

1Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics

Course Description:

This course provides an analytic and critical study of U.S. government and politics, with a focus on preparation for the United States Government and Politics Advanced Placement exam. Instruction is primarily lecture- and discussion-based, and assignments reflect college-level reading loads and writing requirements. Students are also required to familiarize themselves with current events via newspapers, television news reports, and the internet.

Text:

Wilson, James Q. and DiIulio, John J. *American Government: Institutions and Policies (Eighth Edition)*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2001.

Additional Readings and Materials:

Woll, Peter, ed. *American Government: Readings and Cases (Fifteenth Edition)*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002.

The Economist, London: The Economist Newspaper Limited.

The New York Times, New York City: The New York Times Company.

The Washington Post, Washington, D.C.: The Washington Post Company.

Course Outline: AP U.S. Government and Politics

Each unit includes reading assignments from Wilson and DiIulio. Also, the course includes 2-3 “timed writings” per unit (one every 1-2 weeks) that require students to answer analytic free-response questions in essay format; these serve to simulate the free response portion of the Advanced Placement exam. Multiple choice tests follow each unit and prepare students for that portion of the AP exam. Both timed writings and multiple choice tests include questions that test students’ ability to analyze and interpret relevant maps, charts, graphs, and data. The final weeks of the course consist of a course review, a practice released AP exam, and an examination of the students’ performance on the practice AP exam.

Unit 1: The Study of American Government, the Constitution, and Federalism (2.5 weeks)

Political power and democracy
Direct vs. representative democracy
Theories of democratic government
History of the framing and adoption of the Constitution
Separation of powers
Federalism

Key Terms and Concepts: power, authority, legitimacy, democracy, democratic centralism, direct/participatory democracy, representative democracy, elite/elitism, Marxism, bureaucrat/bureaucracy, pluralism, unalienable rights, the Enlightenment, Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention, Shays's Rebellion, Great Compromise, republic/republicanism, judicial review, federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, faction, Federalists, Antifederalists, *Federalist Papers*, coalition, writ of habeas corpus, bill of attainder, ex post facto law, Bill of Rights, freedom vs. equality, slavery, amendment, line-item veto, devolution, sovereignty, unitary system, confederal system, federal system, "necessary and proper" clause, nullification, dual federalism, municipality, charter, Dillon's rule, initiative, referendum, recall, grants-in-aid, revenue sharing, mandates

Chapters Included:
Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 1-3

Other Readings and Materials:
U.S. Constitution; *Federalist #10*; *Federalist #51*; Woll Ch. 1: "Second Treatise on Civil Government"; Woll Ch. 1: "How Not to Read the Constitution"; Woll Ch. 3: "Antifederalists"; Woll Ch. 2: "Merits of the Federal System"; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*; *McCulloch v. Maryland*; *Gibbons v. Ogden*; *Marbury v. Madison*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):
Examine graphs showing the amount and purpose of federal grants to state and local governments; analyze poll questions (regarding concentration of power between states and the federal government) and graphical representations of responses

Unit 2: Political Beliefs, Behaviors, and Culture (3 weeks)

Sources of political beliefs and culture

Comparing the United States with other nations

How citizens learn about politics

Origin, differences, and consequences of public opinion

Political ideology

Political participation

Voting and nonvoting

The American electorate

Protest, demonstration, and mass movements

Differences in beliefs, culture, and participation

Among individuals

Within and across groups

Key Terms and Concepts: political culture and subculture, ideology, civic duty and competence, socioeconomic class/status and class consciousness, orthodoxy, progressive, efficacy, the economy, role of family/religion/race/ethnicity/gender/education/region, political tolerance, silent majority, polls and sampling, sampling error, liberal, conservative, libertarianism, populism, voting-age population, registered voters, motor-voter law, literacy tests, poll taxes, grandfather clauses, white primary, state to federal control of voting practices, activism, voter turnout, participation rates and differences among groups

Chapters Included:

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 4-6

Other Readings and Materials:

Woll Ch. 4: "Theory of Critical Elections"; Woll Ch. 4: "Voting Behavior Democratic Practice and Democratic Theory"; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):

