

## U.S. Government and Politics 2012

### **Brief Description of Course**

This course will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of the operations of the United States Government. To accomplish this goal students will, throughout the course, develop analysis skills that will help them interpret, understand, and explain political events in this country. The subjects that the course covers include constitutional arrangements, policy making institutions such as the legislature, the executive, the bureaucracy, and the courts, public opinion and the media, political participation and voting behavior, political parties, interest groups, civil liberties and rights, and budget making.

### **Textbook**

**Title:** American Government and Politics Today, 2011-2012 (AP\* Edition)

**Publisher:** Wadsworth Publishing

**Published Date:** 2012, 2009

**Author:** Steffen W. Schmidt

**Second Author:** Mack C. Shelley

**Third Author:** Barbara A. Bardes

**Fourth Author:** Lynne E. Ford

### **Other Course Materials**

Because of a tight budget in our school district, we cannot afford to purchase a reader for classroom use. We will instead use the vast array of information on the internet to supplement the lack of a reader. This source will help to provide charts, tables, graphs, and articles to increase the understanding of the student's knowledge of government. It will also provide current information to help students connect the principals of government with the decisions and policy making that dots the landscape of everyday politics. Respected sources such as USA Today, CNN, Time, Newsweek, and The Detroit News and Free Press are a few examples of sources that will be used.

### **Grading**

The grade in this course will be split into a 70% and 30% split. The assessments of chapter multiple choice tests, pop quizzes to keep the students honest on their reading, and free response questions (FRQ's) will be 70% of the grade. The other 30% will include in class writings, debates, and special small homework projects.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The course will be student driven. My job will be the facilitator who presents these principals of government by asking tough questions to get students to think of their own answers. The goal is to develop strong critical thinking skills where students are diving deep into the issues and coming up with their own conclusions. This class will not be driven by liberal or conservative ideals no matter what the ideological makeup may be in the classroom. I will make sure both sides of the political spectrum are presented. The minority opinion will be given if the class is heavy on one side of an issue.

## **Broad Course Outline**

### **Unit One: The American System**

Students should understand: the doctrines and historical background to the constitution; key principles, such as federalism and separation of powers; the ideological and philosophical underpinnings of American government; and theories informing interpretations of the Constitution including democratic theory, republicanism, pluralism, and elitism.

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

Students should understand: the institutional guarantees to political and civil rights granted under the Constitution; the rights conferred by the American government system; key Supreme Court cases and arguments regarding constitutional protections; the impact of the Fourteenth Amendment on civil rights at the state level; and the impact of judicial decisions on American society.

### **Unit Three: People and Politics**

Students should understand: the mechanisms of transmitting interests to government action, including interest groups, political action committees (PACs), and mass media; the role of media coverage and the press on elections and government actions; the different historical and ideological beliefs of political parties; demographic groups in the U.S. and their political beliefs; and ways of understanding political beliefs and behavior. Students should become familiar with the workings of the electoral process; the role of money and interest groups on campaigns; the laws governing elections; and the way individual campaigns operate on the local, state, and national level. The process will be taught using maps, charts, and graphs of electoral outcomes and political participation; charts showing the role of money in politics; contemporary news and Internet coverage and analysis of elections and campaigns; as well as discussion of exit poll data.

### **Unit Four: Political Institutions**

Students should understand: the workings of the legislative process; the functions and powers of Congress; the relationship to other branches of government under the Constitutions; and the change and evolution of congressional powers as a result of specific events in American history.

Students should understand: the functions and powers of the executive branch; its relationship to other branches of government under the Constitution; the change and evolution of the executive branch and the bureaucracy as a result of the specific events in American history; the relationship between the national government and state and local government bureaucracies; and role of the bureaucracy in formulating the federal budget.

Students should understand: the nature, size, and organization of the federal bureaucracy; the challenges bureaucracy face such as stopping terrorism and keeping up with staffing; the modern attempts at bureaucratic reform; bureaucrats as politicians and policy makers; and congressional control of the bureaucracy.

Students should understand: the workings of the judicial process; the functions and powers of the federal court system; the relationship of the Supreme Court to other branches of government under the Constitution; and the change and evolution of the judiciary as a result of specific events in American history.

