**AP United States Government and Politics Syllabus**

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**Overview of the Course and the AP Exam**

Introduction to AP U.S. Government and Politics AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level year-long course that not only seeks to prepare students for success on the AP Exam in May, but also provide students with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that are currently shaping American politics and society. It is important to note that this course is not a history course; it is a political science course that studies the interconnectedness of the different parts of the American political system and the behaviors and attitudes that shape this system and are the byproduct of this system.

AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices through the use of a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, by the end of the course, students will be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well- reasoned, thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

**Expectations:**

Being a college level course, students should possess the self-discipline and ability to do the amount of reading and writing required for Advanced Placement Government. Students will be expected to read large amount out side of the classroom from varying sources. Students will also be required to write numerous papers and essays on the weekly topics. AP style questions and essays will be given for each unit test.

I expect each of you to be completely prepared for the AP test in May by the time you have completed this class. It is important to remember, this class is designed to prepare you for the AP test. Assignments, readings and tests are all developed to help you practice for the test.

As an Advanced Placement class, you will be expected to do the readings on your own and be prepared to discuss them in class. Notebooks are strongly encouraged to help organize the materials and to give you a study guide for the final and the AP test.

**This course will incorporate the analysis of the following 15 required Supreme Court cases:**

* *Marbury v. Madison (1803)*
* *McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)*
* *Schenck v. United States (1919)*
* *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)*
* *Baker v. Carr (1961)*
* *Engel v. Vitale (1962)*
* *Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)*
* *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)*
* *New York Times Company v. United States (1971)*
* *Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)*
* *Roe v. Wade (1973)*
* *Shaw v. Reno (1993)*
* *United States v. Lopez (1995)*
* *McDonald v. Chicago (2010)*
* *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC*) (2010)

For each of these cases, the facts, issues, holdings, and reasoning underlying the majority and dissenting opinions can be found through the Oyez database online. Oyez also has an app that can be downloaded to smartphones.

You will be required to complete multiple assignments analyzing and comparing these cases with other non- required cases.

The list above is not an exhaustive list of the Supreme Court cases that will be analyzed and discussed in this course. Additionally, you will have access to information and majority/dissenting opinion excerpts for cases that complement the required cases,

**Foundational Documents**: This course will incorporate the analysis and discussion of nine required foundational documents to help understand the context and beliefs of the founders and their critics and the debates surrounding the writing and ratification of the U.S. Constitution:

* The Declaration of Independence
* The Articles of Confederation
* *Federalist No. 10*
* *Brutus No. 1*
* *Federalist No. 51*
* The Constitution of the United States
* *Federalist No. 70*
* *Federalist No. 78*
* “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

To aid in the analysis of these foundational documents, students will also have access to the AP United States Government and Politics reading skills workbook. This online reader contains strategies for analyzing the required foundational documents and a sampling of related readings, including:

* Excerpts from Locke’s Second Treatise of Civil Government to go along with the analysis of the Declaration of Independence
* “Letters from the Federal Farmer to the Republican I” to go along with the analysis of the Articles of Confederation
* Essays from the National Constitution Center’s “Matters of Debate” series (Interactive Constitution resource) to go along with the analysis of the Tenth Amendment

**The AP Exam:**

The AP American Government and Politics Exam is given by the College Board in the spring along with other subjects such as Chemistry and Literature. Students taking this class are encouraged and expected to take the test for possible college credit. The test is very difficult and requires a large amount of preparation, some of which will be provided in class. Students who want to score well on the test will have to study and prepare outside of class.

**Overview of the AP Exam and Keys to AP Exam Success The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam will be comprised of the following sections:**

* Multiple-Choice Questions: Number of Questions: Timing: One hour and 20 minutes Percentage of Total Exam: 50% : 55 Structure – The questions on multiple choice will ask students to:
  + Analyze and compare political concepts
  + Analyze and interpret quantitative, text-based, and visual sources
  + Apply course concepts, foundational documents, and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of hypothetical and real-world scenarios
* Free-Response Questions: Number of Questions: Timing: One hour and 40 minutes Percentage of Total Exam: 50% : 4 Structure – The four questions on the free response will ask students to:
  + Apply political concepts in real-world scenarios
  + Compare the decisions and implications of different Supreme Court cases
  + Analyze quantitative data
  + Develop an argument using required foundational documents as evidence