Examine graphs showing changes in trust in the government, political efficacy, and political tolerance; analyze data (and graphical representations) regarding political identification, political attitudes, and voting tendencies of different demographic groups

Unit 3: Political Parties, Elections, Interest Groups, and the Media (3 weeks)

History and development of political parties

The national party structure

Functions

Organization

Conventions

Influence and effect on the political process

The two-party system and minor parties

State and local parties

Elections, electoral laws, and the electoral process

Campaign finance

Interest groups

Types, organization, and funding

Political action committees (PACs)

Activities, regulations, and effects on the political process

The mass media

History

Functions, structures, and governing rules

Effect on politics

Changes in media in the information age

Interpreting political news

Key Terms and Concepts: political party, Jacksonians, sectionalism, national convention, national committee, congressional campaign committee, national chairman, political machine, ideological party, sponsored party, two-party system, Republican Party, Democratic Party, independents, plurality system, nominations, primary election, caucus, Iowa caucus, incumbent, political action committee (PAC), position issue, general election, closed primary, open primary, blanket primary, runoff primary, presidential primary, New Hampshire primary, valence issue, soft money, campaign finance regulation, prospective voting, retrospective voting, critical or realigning periods, split ticket, straight ticket, office-bloc ballot, party-column ballot, presidential vs. congressional campaigns, electoral college, lobbying and lobbyists, interest groups, membership, solidary incentive, material incentive, purposive incentive, ideological interest groups, public-interest lobby, social movements and interest groups, environmentalism, feminism, unions, bias, political cues and ratings, sound bite, muckraker, trial balloon, loaded language, equal time rule, right-of-reply rule, political editorializing rule, fairness doctrine, television markets, watchdog, selective attention, routine stories, feature stories,

insider stories, adversarial press, news leaks, political press, popular press, the internet

Chapters Included:

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 7-10

Other Readings and Materials:

U.S. Constitution; *Federalist #10*; Woll Ch. 4: Perspectives on American Political Parties”; Woll Ch. 4: “Divided We Govern”; Woll Ch. 4: “Politics by Other Means”; Woll Ch. 5: “Madison’s Dilemma”; Woll Ch. 5: “Interest Groups and the American Political System”; Woll Ch. 5: “The Misplaced Obsession with PACs”; Woll Ch. 6: “American Presidential Elections”; Woll Ch. 8: “Media Power and Congressional Power”; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*; selected clips from news coverage of presidential primary debates; *New York Times v. Sullivan*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):

Examine exit poll data; examine 2004 Electoral College Map; analyze graph of changes in party identification; analyze time line of changes in major political parties; examine campaign funds and costs data; examine correlation between economic performance and voting for the incumbent President’s party; interpret significance of data regarding public consumption of and trust in the media

Unit 4: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary (3 weeks)

History and organization of Congress

Election and representation in Congress

The legislative process

History and powers of the President

Election of the president

Growth of the bureaucracy

Congressional oversight

History, structure, and jurisdiction of the federal courts

The Supreme Court

Formal and informal arrangements of power in these institutions

Relationships among the four institutions and balances of power

Links to public opinion, voters, political parties, interest groups, the media, and state and local governments

Key Terms and Concepts: bicameral legislature, the House and the Senate, composition and party structure of Congress, staffs, debates, filibuster, coalition, malapportionment, gerrymandering, descriptive vs. substantive representation, majority/minority leader, whip, congressional caucus, committees, public vs. private bill, resolutions, referrals, open vs. closed vs. restrictive rule, rider, quorum, cloture, types of votes, pork-barrel legislation, franking privilege, perks, cabinet, veto, pocket veto, line-item veto, legislative veto, impeachment, lame duck, gridlock, executive privilege, the Vice President, spoils system, laissez-faire, discretionary authority, the buddy system, authorization legislation, appropriation, competitive service, iron triangle vs. issue network, trust fund, red tape, judicial review, strict-constructionist approach, activist approach, constitutional court, district court, court of appeals, legislative court, litmus test, civil vs. criminal law, writ of certiorari, in forma pauperis, plaintiff, standing, sovereign immunity, class-action suit, brief, amicus curiae, per curiam opinion, concurring vs. dissenting opinion, stare decisis, political question, remedy, checks and balances