### **Unit Five: Public Policy**

Students should understand: the major policy areas and debates in American government today; the formation of policy agendas; the enactment of the public policies by Congress and the president; the implementation and interpretation of policy by the bureaucracy and the courts; as well as domestic, economic, and foreign policy.

### **Unit Six: State and Local Politics**

Students should understand: the U.S. Constitution and the state governments; the three branches of the state; how local governments operate; and paying for state and local government.

### **Specific Course Outline**

The following outline provides a detailed look of what we need to accomplish each day of the semester. It is subject to small changes in case of snow days or certain topics taking a little longer to complete. Overall, though, we will not spend more time in a chapter than what is stated in the chapter.

Date	Homework	Topic for the day/Lesson	Readings/Charts/Tables/Assignments/Cases
Jan. 17th-20th	Ch-1 & 2		
Day 1	pg. 5-17	Syllabus; govt. necessary?; why democracy?	Federalist Papers # 10 & 51
Day 2	pg. 18-27	Political ideology (political beliefs & behaviors)	Articles of Confederation
Day 3	pg. 32-64	Review of the history of the Constitution (AP U.S.)	U.S. Constitution
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-1 &amp; 2 Test</b> ; start reading & preparing for Ch-3	<b>40 multiple choice questions</b>
Weekend	pg. 84-92	<b>Start of Ch-3 "Federalism"; why federalism? States v. The Federal Govt.</b>	Current events concentrating on
Jan. 23rd-27th	Ch-3		state and federal government jockeying
Day 1	pg. 84-92	Why federalism? States vs. The Federal Government	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Landmark Cases:
Day 2	pg. 93-101	Why federalism? States vs. The Federal Government	Each student will be assigned two landmark
Day 3	pg. 102-115	Go over free response writing (FRQ's) guide	Supreme Court Cases. For each assigned case
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-3 Test and FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-4	the students must prepare a written & oral
Day 5	pg. 120-132	<b>Start of Ch-4 "Civil Liberties"</b> ; freedom of religion	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Weekend	pg. 133-141	Freedom of Expression	brief of the case, including the background of
Jan. 30th-Feb. 3rd	Ch-4		the case, points of law, the decision and
Day 1	pg. 133-141	Freedom of Expression	rational of the court, and later related cases.
Day 2	pg. 141-146	Freedom of Press, Assembly, and Petition	Current events concentration on the 1st amendment
Day 3	pg. 146-159	Right of privacy issues and cruel & unusual punishment	Roe v. Wade
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-4 Test</b> ; start reading and preparing of Ch-5	40 multiple choice questions
Day 5	pg. 164-180	<b>Start of Ch-5 "Civil Rights"</b> ; slavery, civil rights, reparations	Brown v. Board of Education; Plessy v. Ferguson
Weekend	pg. 181-193	Women rights and gender bias	NOW protest at the Masters Golf Tourny
Feb. 6th-10th	Ch-5		at Augusta, Georgia (USAToday.com)
Day 1	pg. 181-193	Women rights and gender bias	
Day 2	pg. 194-205	Affirmative Action; disability right; gay & lesbian rights	Gay Marriage Debate: You make the call
Day 3	study for test	<b>Ch-5 Test &amp; FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-6	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Day 4	pg. 210-218	<b>Start of Ch-6 "Public Opinion and Political Socialization"</b> ; public opinion	Gallup.com and Rasmussenreports.com
<b>DAY 5 weekend</b>	pg. 218-238	various entities covering public opinion	will be used by students to look at
Feb. 13th-17th	Ch-6		current public opinion and make their
<b>DAY 1 weekend</b>	pg. 218-238	various entities covering public opinion	own decisions on what is important
Day 2	pg. 218-238	various entities covering public opinion	news and what is not.

