

AP U.S. Government/U.S. Government & Politics Syllabus

Friday Harbor High School
School Year 2024-2025

Ms. Caldwell

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AP Classroom Code (for AP only):

Welcome!

Welcome to AP US Government/U.S. Government & Politics. My role is to facilitate your learning about AP Government/U.S. Government and Politics. Regardless if you're taking the AP version of this course or the non-AP version, my job will be to ask you hard questions about American government, prompt your own questions, and then point you towards answers about how our country functions. The AP version of this course focuses on how to apply the knowledge acquired in this course to the [Collegeboard AP Exam on May 6th, 2025 @ 12pm](#). It will move at an accelerated pace and requires more reading, in general, from the student. Other than these factors, both courses follow the same curriculum and teach to the same Washington State standards. It's going to be fun collaborating as we learn more about the amazing world of politics! I love learning about government and politics and I think you will, too.

Goals

This year we will not just *learn* politics; we will also *do* politics. As Goethe said, "Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world." I hope that by mixing theory, facts, relevant contemporary issues, and opportunities to act on your knowledge you will have the tools necessary to *become* political. So sit back, relax, and get political. It's not just a class; it's reality.

Big Questions and Critical Skills

Questions

I will ask you a lot of questions this year, but I'll ask one especially big question over and over again throughout all five units of the course: **Is America's government tyrannical?**

In addition to the BIG year long question, I'll be asking similar questions in each unit.

Unit	Unit Title	Five Big Questions
1	Foundations of American Democracy	How did the Framers try to preserve liberty and fight tyranny?
2	Interactions Among Branches of Government	Does our system of separation of powers and checks and balances help or hinder tyranny?
3	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Do our civil liberties and rights preserve our liberty and stop tyranny?
4	American Political Ideologies and Beliefs	What about our political culture and belief leads towards either side of liberty versus tyranny?
5	Political Participation	How do the institutions that connect the people to the government encourage liberty or tyranny?

Skills

You're also going to learn many important **critical skills**.

After you've completed this course, you will be able to:

- Analyze political documents
- Carry on cogent political conversations and discussions
- Understand important contemporary political trends
- Practice a critical analysis of the media
- Learn how to effectively interact with your government
- Interpret political charts, graphs, maps, cartoons and data
- Understand your legal rights and responsibilities
- Act on your knowledge
- Crush the AP exam (**for AP US GoPo only**)

Free Inquiry

This classroom is a place for critical inquiry to turn into vital questions about our political beliefs and values. This class will stimulate your thinking, as well as respect and affirm your beliefs in a safe place for you to share your ideas. It's my goal to listen thoughtfully, ask incisive questions, and consider all sides of an issue. I expect that you do the same.

Required Materials

- 1 spiral ring or composition notebook
- Highlighters
- AMSCO Textbook (For AP GoPo only)
- Chromebook

Required Reading

Provided by Student: (For AP GoPo **ONLY**)

Walford, David. *AMSCO: Advanced Placement US Government and Politics, 3rd Edition*. 2020. (You can find this on Amazon. It needs to be purchased by **September 13th, 2024**).

Provided by Ms. Caldwell:

Various articles and editorials from, but not limited to: **The Economist, The Atlantic, The New York Times, The Seattle Times, AP News, Pear Research, Wall Street Journal, Vox**

(GoPo/AP) Foundational Documents

- [*The Declaration of Independence*](#)
- [*The Articles of Confederation*](#)
- [*The Constitution of the United States*](#) (Bill of Rights & Amendments)
- [*Federalist No. 10*](#)
- [*Federalist 51*](#)
- [*Federalist No. 70*](#)
- [*Federalist No. 78*](#)
- [*Brutus No. 1*](#)
- [*Letter from Birmingham Jail*](#)

(GoPo/AP) Required Supreme Court Cases

1. [*Marbury v. Madison*](#), 1803*

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

Note-Taking

Note taking is a necessary part of this course. World History is broad and expansive, and we have a lot of it to learn before May. At times, it is the most efficient way for students to receive information. Notes can be taken in class or at home depending on how they are assigned. Some lectures are by Ms. Caldwell, others are done by professionals online. Regardless, **all notes must be hand-written in a notebook in Cornell-note style.** Not loose-leaf, not in a binder, not typed - in a special notebook reserved just for AP World notes. Note taking is a skill that will follow you for the rest of your life. More and more science points to the fact that digital note taking does not allow the brain to comprehend information in the same manner as handwriting notes. Random notebook checks will occur and are a part of your present participation grade.

