102659470.html?refid=easy_hf)**.**
2. **“EXERCISING CONGRESS’S CONSTITUTIONAL POWER TO END A WAR.”** [**https://fas.org/irp/congress/2007\_hr/endwar.pdf**](https://fas.org/irp/congress/2007_hr/endwar.pdf)**.**
3. **Bazelon, Emily. “The War Powers Showdown: It's Legal for Congress to Manage the War.” *Slate*, 5 Mar. 2007.** [**http://www.slate.com/articles/news\_and\_politics/jurisprudence/2007/03/the\_war\_powers\_showdown.html**](http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/jurisprudence/2007/03/the_war_powers_showdown.html)
4. **Sabato, Larry. “War Making Limits – Presidential Downsizing.” A More Perfect Constitution. Walker and Co.: New York, 2007.**

* **Learning Objective and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: CON-4, PMI-1, CR2, CR8, CR10**

**Sample Assignment #3: Framing Question –** What are the relationships between federal taxing, spending, borrowing and the growth of the federal total Public Debt?

* **Activity Summary:** Students will take an 85-minute class and one 45-minute class or three 45-minute class periods to consult several documents about the federal budget from the website [www.nationalpriorities.org](http://www.nationalpriorities.org) and then work as paired-teams to play a federal budget balancing/debt reduction simulation called “Fiscal ship”.

* Step 1 of the activity has the students: discover why, how, and from whom or what the federal government obtains borrowed money (through various graphs and charts); see the average household tax expenditure for their state; see quotes from people around the country discussing what they think about taxation and the various expenditures of the Federal government (shown as points of a map of the country and entitled “Faced of the Federal Budget”); and examine the current year’s spending for various budget sectors (again through various graphs and charts).

* Step 2 of the activity has students work in pairs play a simulation game where they are asked to balance the budget, reduce the overall federal debt, and calm the budgetary seas of their “Fiscal Ship” - <http://fiscalship.org/index.php>. If students really work through the issues in the Fiscal Ship, they’ll likely need a full 85-minute class period to do this simulation. They get to choose from various optional policy platform positions, read about the pros and cons of various tax cuts or spending expenditures, and see the consequences of those expenditures for the year’s deficits and the overall total public debt. Students learn much and have a fun time playing this game. At the end, I ask them to explain: 1) whether or not their plan was able to "reduce future debt to today's levels" (the goal of the game was to halt debt growth), 2) what the total federal debt was after they played the game, and 3) what they learned about federal spending and taxing from this game.

* **Learning Objective and Curriculum Requirement Alignment:** CON-3.B.4, PMI-2, PMI-4.B-F, PMI-5.B.1, PMI-5.C.2, PMI-5.G, CR2, CR4, CR6, CR7, CR8, CR9, CR10, C, and CR12

**Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights [CR3] (18 instructional days)**

**[CR3]** — The course includes the Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**Essential Questions:**

* To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination?
* How have U.S. Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

**Topic 3.1**: The Bill of Rights  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.A and LOR-2.B) Key Terms: Bill of Rights, Civil Liberties  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 3.2**: First Amendment - Freedom of Religion  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.C)  
Key Terms: Establishment Clause, Free Exercise Clause  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, Engel v. Vitale (1962), Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)

**Topic 3.3**: First Amendment - Freedom of Speech  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.C)  
Key Terms: Symbolic Speech, Limits on Speech – Time, Manner, and Place Regulations, Defamatory, Offensive, and Obscene Gestures, “Clear and Present Danger”  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, Tinker v. Des Moines (1969), Schenck v. United States (1919)

**Topic 3.4**: First Amendment - Freedom of the Press  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.C)  
Key Terms: Prior Restraint  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, New York Times Co. v. United States (1971)

**Topic 3.5**: Second Amendment - Right to Bear Arms  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.C)  
Key Terms: Second Amendment  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, McDonald v. Chicago (2010)

**Topic 3.6**: Amendments - Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-2.D)  
Key Terms: Second Amendment, Fourth Amendment, Eighth Amendment Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 3.7**: Selective Incorporation  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-3.A)  
Key Terms: Selective Incorporation, Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, McDonald v. Chicago (2010)

**Topic 3.8**: Amendments - Due Process and the Rights of the Accused  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-3.B)  
Key Terms: Selective Incorporation, Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Miranda Rule, Miranda v. Arizona (1966), Public Safety Exception, Right to Legal Counsel, Right to Speedy and Public Trial, Right to Impartial Jury, Protection Against Warrantless Searches, Exclusionary Rule  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