Day 3	study for test	<b>Ch-6 Test;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-7	40 multiple choice questions
Day 4	pg. 242-254	<b>Start of Ch-7 "Interest Groups";</b> why & how	Opensecrets.com (Top PACs)
Day 5	pg. 255-270	lobbying and gun control issue (pg.270)	Obama gun control policy: source from
Weekend	study for test		Huffington Post Politics
Feb. 20th-24th	Ch-7		
Day 1	study for test	<b>Ch-7 Test &amp; FRQ's;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-8	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Day 2	pg. 274-290	<b>Start of Ch-8 "Political Parties;</b> party history; parties today	Debate: Democrats v. Republicans
Day 3	pg. 291-299	the party organization	This debate is organized by debatepedia.com
Day 4	pg. 300- 308	third parties and fairness of two parties	Chart on changing voting patterns
Day 5	study for test	<b>Ch-8 Test;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-9	40 multiple choice questions
Weekend	pg. 312-321	<b>Start of Ch-9 "Voting &amp; Elections";</b> voting: important?	National Voter Turnout in Federal Election
Feb. 27th-Mar. 2nd	Ch-9		from 1960-2010 table
Day 1	pg. 312-321	<b>Start of Ch-9 "Voting &amp; Elections";</b> voting: important?	Supreme court cases governing elections
Day 2	pg. 322-328	Restrictions on and conducting of elections	Hanging Chads & Florida: Decision 2000
Day 3	pg. 329-333	The electoral college	RealClearPolitics.com electoral map
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch- 9 Test;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-10	40 multiple choice questions
Day 5	pg. 336-345	<b>Start of Ch-10 "Campaigning for Office";</b> being a candidate & strategies	Building a campaign for president:
Weekend	pg. 357-364	Running for President	Students will break into groups and make a campaign
Mar. 5th-9th	Ch-10		and organize a campaign for their president. Issues
Day 1	pg. 357-364	Running for President	will be covered as well as plans for how they will
<b>DAY 2</b>	pg. 345-357	Campaign financing	finance their campaign.
<b>DAY 3</b>	pg. 345-357	Campaign financing	
<b>DAY 4</b>	pg. 345-357	Campaign financing	
Day 5	study for test	<b>Ch-10 Test &amp; FRQ's;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-11	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Weekend	pg. 368-377	Start of Ch-11 "The Media & Cyberpolitics"; media functions	Measuring the impact of shows like the
Mar. 12th-16th	Ch-11		Daily Show and The Colbert Report
Day 1	pg. 368-378	Start of Ch-11 "The Media & Cyberpolitics"; media functions	Debate: Should the media be censored
Day 2	pg. 379-385	The media in campaigns	in times of crisis? Students have to take
Day 3	pg. 386-395	The media and the government	a position and support it with research
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-11 Test;</b> start reading and preparing for Ch-12	40 multiple choice questions
Day 5	pg. 400-407	Start of Ch-12 "The Congress"; the functions of Congress	Article I of the US Constitution
Weekend	pg. 407-412	Powers of Congress; House -Senate differences	"A New Century of American Leadership"

Mar. 19th-23rd	Ch-12		Senator Tom Daschle
Day 1	pg. 407-412	Powers of Congress; House -Senate differences	
Day 2	pg. 413-427	Congressional elections & apportionment; committees	Map: 2010 Congressional Reapportionment
Day 3	pg. 428-435	How members decide & how a bill becomes a law	Congress.gov: researching current bills
Day 4	pg. 436-439	Congress and the Federal Budget	Earmarkwatch.org
Day 5	study for test	<b>Ch-12 Test &amp; FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-13	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Weekend	pg. 444-458	Start of Ch-13 "The President"; the many roles of the president	
Mar. 26th-30th	Ch-13		
Day 1	pg. 444-458	The many roles of the president	Watch part of 2012 State of the Union
Day 2	pg. 459-463	The President as party chief and superpolitician	Federalist Paper #70
Day 3	pg. 464-468	Special uses and abuses of presidential power	Chart: major departments and responsibilities
Day 4	pg. 469-476	The cabinet and vice president	of important executive branch appointees
Day 5	study for test	<b>Ch-13 Test</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-14	40 multiple choice questions
<b>Spring Break</b>	pg. 480-491	Start of Ch-14 "The Bureaucies"; the nature, size, and organization of bureaucracies	
<b>April 2nd-6th</b>	Ch-14		
<b>Day 1</b>	Your only responsibility on your spring break is to read pg. 480-491 on the		Governmentisgood.com: The case for
<b>Day 2</b>	nature, size, and organization of the federal bureaucracy. Do not be		bureaucracy.
<b>Day 3</b>	surprised if you have a pop quiz when you come back from break on this		Beatbureaucracy.org: How bureaucracies
<b>Day 4</b>	material. Get some well deserved rest to get ready for the stretch run		go bad.
<b>Day 5</b>	towards the AP Government Exam.		We will use these two sources to create
April 9th-13th	Ch-14		a class debate on what makes the
<b>Day 1</b>	pg. 480-491	The nature, size, and organization of the bureaucracy	bureacracic government work and what
Day 2	pg. 480-491	The nature, size, and organization of the bureaucracy	makes it fail. In the end we will try to
Day 3	pg. 491-499	Challenges of, staffing of, and mondernizing the bureaucracy	determine if there is a better way or
Day 4	pg. 500-510	Privatizing the military; controlling the bureaucracy	should the system just be reformed
Day 5	study for test	<b>Ch-14 Test &amp; FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-15	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Weekend	pg. 514-527	Start of Ch-15 "The Courts"; the federal court system	Major Supreme Court Decisions will be
April 16th-20th	Ch-15		discussed.