**Grading:**

Grades will be based on a weighted point system. Grades are weighted according to the following:

**75% Papers, tests and quizzes**

**25% Other graded assignments**

Every assignment, test, project and notebook will be assigned points. Report card grades will be determined by the points earned compared to the total possible points. To earn the maximum number of points, attempt and turn in every assignment. **Points will be deducted for late assignments, 50% credit will be earned on late assignments.**

93-100 A 73-76 C

90-92 A- 70-72 C-

* 1. B+ 67-69 D+
  2. B 60-66 D
  3. B- 0-59 F
  4. C+

**Attendance:**

Good attendance is important to success in school and this class. Be in class everyday on time. For each excused absence, students will be given two days to complete work. If the absence is unexcused, make-up work will be worth 50% of the total possible points. **It is your responsibility to get missed work while you were absent.** Weekly assignments will be posted on the board and missed papers can be obtained from me upon your return to class or on the class website bwelles.weebly.com.

**Classroom objectives**

1. **Respect everyone’s opinions.** You may not agree, but everyone is entitled to respect.
2. **Be responsible for yourself and your actions.**  Don’t make excuses, accept responsibility and correct the issue.
3. **Care for the environment around you.** Help the people and area around you.

Students who do not follow the rules can expect a warning, call home, and or after school detentions. Parents will be contacted for poor behavior, attendance, and grades, as well as for good effort and achievement.

I look forward to an exciting year. I hope to get to know each of you throughout the year. If you have any problems or questions please feel free to see me before or after school or email questions to **bwelles@solake.org.**

## Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

## Essential Questions:

* How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety?
* How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system?
* How does the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.?

**Chapters in Sabato:**

Chapter 1: Political Landscape

Chapter 2: Constitution

Chapter 3: Federalism

Chapter 4: State and Local Government

**What you need to know:**

1. A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.
   1. Explain how democratic ideals (limited government, natural rights, popular sovereignty, republicanism, and social contract) are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.
      1. **Declaration of Independence** (popular sovereignty)
      2. **U.S. Constitution**
      3. Thomas Hobbes’ definition of anarchy in absence of government
      4. Mayflower Compact (1620)
      5. John Locke’s “Second Treatise of Civil Government” (1690)
      6. Baron de Montesquieu’s “The Spirit of the Laws” (1748) – separation of powers
   2. Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the U.S.
      1. Participatory democracy – broad participation
      2. Pluralist democracy – group-based activism
      3. Elite democracy – limited participation
      4. U.S. Constitution
      5. **Federalist No. 10**
      6. **Brutus No. 1**
2. The Constitution emerged from the debate about the weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation as a blueprint for limited government.
   1. Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents.
      1. **Federalist No. 10**: large republic controls factions; federalism; representative democracy
      2. **Brutus No. 1**: small republic
      3. “Letters from the Federal Farmer #1”
   2. Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.
      1. **Articles of Confederation**: lack of federal military; lack of tax power
   3. Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.
      1. **Constitution of the U.S. -** Compromises: Great (CT) Compromise; Electoral College; Three-Fifths Compromise; Importation of slaves
      2. Article V Amendment process: 2/3 proposal; ¾ ratification
      3. Debates still today: role of central government; powers of state government; rights of individuals
3. The Constitution creates a complex policy-making process to ensure the people’s will is represented and that freedom is preserved.
   1. Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and checks and balances.
      1. Congress, President, Courts
      2. **Federalist No. 51 –** Separation of Powers; Checks and Balances
   2. Explain the implications of separation of powers and checks and balances for the U.S. political system.
      1. Impeachment
4. Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.
   1. Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.
      1. Exclusive powers; concurrent powers
      2. Grants, incentives, aid programs: mandates, categorical grants, block grants
         1. National Recovery Act 1933
         2. Devolution of 1980’s
         3. Hurricane Katrina federal response
         4. Minimum Drinking Act 1984
         5. Marijuana legalization
   2. Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.
      1. **Tenth Amendment; Fourteenth Amendment**; commerce clause; necessary and proper clause
      2. **McCulloch v. Maryland** (1819) – supremacy of fed over state; implied powers of Congress
      3. **U.S. v. Lopez** (1995) - commerce clause; states win; no federal gun free zones in schools
      4. Defense of Marriage Act (1996); No Child Left Behind Act (2001); Violence Against Women Act (1994); U.S. v. Morrison (2000)
   3. Explain how the distribution of powers among three federal branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.