**Topic 3.9**: Amendments - Due Process and the Right to Privacy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order (LOR-3.B)  
Key Terms: Ninth Amendment, Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, Roe v. Wade (1973)

**Topic 3.10**: Social Movements and Equal Protection  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-1.A)  
Key Terms: Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment, Civil Rights, National Organization for Women (NOW), Pro-Life Movement  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States, “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

**Topic 3.11**: Government Responses to Social Movements  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-3.A)  
Key Terms: The Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Voting Rights Act of 1965  
Required Cases: Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

**Topic 3.12**: Balancing Minority and Majority Rights  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-6.A)  
Key Terms: Public Accommodation Laws, Majority-Minority Districts Required Cases: Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

**Topic 3.13**: Affirmative Action  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism (CON-6.A) Key Terms: Affirmative Action

**Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 3**

**Sample Assignment #1:  Framing questions:** Why are some of our most important rights and liberties in the amendments and not the constitution itself? And, what are the meanings behind the main clauses of the amendments in the Bill of Rights?

**Activity Summary:** This activity occurs just as we discuss the ratification of the Constitution and the political differences between the Federalists and Anti-federalists. Students will have also read about the Bill of rights amendments in their textbook and their relationship to the ideals of the Enlightenment Era. Students watch Episode 2 of the PBS Constitution series presented by Peter Sagal. This episode is entitled *It’s a Free Country* it presents a discussion of the compromises the framers made in agreeing to add the Bill of Rights to the Constitution. It also discusses selected elements of Bill of Rights. We watch this episode and teams then read further about a few of amendments from the interactive Constitution. They then work as a group to prepare a skit, or “act out” that dramatizes a piece of an amendment. They then perform this “act out” before the rest of the class and the rest of the class must guess which clause and amendment is being referenced in the skit.

**Additional Resources: PBS Series The Constitution episode #2 with Peter Sagal, Interactive Constitution**

**Learning Objective and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: LOR-2.A-C, CON-1.C.3-4, LOR-2.A-C, LOR-3.A-B, CON-2.B.2, CR1, CR3, CR12, CR15.**

**Sample Assignment #2: Framing question –** How has SCOTUS selectively incorporated various pieces of the Bill of Rights to apply to individuals and state laws via the 14th amendment?  

* **Activity Summary –** This activity occurs after students: understand the activities and structure of the Judicial Branch; have learned the basic tenets of all amendments in the Bill of Rights; and the concepts of civil rights versus civil liberties.
* I organize students into teams and as a team they research SCOTUS cases, concepts, and laws related to the following themes:

1) Freedom of Speech,

2) Freedom of Religion and Anti-Religious Establishment laws,

3) Freedom of Assembly and Press,

4) Rights of the Accused,

5) Rights to Privacy,

6) Anti-Discrimination and Affirmative Action.

- I usually cover themes of criminal punishments and gun rights myself to model what I want the kids to do. The teams then create presentations about these six themes and share their knowledge with the rest of the class. The students spend one 85-minute class period researching the topics and preparing presentations. Three other 85-minute class days consist of student presentations and class discussions. For cases that are part of their theme, they have to present the constitutional question(s) of the case, a brief case background, majority/minority opinion summaries, and precedents/rules made or overturned by the case. Students are tested at the end of this presentation period for their accumulated understanding of these concepts, laws, and related cases. We do this activity before our second set of debates for the year as well. Those debates are thus better informed about actual federal civil rights laws and court cases before we debate policy positions related to current issues.

Additional resources:

* [Street Law](http://store.streetlaw.org/free-resource-library/subject/ap-u-s-govt-politics/),
* [*AP United States Government and Politics reading skills lessons*](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/courses/ap-united-states-government-and-politics/classroom-resources)*,*
* [*Oyez*](https://www.oyez.org/)
* [*The National Constitution Center’s Interactive Constitution*](https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution)
* **Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: LOR-2.A-C, LOR-3.A-B, CON-2.B.2, CR3, CR12, CR15.**