Late-Assignments:

Late assignments will be accepted with a 5% penalty each day the work is late and will be accepted for up to two weeks after the original due date, with no credit received beyond that time period.

Make-ups:

For regular absences, quizzes, notes, and other assignments are due within **one week** of return with no penalty. Longer absences may be negotiated. It is up to the student to complete missed assignments. All curriculum schedules are on the class website. If you know you are going to be absent for any reason, **do not email Ms. Caldwell** (unless you have a question about how to complete the work) - just look up what you have missed on the website or Google Classroom.

Reassessments/Retakes:

Students can retake any quiz or exam within **two weeks** of the original assessment date. Students must organize a date outside of class time to retake the assessment. Students will receive the higher of the two scores in the gradebook.

Extra Credit:

No extra credit will be given throughout the year.

Plagiarism and Cheating:

Plagiarism or cheating of any kind is unacceptable. All members involved with plagiarism or cheating will receive zeros on plagiarized assignments. In addition, students involved will be required to do the following:

1. Redo the assignment on their own for no more than 75% credit.
2. Type a two-page essay in MLA format answering the following prompt: "*I chose to plagiarize/cheat on this assignment because...*" or "*I allowed someone else to plagiarize/cheat off of my assignment because...*" This should be answered honestly as a form of restoration, not to shame the student. There are millions of different reasons why students cheat, and often it comes down to a lack of reflection on this decision; it's often an impulse or due to peer pressure. By writing a reflection and reasoning behind the choice, it encourages the student to think about their decisions in an intentional manner. Practicing reflection and intention supports growth and changes behaviors for the future.
3. A copy of the short essay will be given to Ms. Hillman and the student(s) parent or guardian.

Cell Phone Policy:

Cell phones will be stored on the cell phone rack in class before the start of each class. If you do not have a cell phone, this needs to be communicated to Ms. Caldwell on Day 1. If your cell phone has been removed from your possession by a parent or guardian or the school, please have your parent communicate this to Ms. Caldwell as soon as possible by email.

Cell phones are never to be used without permission from Ms. Caldwell. Your cell phone will rarely be used for academic purposes in class. If you are expecting a call or text from a parent or guardian, please have them call the front office instead.

Food Policy:

Students are **not allowed** to eat any food during class time. Students are allowed to drink water, coffee, or tea **only** during class. Students are allowed to consume food and drink in the classroom during the **lunch period, only if the classroom is open**. All food wrappers, products, and items must be thrown away **outside of the classroom** at the end of the lunch period.

Bathroom Policy:

Students are allowed to use the restroom **after** the first 15 minutes of class and before the **last** 15 minutes of class. Students must sign out of class on the "Bathroom Sign Out" sheet and take the bathroom pass with them and then sign back in when they return from the restroom. Emergencies happen and exceptions can be made, but this bathroom policy is set to limit the amount of time students spend outside of class, keeping them consistently engaged.

Discussion

There is a great deal of opportunity for discussion in this class.

Discussion (and life in general) works best if you observe the following rules.

- Listen.
- Speak your mind (not just your heart).
- Attack ideas, not people. Don't kill the messenger.
- Ask as many questions as you make statements.
- It's ok to disagree. You can still be friends.
- Do us all a favor and think about what you are going to say before you say it.
- Follow this guide: Is what you are saying true? Is it important? Is it worth saying? Is it hurtful?
- Don't repeat things that have already been said. Don't begin with, "Somebody already said this..."
- Respond to the current thread of the discussion, not what was said five minutes ago (let it go).
- If you start a sentence with, "I'm not racist/homophobic/sexist, but..." you should just stop right there.

The Curriculum

Title (CED p.25)	Topics	<u>Foundational Documents</u> (CED p. 30)	<u>SCOTUS Cases</u> (CED p. 32)	Dates for course
Foundations of American Democracy (CED p. 37)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ideals of Democracy 2. Types of Democracy 3. Government Powers and Individual Rights 4. Challenges of the Articles of Confederation 5. Ratification of the U.S. Constitution 6. Principles of American Government 7. Relationship Between State & Federal Government 8. Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism 9. Federalism in Action Test - MC + FRQ Project + Journal Reviews	<u>Declaration of Independence</u> <u>The Articles of Confederation</u> <u>Brutus No. 1</u> <u>The Constitution of the United States</u> <u>Federalist No. 10</u>	<i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> <i>US v. Lopez</i>	September-October
Interactions Among Branches of Government (CED p. 53)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Congress: The Senate and the House 2. Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress 3. Congressional Behavior 4. Roles and Powers of President 5. Checks on President 6. Expansion of Presidential Powers 7. Presidential Communication Test - MC <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Judicial Branch 9. Legitimacy of Judicial Branch 10. The Court in Action 11. Checks on Judicial Branch 12. The Bureaucracy 13. Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority 14. Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable 15. Policy and the Branches of Government Test - MC + FRQ Project + Journal Reviews	<u>Federalist No. 70</u> <u>Federalist No. 78</u> <u>Federalist 51</u>	Marbury v. Madison,	October-November

