

**AP American Government**  
**21064200**

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### **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course explores the political theory and everyday practice that direct the daily operation of our government and shape our public policies. The express purpose of this course is to prepare students to take the AP Exam for U.S Government and Politics, while earning the required high school credit.

*This course will meet the graduation requirement for: Government*

### **II. COURSE GOALS & OBJECTIVES:**

1. Analyze the sources of public authority and political power in different nations.
2. Evaluate the sources of political beliefs and determine why political values in one country may differ radically from those in another.
3. Analyze how class, ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions affect politics in different nations.
4. Evaluate the variety of roles played by individual citizens under different types of regimes.
5. Understand the functions of government institutions and political parties in different countries.
6. Evaluate the validity of the labels and classifications commonly applied to various regimes.
7. Analyze the sources, scope and consequences of political change in different countries.
8. Apply the basic methodology associated with the study of comparative politics.
9. Apply research, study, critical-thinking and decision-making skills and demonstrate the use of new and emerging technology in problem solving.

### **III. TEXTBOOKS:**

The assigned textbook is Barbara A. Bardes, Mark C. Shelley II, and Steffen W. Schmidt; 2005-2006; *American Government and Politics Today* (\$111); Belmont, Calif.: Thomson Learning.

### **IV. SPECIAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS & MATERIALS:**

Access to the internet at school and home

### **V. GRADING:**

#### **1. COUNTY GRADING POLICY:**

The high school grading system for Leon County Schools is as follows:

Letter	Percentage	GPA Points
A	90-100	5
B	80-89	4
C	70-79	3
D	60-69	1
F	0-59	0

#### **2. TEACHER GRADING POLICY:**

The grade will be calculated by dividing the points earned by the points possible. The percentage will then convert to a letter grade using the standard LCS scale. The assignments that will be used are;

- ▶ 6 Core tests (60 points each); 60 multiple choice questions); after each AP core area; 45 minute time limit
- ▶ 3 Sub-Core tests on Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches; untimed
- ▶ Vocabulary quizzes (5 points each); randomly given

- Current Event Assignment (8 points); 1 a week; instructions and scoring rubric on web site

The AP exam is a separate and independent score from the class. How well a student does on the AP exam has no bearing on their grade for high school credit. The AP United States Government and Politics Exam has two sections. In the first section, students have 45 minutes to answer 60 multiple-choice questions. In the second section, students have 100 minutes to complete four free-response questions. Each section counts for half of the overall score.

*Plagiarism is defined as the false presentation of another's writing or work as one's own. Do NOT commit this offense in this class. Plagiarism will result in a "0" on the given assignment, with the inability to re-do the assignment for credit. In addition a parent or guardian will be contacted. Depending on the severity of the offense, or in cases of repeat offenses, the school administration will be contacted and informed and serious penalties will follow.*

## VI. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT:

- Show respect for yourself , others and the things you interact with
- Think before you act
- Expect to be held responsible
- Accept responsibility for your actions
- Stay in your seats until dismissed.
- Must have agenda book to leave the room.

Offense	Consequence	Affect on Privileges
Informal infraction	1 <sup>st</sup> offense: warning/ student teacher conference 2 <sup>nd</sup> offense: lunch detention and parent/guardian phone call 3 <sup>rd</sup> offense: referral and parent/ teacher conference	More than 2 Informal infractions may result in a loss of privileges
Formal Infraction	Referral and/or Parent Teacher Conference	Immediate loss of privileges for nine weeks

## VII. COURSE OUTLINE: (dates are subject to change

### **Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government** (5–15% of AP Exam)

January 6-January 19 (core test day)

Chapters 1 (up to page 10), 2 and 3

Key Concepts/Questions: What influenced the formulation and adoption of the Constitution? What are “Separation of Powers” and “Checks and Balances”? What is Federalism? What are the theories of democratic government?

### **Civil Rights and Civil Liberties** (5–15%)

January 20-February 1 (core test day)

Chapters 4 and 5

Key Concepts/Questions: What is the difference between civil rights and civil liberties? How did civil liberties and civil rights develop through judicial interpretation? What is the impact of the Fourteenth Amendment?

### **Institutions of National Government: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts** (35–45%)

February 2-March 16 (core test day)

Chapters 11-14

Key Concepts/Questions: What are the major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power? What is the relationship among these institutions?

The Legislative Branch

February 2-February 15 <test day>

Chapter 11

Key Concepts/Questions: What is the structure of the Legislative Branch? What power does it have? How does a bill become a law?

The Executive Branch & Bureaucracy

February 16-March 1 <test day>

Chapter 12 and 13

Key Concepts/Questions: What is the structure of the Executive Branch? What power does it have? What is the “federal bureaucracy”?

The Judicial Branch

March 2-March 13 <test day>

Chapter 14

Key Concepts/Questions: What is the structure of the Judicial Branch? What power does it have?

*END GRADES FOR THIS NINE WEEK GRADING PERIOD*

**Public Policy** (5–15%)

March 27-April 9 (core test day)

Chapters 15-17

Key Concepts/Questions: What is domestic, economic and foreign policy? What role does each branch play in making policy? What role does each branch play in implementing policy? What role do outside groups play?

**Political Beliefs and Behaviors** (10–20%)

April 10-April 24 (core test day)

Chapters 1 (pages 10-20), 6 and 9 (313-320)

Key Concepts/Questions: What are the beliefs that citizens hold about their government and its leaders? How do citizens learn about politics? What are the nature, sources, and consequences of public opinion? How do citizens vote and otherwise participate in political life? What factors influence citizens to adopt certain political beliefs and behaviors? How do elections work?

**Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media** (10–20%)

April 25-May 10 (core test day)

Chapters 7, 8, 9, and 10

Key Concepts/Questions: What are the functions, organization, development of political parties? What are their effects on the political process? What are interest groups, including political action committees (PACs)? What are the functions and structures of the media? What has been the impact of media on politics?

**May 15 @ 8 a.m.      AP American Government and Politics Exam**