**Sample Assignment #3: Group Debates -** related to year-long current events project and civil rights issue.

* **Activity Summary -** Debates occur at the end of each semester and will be a group project where debate teams face off against each other. Students will choose controversial issues from current events discussions to debate. Last year, for instance, we held formal debates about “Should school districts be allowed to arm teachers?”, “Should undocumented migrants be allowed to obtain driver’s licenses?”, and “Should people identifying as transgender be allowed to use the bathrooms of their choice?”. These were all “ripped from the headlines” debate topic issues. Students will be randomly assigned pro or con positions on these issues and teams will have at least one 85-minute class period (or two 45-minute periods) to research these issues and prepare for debate. Debates will be held on a second 85-minute class period (or over two 45-minute periods). Formats for the debate are as follows:
* a 2-minute opening statement by each team;
* followed by four, 2-minute rounds of questions and responses (with at least 2 direct questions initiated by each team with the rest of the time in the round for response/rebuttal as time permits);
* followed by 2 – 4 audience-initiated questions (addressed to either or both teams), for a maximum time of 4 minutes; and
* ending with a 1-minute closing statement (the last team asking a question is the first to provide a closing statement).
* I will be debate moderator. Debates should take no more than 20 minutes total per topic. Debate winners will be decided by class vote. However, being debate winner has no bearing on team grade (only bragging rights). Grading of the debates will consider the quality and effectiveness of students’ overall oral performance and the quality, usefulness, and quantity of each team’s research for the debate (including notes for opening statements, sourced data that were utilized oral arguments, *etc*.).
* Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: generally these debates center around some issue of civil rights or civil liberties and as such are related to the following objectives and requirements, LOR-2.A-C, LOR-3.A-B, CON-2.B.2, CR3, CR12, CR15.

**Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs [CR4] (13 instructional days)**

**[CR4]** — The course includes the American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**Essential Questions:**

* How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
* How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?

**Topic 4.1**: American Attitudes about Government and Politics  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-1.A)  
Key Terms: Individualism, Equality of Opportunity, Free Enterprise, Rule of Law, Limited Government

**Topic 4.2**: Political Socialization  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-1) Key Terms: Political Socialization, Political Culture

**Topic 4.3**: Changes in Ideology  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-1)

**Topic 4.4**: Influence of Political Events on Ideology  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-1)

**Topic 4.5**: Measuring Public Opinion  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-2)  
Key Terms: Opinion Polls, Tracking Polls, Exit Polls, Sampling Techniques, Sampling Error

**Topic 4.6**: Evaluating Public Opinion Data  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis (MPA-2.B)

**Topic 4.7**: Ideologies of Political Parties  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-4.A)  
Key Terms: Democratic Party, Republican Party, Conservative Ideology, Liberal Ideology

**Topic 4.8**: Ideology and Policy-Making  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-4.B)

**Topic 4.9**: Ideology and Economic Policy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-4.C, PMI-4.D)  
Key Terms: Liberal Ideology, Conservative Ideology, Libertarian Ideology, Keynesian Economics, Supply-Side Economics, Fiscal Policy, Monetary Policy, the Federal Reserve

**Topic 4.10**: Ideology and Social Policy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-4.E, PMI-4.F) Key Terms: Liberal Ideology, Conservative Ideology, Libertarian Ideology

**Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 4**

**Sample Assignment #1: Framing Question –** Which way do you currently lean on the Political Spectrum and what current or recent Presidential candidates align with your ideas.

* **Activities Summary:** Students determine and discuss their pre-course political ideology leanings – the activity takes about one 85-minute class period or two 45-minute class periods. Since I start the year with unit 4, this topic occurs very early on in the start of the year and before we discuss ideology and the Political Spectrum. Students come to class and I have them take two quizzes. One is an ideology quiz from the Pew Research Center (<http://www.people-press.org/quiz/political-typology/>) and helps students situate themselves along the along the ideological spectrum. I have them anonymously write down the name of their political typology identification and leave it in a box for me to then gather a percentage-based breakdown of ideologies present in the class.

The other quiz they take helps students link their ideas to Presidential election candidates with stated platform positions that are most similar to their own ideas. This quiz comes from [www.isidewith.com](http://www.isidewith.com/). For many students, the linkages of their own ideas to particular candidates’ views can be quite eye-opening. I again have them write down their top two candidate matches and their least well-matched candidate and give that to me anonymously. As before, this helps me gather a snapshot of class ideological/party leanings. My intent is not to have students “label” themselves it is just to give them a working idea of where they “may” be at in terms of positionality on the political spectrum once I introduce it. It also helps me get them to understand there is a difference between ideology and party identification.

