

* **Subject Area:** History / Social Science

* **Category:** American Government / Civics

* **Grade Level
for which this
course has been
designed:**

9 10 11 12

* **Unit Value:** 0.5 (half year or semester equiv.)

* **Is this course classified as a Career Technical Education:** No

* **Brief Course Description**

Students in grade twelve pursue a deeper understanding of the institutions of American government. They compare systems of government in the world today and analyze the life and changing interpretations of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the current state of the legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government. An emphasis is placed on analyzing the relationship among federal, state and local governments, with particular attention paid to important historical documents such as The Federalist. These standards represent the culmination of civic literacy as students prepare to vote, participate in community activities and assume the responsibilities of citizenship.

Pre-Requisites

U.S. History - Recommended

Co-Requisites

**Context for Course
(optional)**

**History of Course Development
(optional)**

Textbooks**TEXTBOOK 1**

* **Title:** United States Government: Democracy in Action

* **Edition:** 2003

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Publication Date: 2003

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Publisher: Glencoe

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Author(s): Remy, Richard

URL Resource:

* **Usage:** Primary Text

Read in entirety or near entirety

TEXTBOOK 2

* **Title:** Magruder's American Government

* **Edition:** 2006

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Publication Date: 2006

TEXTBOOK 2

*** Publisher:** Prentice Hall

*** Author(s):** Howden et al.

URL Resource:

*** Usage:** Primary Text

Read in entirety or near entirety

Supplemental Instructional Materials*** Course Purpose**

In this course:

- Students explain the fundamental principles and moral values of American democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents of American democracy.
- Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the scope and limits of rights and obligations as democratic citizens, the relationships among them, and how they are secured.
- Students evaluate and take and defend positions on what the fundamental values and principles of civil society are (i.e., the autonomous sphere of voluntary personal, social, and economic relations that are not part of government), their interdependence, and the meaning and importance of those values and principles for a free society.
- Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.
- Students summarize landmark U.S. Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution and its amendments.
- Students evaluate issues regarding campaigns for national, state, and local elective offices.

- Students analyze and compare the powers and procedures of the national, state, tribal, and local governments.
Students evaluate and take and defend positions on the influence of the media on American political life.
- Students analyze the origins, characteristics, and development of different political systems across time, with emphasis on the quest for political democracy, its advances, and its obstacles.
- Students formulate questions about and defend their analyses of tensions within our constitutional democracy and the importance of maintaining a balance between the following concepts: majority rule and individual rights; liberty and equality; state and national authority in a federal system; civil disobedience and the rule of law; freedom of the press and the right to a fair trial; the relationship of religion and government

* Course Outline

- A. Foundations of American Government
 - 1. Principles of government
 - 2. Origins of American Government
 - 3. The Constitution (memorize the preamble)
 - 4. Federalism
- B. Political Behavior: Government by the PEOPLE
 - 1. Political Parties
 - 2. Voters and voter behavior
 - 3. The Electoral process
 - 4. Mass media & Public Opinion
 - 5. Interest groups
- C. Legislature Branch
 - 1. Congress
 - 2. Power of Congress
 - 3. Congress in Action
- D. Executive Branch
 - 1. The Presidency
 - 2. The Presidency in Action
 - 3. Government at Work: The Bureaucracy
 - 4. Financing the Government
 - 5. Foreign Policy & National Defense
- E. Judicial Branch

1. The Federal Court System
2. Civil Liberties: 1st Amendment Freedoms
3. Civil Liberties: Protecting Individual Freedoms
4. Civil Rights: Equal Justice Under Law
- F. Participating in State & Local Government
1. Organization of State & Local Government

* Writing Assignments

A final topic paper is due by the semester end. The paper should be: 3 to 5 pages in length; typed using 12 font, single space, standard format. The paper should thoroughly cover one of the topics listed below, including important events in history, highlights, basic information, outline of processes, etc. You may use other outside resources. Whenever information is from your text or other resources, it should be quoted, or paraphrased and acknowledged properly in the text of the paper (MLA format style).

The idea is to show a thorough understanding of the topic through your studies.

US Government Topics, choose one:

- 1) Civil Rights
- 2) The Two-Party Voting System
- 3) The US Court System (this covers courts from Federal to local levels—their history and jurisdiction, etc.)

* Key Assignments

Assignments will include but not be limited to regular review and extrapolation from the text. In addition, students will be expected to complete extensive internet and web based research assignments, which will be formatted for group work, individual essays, and oral presentations.

Focus Points for note taking

Vocabulary cards and memorization

Free-Response essay preparation

Discussion

Current events research and reports

Focus Issues for test preparation
Attend tutoring for test preparation
Read Economist articles, define key terms

* Instructional Methods and/or Strategies

College Model of Education: Personalized Learning Model emphasizes independent study while attending Resource Center classes twice weekly. Students may choose

to meet weekly with their Personalized Learning Teacher and/or Highly Qualified Teacher instead. The same instructional methods are used in either case.

- Presentation: Concepts and reading assignments are introduced, explained, and demonstrated during weekly class/teacher (Personalized Learning and Highly Qualified) meetings. Following the information, corresponding questions, writing assignments, and activities are given to evaluate comprehension.
- Discussion: Students analyze, discuss, and respond to issues and ideas stimulated by presentations and readings. Students work in small groups or one-on-one whenever possible to increase participation.
- Reading: Students read all required reading: primary novels in their entirety. supplemental materials in part, some text books in their entirety.
- Writing: Students use their writing skills and critical thinking strategies as they respond to literature and discussion topics and text book readings. Activities vary from summary, short answer to extended essay. Research papers, response to literature, and literary analysis. Papers are graded according to rubrics detailing: expected organization of work; clarity of thesis statement; format of formal papers; content or message; flow of writing; and grammar and punctuation conventions.
- Oral Presentation: Students present information during weekly class meetings both formally and informally. Presentations include Power Point, debate, and discussion, and always include an outline or handout and audio-visual aides.
- Library/Internet Research: Students research topics that are relevant to the reading assignments and give written and oral reports of their findings.

* Assessment Methods and/or Tools

- Attendance at Resource Center Class twice weekly OR weekly review of work by Personalized Learning Teacher/Highly Qualified Teacher

- Written assignments evaluated by provided writing rubrics
- Oral presentations
- Discussions: classroom participation and small group work. If not enrolled in Resource Center class then weekly discussions with Personalized Learning Teacher/Highly Qualified Teacher.
- Weekly homework assignments
- Chapter/Unit tests
- Comprehensive midterm/final

Assessment tools may also include the following:

- Participation in weekly lab activity with graded lab manual (science courses)
- Student demonstrations
- Student work samples
- Research Projects
- Projects: Power Point Presentation, brochures, community service, etc.

Exams, homework assignments, discussions, oral presentations, and writing assignments are used to assess student progress. Exams for each unit consist of short essay format or extensive essay. Essays emphasize critical thinking skills and demonstrate analysis and synthesis of ideas. All work is corrected by the course instructor and/or Personalized Learning Teacher/Highly Qualified Teacher. Feedback is provided on all written work with student revision and rewrite completed when appropriate.

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