

AP United States Government and Politics

COURSE SYLLABUS 2013 - 2014

COURSE GOALS AND DIRECTION

The goal of this course is to increase your understanding of and participation in the American political system and pass the AP College Board Examination. Our study will focus on the framework of government and the traditions and values of American politics. We will examine in detail the processes and institutions through which the political system functions as well as some of the public policies the political system develops.

AP Government is a full year course for 1.0 high school credit. Extra consideration is given in calculating accumulative grade point averages for grades in this course as provided in the grading policy of Westerville City Schools. The College Board AP Exam for American Politics and Government offers the potential of college credit for a semester course. **All students are strongly encouraged to take the AP Exam; it is the equivalent of the second semester exam.**

TEXTBOOKS AND READING MATERIAL

American Government. James Q. Wilson and John J. Dilulio, Jr. (Primary textbook)
American Government: Readings and Cases. Peter Woll. (Supplemental readings in unit packet)
American Politics: Classic & Contemporary Readings. Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis, The Lanahan Reader & (Supplemental readings in unit packet)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading assignments - textbook, supplemental readings, handouts.
2. Notebook - For organizing handouts, notes and assignments (optional)
3. Short written reports on readings and occasional homework questions. These critical reviews, summaries, questions, etc. are due the day they are assigned. **Late papers will receive no more than ½ credit.**
4. Participation in class lectures and discussions (**very, very important!**).
5. Occasional oral presentations and debates.
6. Quizzes and tests.
7. Formal Reports - A book review for first semester in place of exam and a research paper on foreign policy for second semester for those not taking the College Board examination.
8. Regular attendance is a necessary and proper requirement for this course. Make-up work is essentially self-service except for quizzes and tests. These are the responsibility of the student to schedule outside of class and when the teacher is free of other classes. This may mean scheduling such make-up work before or after the regular student day. Eligibility for make-up work is based on the formal school rules. The teacher also reserves the right to assign extra individual assignments when excessive absenteeism threatens a student's progress.

GRADES

Quarter grades will be based on student achievement in three areas and weighted as noted:

Tests and quizzes - 45%;
Reaction papers, short reports, and question/answer assignments - 35%;
Class participation - involvement in class discussions and activities (100 points) - 20%
Base participation: 76 points (approximately 1 ½ points for each day).
Volunteers: 0 - 8 points.
Objectivity: 0 - 8 points.
Insight: 0 - 8 points.
Total: 100 points.

Semester grades will weigh the two quarter grades to count 40% each and the grade on the semester report as 20%.

STUDY UNITS, TOPICS, TEXT CHAPTERS, AND SCHEDULE

I. AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE AND IDEOLOGY

August 14 to August 23 (8 days)

Wilson Ch 1 - The Study of American Government - pp. 3-15

Wilson Ch 4 - American Political Culture - pp. 76-95

II. THE CONSTITUTION

August 26 to September 13 (14 days)
Wilson Ch 2 - The Constitution - pp. 16-46

III. THE FEDERAL SYSTEM

September 16 to September 26 (9 days)
Wilson Ch 3 - Federalism - pp. 49-73

TESTING - (2 days)

Friday, September 27 - 60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 50 min. Chapters 1,2,3, and 4
Monday, September 30 - Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 50 minutes Chapters 1,2,3, and

4

All future dates will be determined as we progress through the school year

IV. POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

(11 days)
Wilson Ch 7 - Public Opinion - pp. 155-175
Wilson Ch 8 - Political Participation - pp. 178-194
Wilson Ch 11 - Interest Groups- pp. 265-287

V. POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS

(7 days)
Wilson Ch 9 - Political Parties- pp. 198-229
Wilson Ch 10 - Elections and Campaigns - pp. 231-262

VI. THE MEDIA AND POLITICS

(8 days)
Wilson Ch 10 - The Media - pp. 253-280

TESTING - (2 days)

60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 min. Chapters 7 - 12
Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 45 minutes Chapters 7 -12

VII. THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

(11 days)
Wilson Ch 13 - Congress - pp. 317-365

TESTING - (2 days)

60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 minutes Chapter 11
Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 45 minutes Chapter 11

MOCK SENATE

Sometime in November/early December (5 - 8 days)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUE DEBATES (time permitting)

Topics to be announced and selected in January and debates conducted in March. (Usually during OGT week)

VIII. THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

(13 days)
Wilson Ch 14 - The Presidency- pp. 368 - 406
Wilson Ch 15 - The Bureaucracy - pp. 410 - 433
***SPECIAL NOTE:** Book review is due on date scheduled for a semester exam (December 18 - 20). Counts for first semester final exam grade; optional oral presentation encouraged.

TESTING - (2 days)

January? - 60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 minutes Chapters 14 and 15
January? - Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 45 minutes Chapters 14 and 15

IX. THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

(17 days)
Wilson Ch 16 - The Judiciary - pp. 438-465

TESTING - (2 days)

60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 minutes Chapter 16
Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 45 minutes Chapter 16

MOCK TRIAL

February (5 days)

X. CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

(20 days, could be fewer if prior to OGT week)
Wilson Ch 5 - Civil Liberties- pp. 98-122
Wilson Ch 6 - Civil Rights- pp. 125-151

TESTING - (2 days)

60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 minutes Chapters 5 and 6
Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 50 minutes Chapters 5 and 6

XI. THE POLITICS OF PUBLIC POLICY/Comprehensive Review

(10 days)

Wilson Ch 17 - The Policy-Making Process - pp. 468-489
Wilson Ch 18 - Economic Policy - pp. 491-509
Wilson Ch 19 - Social Welfare - pp. 511-527

TESTING - (2 days)

60 Question Multiple Choice Test - 45 minutes Chapters 17, 18, and 19
Free-Response/Essay Format Test - 50 minutes Chapters 17, 18, and 19

XII. The Nature of American Democracy/Comprehensive Review/Wrapping up loose ends

Late April early May

Optional but recommended: Wilson Ch 22 - Who Governs? To What Ends? - pp. 576-588

THE REAL THING!

Tuesday, May 13. College Board AP Exam for U.S. Government and Politics (This will be an A.M. Test)

60 multiple choice questions - 45 minutes
4 Free-Response Analysis questions - 100 minutes

XIII. ASSORTED TOPICS

May 14 to final day for Seniors

*Research paper on Foreign Policy topic due during senior final exam (only for those who do not take the AP exam) - Grade counts for second semester final exam grade for any student not exempt from the final exam. For most students, this will be an optional assignment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to abide by ethical standards in preparing and presenting material. Such standards are founded on the basic concepts of honesty and integrity. Students' efforts submitted for grading must reflect their individual levels of knowledge and accomplishment. The WNHS Student Handbook has additional references to this important consideration