After they take these quizzes we examine the identified typologies a bit more in-depth – trying to decide if they really are labels that they personally feel they identify with. We also compare class typology percentages against national and regional typology percentages. We then discuss differences between ideologies more popular to our region versus ideologies more frequently occurring in others. I use all of thisinformation as a future jumping point to discuss sociological and geographic context in the political socialization process.

Differentiation activities for struggling readers or gifted students: For some students, I assign an alternative, shorter, less wordy quiz for the political party match up which comes from <http://www.youthleadership.net/econgress/political_ideology_survey>. I usually give that to ESL or SPED-identified students. For gifted readers or more interested students, I encourage them to take the ideology quiz located here: <https://www.politicalcompass.org/test>. This quiz is longer and uses very advanced vocabulary, but it compares students’ ideas to conservative, liberal, authoritarian, and libertarian parts of the ideological compass (it also highlights world leaders that lead from the different realms of this expanded ideological compass, as opposed to a left-right spectrum).

* **Additional resources:** [www.isidewith.com](http://www.isidewith.com/), <http://www.youthleadership.net/econgress/political_ideology_survey>, <https://www.politicalcompass.org/test>
* Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: PMI-4, CR4, CR6

**Sample Assignment #2: Framing Questions –** What are the differences between scientifically generated polls and those that are not? And, how do these polls gather data that either accurately informs or potentially misleads officials about public opinion?

* **Activity Summary:** Students will interrogate public opinion polls for methods and usefulness towards campaigns or policy creation. This activity occurs after students learn about methods used in scientific polling. I have kids work in pairs and they seek a political poll from two different sources: 1) must come from a research group like Gallop, <https://news.gallup.com/topic/politics.aspx> or the Pew Research Center, <http://www.people-press.org/>, and 2) the other can come from anywhere else (usually they get those polls form CNN.com or Fox.com, not the best polling sites). I require them try to uncover the methods the survey group used to select sample participants, then evaluate the reliability, veracity, and applicability of the survey by analyzing the poll’s sampling techniques. I also have them describe and critique a couple of the poll’s specific questions (examining for push polling, reader/participant confusion, etc.). They then have to work together and describe what they think should have been done differently in: 1) constructing and delivering the poll, 2) asking those particular questions that they thought were worded poorly, and 3) displaying relevant data from the poll. This last thing I ask helps them think about better, potentially more objective, or more communicative ways to display the data generated by the poll.
* **Additional resources:** <https://news.gallup.com/topic/politics.aspx>, <http://www.people-press.org/>
* Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment: MPA-2, CR4, CR6, CR7, CR8, CR9

**Sample Assignment #3: Framing Question:** What are the similarities and differences between or major political party’s platform ideas, and what problems could still be addressed by new or third parties?

* **Activity Summary:** Students will work in jigsaw teams to link ideologies to political parties’ platforms and extend the activity by creating their own party. This activity requires kids to work in teams in a four-step activity: step 1, research political party platforms for the purpose of informing their fellow students; step 2, create a party and platform of their own (one they intend to be successful nationally); step 3, collect the gathered information on these main parties; and step 4, discuss why they would or would not join the parties created by their fellow students or how successful their fellow students’ parties might be nationally. Last year we examined the Green Party, the Constitution Party, and the Tea Party (even though they didn’t have a presidential candidate), and the Independent Party (candidate Evan McMullian)

Steps 1 and 2 take about one 85-minute class period (or two 45-minute class periods). Students first work in teams to gather a worksheet’s required information about one of six parties. On this worksheet, I ask questions about party candidates, presence on the VA ballot, vote success (% popular and electoral count), and at least 5 major platform planks supported by the party. After they have collect this information about a particular party, they will then work in their same team and pretend to be a coalition of voters that intend to create a party that will *eventually* run a national campaign for a Presidential candidate. In creating their party, I prompt them to: ask why this party is needed now (what problem or problems is the party going to solve), give their party a name and a logo, investigate how they would get their party’s candidate on the ballot in VA, strategize about how to build an organization that wins support in VA, and think about what they would have to do to win electoral votes across many states nationally (how to they build a national party from a local coalition of voters?). These last two questions link to campaign-building processes

Steps 3 and 4 take another 85-minute class period (or two 45-minute class periods) and requires students to display their party research *and* their party creations on paper displays that they hang around the room. Teams then move from display to display: 1) gathering research about the actual parties (using a chart that collects standard info. for all six parties) and 2) discussing the political parties created by their fellow students. As they do this, the students leave anonymous *constructive* comments on the posters detailing the new parties. This takes about half of one 85-minute class period or one 45 minute class period. I debrief at the end of this period with lingering questions about the main parties (their ideas or relationships to each other, some are splinter parties, etc.) and by holding whole class discussion using the comments about the created parties.