Chapters Included:

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 11-14

Other Readings and Materials:

Woll Ch. 8 (all); Woll Ch. 6: "Presidential Power"; Woll Ch. 9 (all); Woll Ch. 7 (all); Woll Ch. 9 (all); U.S. Constitution; *Federalist #78*; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*; *Marbury v. Madison*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):

Examine data regarding the demographics of Congress; analyze graph of incumbent reelection trends; examine map of North Carolina Districts 1 and 12; learn flowchart of how a bill becomes a law; examine graph of changes in presidential popularity; learn flowchart of the jurisdiction of federal courts

Unit 5: Public Policy (2.5 weeks)

The policy-making process in a federal system

Policy agendas

The enactment of policy by Congress and the President
Implementation and interpretation by the bureaucracy and the courts
Links to interest institutions, federalism, political parties, interest groups,
public opinion, elections, and policy networks

Domestic policy

Economic policy

Social welfare

Environmental policy

Foreign and military policy

Key Terms and Concepts: political agendas, costs and benefits, majoritarian politics, interest group politics, client politics, pork-barrel projects, logrolling, entrepreneurial politics, boycott, business regulation, monetarism, Keynesian economics, price and wage controls, industrial policy, supply-side economics, Reaganomics, fiscal policy, taxation and spending, budget deficit, budget surplus, monetary policy, the Federal Reserve, budget resolution, entitlements, insurance programs, assistance programs, social security, medicare, means testing, Earned Income Tax Credit, service strategy, income strategy, environmentalism, global warming, major environmental laws, offsets, bubble standard, pollution allowances, the President and foreign policy, intelligence, military-industrial complex, Cold War policies, the defense budget, foreign aid, international trade policy, the Middle East and Iraq

Chapters Included:

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 15-17, 20, 21

Other Readings and Materials:

Review Woll Chs. 6-9; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):

Examine graphs of changes in the federal budget and the national debt; compare data on tax burdens in diverse democratic nations; analyze data on social security solvency; examine map of military intervention in the Middle East; examine map of sources of fossil fuels in the U.S. and compare to environmental policy agendas of representatives from different areas

Unit 6: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (2.5 weeks)

History and development of civil liberties and civil rights
Judicial interpretation
The Bill of Rights
The First Amendment
Crime and due process
Racial segregation and the Fourteenth Amendment
Women and equal rights
Affirmative action
Supreme Court decisions as tools of social change (strengths, weaknesses, major decisions)

Key Terms and Concepts: civil liberties, McCarthyism, freedom of expression, freedom of religion, prior restraint, clear-and-present-danger test, due-process, clause, slander, libel, obscenity, symbolic speech, free-exercise clause, establishment clause, wall-of-separation principle, exclusionary rule, search and seizure, search warrant, probable cause, self-incrimination, good-faith exception, terrorism and civil liberties, civil rights, suspect classifications, Jim Crow, discrimination, prejudice, separate-but-equal doctrine, *Brown v. Board of Education*, desegregation vs. integration *de jure* segregation, *de facto* segregation, nonviolence and civil disobedience, strict scrutiny, sexual harassment, abortion, affirmative action, reverse discrimination, equality of results vs. equality of opportunity, compensatory action

Chapters Included:
Wilson and DiIulio, Chapters 18, 19

Other Readings and Materials:
U.S. Constitution (Bill of Rights, 14th Amendment); Woll Ch. 3: “The Need to Maintain a Free Marketplace of Ideas”; selected readings from *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Economist*; *Plessy v. Ferguson*; *Brown v. Board of Education I&II*; *Roe v. Wade*; *Engel v. Vitale*; *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*; *New York Times v. Sullivan*; *Texas v. Johnson*; *Gideon v. Wainwright*; *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*; *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*

Using graphs, maps, and charts (samples):
Examine graphs showing changing composition of U.S. immigration and population; analyze chart of legislators from different demographic groups

Final 1.5 weeks: Course review and testing

Course review

Released Advanced Placement test (multiple choice and free response)

Review of released Advanced Placement test