Day 1	pg. 514-527	Start of Ch-15 "The Courts"; the federal court system	Article: ACLU Lawsuit Challenges Life
Day 2	pg. 528-533	The supreme court at work & selecting federal judges	Without Parole for Michigan Juveniles
Day 3	pg. 534-541	Policy making & the courts; checking the courts	Position Paper: Is the Fed. Judiciary Too Powerful?
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-15 Test</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-16	40 multiple choice questions
Day 5	pg. 546-557	Start of Ch-16 "Domestic Policy"; making policy & healthcare reform	Looking at the broad strokes of Obamacare
Weekend	pg. 558-570	Environmental and Energy Policy	Assignment: Oil v. Green Energy?
April 23rd-27th	Ch-16		Students will research this dilemma and look at govt.
Day 1	pg. 558-570	Environmental and Energy Policy	efforts to change our thirst for foreign oil.
Day 2	pg. 570-575	Poverty, Welfare, and Immigration	Article: Lawmaker proposes drug tests for Michigan
Day 3	pg. 576-583	Crime and Global Warming	Global Warming: Is it an inconvenient truth?
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-16 Test &amp; FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-17	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
<b>Review</b>	pg. 588-603	Review of business cycles, unemployment, inflation, fiscal & monetary policy covered in my economics' class	
Day 5	pg. 604-608	World trade and jobs overseas	Chart: Trade deficit with China
Weekend	pg. 609-614	The politics of taxes & the social security problem	Chart: When Social Security Runs Out
April 30-May 4th	Ch-18		
Day 1	pg. 618-629	<b>Start Ch-18 "Foreign Policy &amp; National Security</b> ; foreign and defense policy	Video: inside North Korea
Day 2	pg. 630-641	Challenges in World Politics	
Day 3	pg. 642-650	Who makes foreign policy & human rights	Humanrights.com
Day 4	study for test	<b>Ch-18 &amp; FRQ's</b> ; start reading and preparing for Ch-19	<b>40 multiple choice questions &amp; one AP level FRQ</b>
Day 5	pg. 654-669	Start Ch-19 "State & Local Government"; state branches	
Weekend	pg. 669-682	How local government operates & paying for local & state govt.	Michigan.gov/vote to register to vote
May 7th-11th	Ch-19		state and local elections; find precincts
Day 1	pg. 669-682	How local government operates & paying for local & state govt.	as well as times and dates
Day 2	Review boot camp		
Day 3	Review boot camp		
Day 4	Review boot camp		
Day 5	Review boot camp		
May 14th & 15th	Review for AP Exam		
Day 1	Review boot camp		
Day 2	AP Government Test!!!!		
Day 3	Talk about the AP Government Exam experience		

Day 4	Mini-research paper directions	
Day 5	Research	
May 21st-25th		
Day 1	Research	
Day 2	Research	
Day 3	Research	
Day 4	Research	
Day 5	Research	