Additional resources: online party websites and [www.ballotpedia.org](http://www.ballotpedia.org)

* **Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment:** PMI-4, PMI-5, CR4, CR5, CR7, CR8

**Unit 5: Political Participation [CR5] (26 instructional days)**

**[CR5]** — The course includes the Political Participation Unit and addresses all related big ideas (BIs) and enduring understandings (EUs).

**Essential Questions:**

* How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
* Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary?
* How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policies?

**Topic 5.1**: Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (MPA-3.A, MPA-3.B) Key Terms: Fifteenth Amendment, Seventeenth Amendment, Nineteenth Amendment, Twenty-Fourth Amendment, Twenty-Sixth Amendment, Voting Rights Act of 1965, Rational Choice Voting, Retrospective Voting, Prospective Voting, Party-Line Voting

Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

**Topic 5.2**: Voter Turnout  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (MPA-3.C)  
Key Terms: Voter Turnout, Vote Choice, Political Efficacy, Voter Registration, Compulsory Voting, Mid-Term Elections, Presidential Elections, Relationship Between Demographics and Voter Turnout, Relationship Between Demographics and Vote Choice

**Topic 5.3**: Political Parties  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-5.A, PMI-5.B)  
Key Terms: Linkage Institutions, Political Parties, Party Platforms, Committee and Party Leadership in Legislatures

**Topic 5.4**: How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-5.C)  
Key Terms: Candidate-Centric Campaigns, Direct Primaries, Critical Elections, Realignments, Campaign Finance

**Topic 5.5**: Third-Party Politics  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-5.D) Key Terms: Proportional System, Winner-Take-All System, Party Platforms

**Topic 5.6**: Interest Groups Influencing Policy-Making  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-5.E, PMI-5.F) Key Terms: Iron Triangle, Issue Networks, “Free Rider” Problem

**Topic 5.7**: Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests (PMI-5.G)  
Key Terms: Single-Issue Groups, Ideological/Social Movements, Protest Movements, Professional Organizations, Federal Budget Process

**Topic 5.8**: Electing a President  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-2.A, PRD-2.B) Key Terms: Incumbency Advantage, Open and Closed Primaries, Caucuses, Party Conventions, Electoral College, Winner-Take-All, National Popular Vote

**Topic 5.9**: Congressional Elections  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-2.C)  
Key Terms: Incumbency Advantage, Open and Closed Primaries, Caucuses, Presidential Elections, Mid-Term Elections

**Topic 5.10**: Modern Campaigns  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-2.D) Key Terms: Political Consultants, Campaign Finance, Social Media

**Topic 5.11**: Campaign Finance  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-2.E) Key Terms: Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, Soft Money, “Stand by Your Ad” provision, PACs and Super PACs  
Required Case: Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010)

**Topic 5.12**: The Media  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-3.A) Key Terms: Horserace Journalism, Media as a Gatekeeper

**Topic 5.13**: Changing Media  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy (PRD-3.B) Key Terms: Media Bias, Partisan News Sites, Ideologically Oriented Programming

**Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 5**

**Sample Assignment #1:** **Framing Questions –** How do you distinguish credible news sources from non-credible sources? How do you distinguish fact from opinion? How can you recognize media bias and media framing choices? And, how can you deal with the realities of media consolidation?

* **Activities Summary**: Students will improve their media literacy skills such that they can recognize fact from fiction, distinguish credible from non-credible sources, and identify the ideological leanings of news sources. These activities happen during the first week or so of the year *before* students submit their first current events log. It will take approximately one and a half 85-minute classes (or 3, 45-minute classes) to work through these activities. I provide direct vocabulary instruction and discussion about media literacy and then provide various activities to help students answer the above framing questions.