<p>Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (CED p. 75)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Bill of Rights 2. First Amendment: Freedom of Religion 3. First Amendment: Freedom of Speech 4. First Amendment: Freedom of the Press 5. Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms 6. Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety 7. Selective Incorporation 8. Amendments: Due Process + the Rights of the Accused 9. Amendments: Due Process + the Right to Privacy 10. Social Movements and Equal Protection 11. Government Responses to Social Movements 12. Balancing Minority and Majority Rights 13. Affirmative Action <p>Test - MC + FRQ Project + Journal Reviews</p>	<p><u><i>Letter from Birmingham Jail</i></u></p>	<p><i>Tinker v. Des Moines</i></p> <p><i>Schenck v. United States</i></p> <p><i>McDonald v. Chicago</i></p> <p><i>New York Times Co. v. U.S.</i></p> <p><i>Engel v. Vitale</i></p> <p><i>Wisconsin v. Yoder</i></p> <p><i>Brown v. Board</i></p> <p><i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i></p>	<p>November-December</p>
<p>American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (CED p. 95)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. American Attitudes about Government + Politics 2. Political socialization 3. Changes in Ideology 4. Influences of Political Events on Ideology 5. Measuring Public Opinion 6. Evaluating Public Opinion Data 7. Ideologies of Political Parties 8. Ideology and Policy Making 9. Ideology and Economic Policy 10. Ideology and Social Policy <p>Test - MC + FRQ Project + Journal Reviews</p>			<p>January-February</p>
<p>Political Participation (CED p. 111)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior 2. Voter Turnout 3. Political Parties 4. How and Why Political Parties change and adapt 5. Third-Party Politics 6. Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making 7. Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes 		<p><i>Shaw v. Reno</i></p> <p><i>Baker v. Carr</i></p> <p><i>Citizens United v. FEC</i></p>	<p>March-May</p>

	8. Electing a President 9. Congressional Elections 10. Modern Campaigns 11. Campaign Finance 12. The Media 13. Changing Media Test - MC + FRQ Project + Journal Reviews AP Exam = May 6, 2025 (AP GoPo only) Non-AP Final Exam = June 4 or 5, 2025			
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The AP Exam (Disregard if you're in non-AP GoPo)

AP Exam Format

Section	# of Questions	Timing	Percent of Total Exam Score
I. Multiple Choice	55	80 minutes	50%
II. Free Response	4 mandatory	1 hour, 40 minutes	50
Concept Application		20 minutes	12.5%
Quantitative Analysis		20 minutes	12.5%
SCOTUS Comparison		20 minutes	12.5%
Argument Essay		40 minutes	12.5%

AP Exam Content Breakdown

Unit	Unit Title	% of Exam	# of Questions	Yearlong Days	Semester Days
1	Foundations	15-22%	8-12	30	15
2	Branches	25-36%	14-22	30	15
3	Civil	13-18%	7-10	30	15
4	Beliefs	10-15%	5-8	24	12
5	Participation	20-27%	11-15	30	15
Total		100%	55	144	72

Final Project

You will be required to complete a final project that is worth 20% of your second semester grade. For AP GoPo you will complete this project AFTER the AP exam. This project will require you to apply everything you learned from the course and apply it to a current event topic that interests you. Detailed instructions will be given out in May to all students.

Disclaimer All parts of this syllabus can be changed under the discretion of the instructor. If the syllabus is to change, the teacher will inform students of all changes made.

Rip this page off and turn it in to Ms. Caldwell

I have read and understand the above syllabus and have shared it with a parent or guardian.

Student Name (Printed) _____

Student Signature _____

Date _____

I acknowledge that my student has read and understood the syllabus. I acknowledge that this document can be referenced throughout the year by student and guardian alike for any questions that might arise.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed) _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____