This instruction includes: discussing the qualities of credible sources; showcasing instances of “fake news” (that even relatively credible sources have fallen prey to); and having students practice and test for their recognition of opinion versus fact in news reporting. I think I will use [a quiz from Pew](http://www.pewresearch.org/quiz/news-statements-quiz/) to help with pre-testing opinion versus fact knowledge. There are numerous practice materials on media literacy topics from the Newseum that will also help. I currently use the lessons, [Here’s What We Think](https://newseumed.org/activity/the-press-and-the-presidency-heres-what-we-think-editorials-and-opinion-articles-mlbp/?form_id=12) and [E.S.C.A.P.E Junk News](https://newseumed.org/activity/e-s-c-a-p-e-junk-news-mlbp/) ). Others maybe be given for short homework assignments. Throughout these activities and the year, I will constantly be stressing the need for students to seek out information from multiple, highly-factual sources (given how consolidated media is today) and that they need to know the ideological slant of even very credible sources (I use the website <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/> for help with evaluating the factual level and ideological slant of their sources).

* **Additional Resources**: See the Newseum lesson activities I’ve embedded in the discussion of the activities, Pew Research, and Media Bias Fact Check websites.
* **Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment**: PRD-3, CR4, CR5, CR6, CR7, CR8, CR10

**Sample Assignment #2: Framing Questions:** Who is running for the various government offices in our region? What are the duties and jurisdictions of those offices? What are their chances of winning, and what kinds of people and organizations are providing support for or opposition to these candidates?

* **Activity Summary**: Students will learn about the duties and jurisdictions of various legislative and executive offices for the different levels of government in their area by creating a factsheet to share with their fellow students. During the course of this project, they will also gain practice with interpreting tracking polls, summarizing candidate platforms, and investigating the sources of candidate support or opposition. Instruction for completing the assignment occupies about half of one 85-minute class period early in the fall before the general election in November. Students then generally have about one month to work outside of class to gather the following required information for their factsheet.
* **Requirements for the factsheet:**
* Recent picture of the candidate
* Short discussion of the Job Duties of the Office the candidate is seeking, start date and length of term of office
* Short candidate biography, including party affiliation if known -- in the case of incumbents, you also should include key legislative or political accomplishments
* Short description of the geographic jurisdiction associated with the political office (include a map of the location of the district, county, or state office)
* Key Supporters and Interest Groups (Key Endorsements) in the case of candidates that have named supporting groups
* Major Opposition and Interest Groups in the case of candidates that have published opposition groups
* Latest Tracking Polls if you can find them
* Mention of any controversies or unique, interesting campaign strategies (attack ad, mailers, etc.)
* List of Website Source Link
* **Requirements for the design of the sheet:**
* No more than one 8.5 x 11 sized page. Must be turned in MS Word or .pdf formats (Don’t use google docs graphics and other design elements are harder to deal with in this application.)
* Must have at least .5 inch margins all around, font no smaller than 10 pt., bullet points are fine.
* Use color and photos wisely. I will share the document digitally with other students. However, for class hardcopy purposes, we may only print in black/white. **Must be turned in MS Word or .pdf file formats.**
* Be neat and creative, but accurate and informative. Remember our purpose is to educate each other.
* **Additional Resources**:
* The [county government website](https://vote.arlingtonva.us/elections/) that includes information about local, state, and national candidates, including candidate website linkages.
* <https://www.ballotpedia.org/>
* Candidate flyers, local, state, and national newspapers and online news outlets
* **Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment**: PMI-5, PRD-2, MPA-2, CR4, CR5, CR7, CR9, CR10

**Sample Assignment #3: Framing Question – How do special interest groups and electioneering activities affect elections in America?**

* **Activity Summary:** Students willwatch a Frontline PBS video called “Big Sky, Big Money” that presents a case study of the 2012 general election in Montana where outside special interest groups of various types conducted potentially shady electioneering practices (through mailers and commercials). In presenting the case, the video discusses the Citizens United case, the FCC, the “magic words test”, SuperPACs, 501c3/c4, and 527 groups and other rules about candidate coordination with special interest groups. I follow this video presentation with a segment from the Steven Colbert show where he formed a SuperPac and then transferred operations of that SuperPac to Jon Stewart so that Mr. Colbert could run for president in South Carolina. I also pass around current media mailers that have been mailed either by local candidates or by special interest groups. After watching these videos and examining these materials, we go back to review the vocabulary and concepts required for knowledge of Campaign Finance.
* **Additional Resources:** Frontline PBS video of [“Big Sky, Big Money”](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/big-sky-big-money/), SuperPac and Steven Colbert/Jon Stewart <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuyYBE0mD-s>
* **Learning Objectives and Curriculum Requirement Alignment**: PRD-2.E, PMI-5.G, PRD-2.D, CR5, CR11, CR12, CR15,