**Foundational Documents:**

The Declaration of Independence

Excerpts from *Federalist No. 10*

excerpts from *Brutus No. 1*

Excerpts from the Articles of Confederation

The Constitution of the United States

Excerpts from *Federalist No. 51*

**Required Cases:**

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

United States v. Lopez (1995)

## Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government

### Essential Questions:

* How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?
* To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21st century?

**Chapters in Sabato:**

Chapter 7: Congress

Chapter 8: The Presidency

Chapter 9: The Executive Branch and Federal Bureaucracy

Chapter 10: The Judiciary

**What you need to know:**

1. The republican ideal in the U.S. is manifested in the structure and operation of the legislative branch.
   1. Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.
      1. Senate = states; House = population
      2. Debate
      3. Coalitions
      4. Pass budgets; raise revenue; coin money
      5. Declare war
      6. Enact legislation
   2. Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy making process.
      1. Procedures, rules, and roles:
         1. Debate rules
         2. Speaker, President, Whips, Committee Leaders
         3. Filibuster, cloture
         4. Rules Committee
         5. Treaty ratification and confirmation
         6. Budget
         7. Pork Barrel, Logrolling
   3. Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.
      1. Gridlock
      2. Gerrymandering, redistricting,
      3. **Baker v. Carr** (1961) – “one person, one vote”
      4. **Shaw v. Reno** (1993) – no racial gerrymandering
      5. Trustee, Delegate, Politico voting
2. The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.
   1. Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.
      1. Vetoes / pocket vetoes
      2. Foreign policy
      3. Bargaining and persuasion
      4. Executive orders
      5. Signing statements
   2. Explain how the president’s agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.
      1. Executive branch appointments
      2. Judicial appointments
      3. Policy initiatives
   3. Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.
      1. **Federalist No. 70 –** single executive
      2. **Twenty-second Amendment**
   4. Explain how communication technology has changed the president’s relationship with the national constituency and the other branches.
      1. Modern technology; social media
      2. State of the Union broadcast
3. The design of the judicial branch protects the Supreme Court’s independence as a branch of government, and

the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.

* 1. Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.
     1. **Article III**
     2. **Federalist No. 78**
     3. **Marbury v. Madison** (1803)
  2. Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court’s power.
     1. Precedents / *stare decisis*
     2. Martin v. Hunter’s Lessee (1816)
     3. New Deal conflict
     4. U.S. v. Nixon (1974)
     5. Judicial activism v. judicial restraint
     6. Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Bd. Of Ed. (1970); Milliken v. Bradley (1974)
  3. Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court’s power.
     1. Legislation to modify decisions
     2. Constitutional amendments
     3. Appointments and confirmations
     4. Ignoring decisions
     5. Legislation impacting jurisdiction
        1. Roosevelt’s court packing scheme
        2. 16th Amendment

1. The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability.
   1. Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.
      1. Writing and enforcing regulations
      2. Issuing fines
      3. Testifying
      4. “iron triangles”
      5. FCC, Civil Service Act, TSA
   2. Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.
      1. Dept. of Homeland Security
      2. Dept. of Transp.
      3. Dept. of V.A.
      4. Dept. of Ed.
      5. EPA
      6. FEC
      7. SEC
   3. Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.
      1. Committee hearings
      2. Power of the purse
   4. Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration.
      1. Compliance monitoring
   5. Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.
      1. Legislative veto

**Foundational Documents:**

The Constitution of the United States

*Federalist No. 70*

*Federalist No. 78*

**Required Cases:**

Baker v. Carr (1961)

Shaw v. Reno (1993)

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

## Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

### Essential Questions:

* To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination?
* How have U.S. Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

**Chapters in Sabato:**

Chapter 5 Civil Liberties

Chapter 6: Civil Rights

**What you need to know:**

1. Provisions of the U.S. Constitution’s Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of the government and the civil liberties of individuals.
   1. Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.
      1. Bill of Rights
      2. Court interpretation
   2. Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.
   3. Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court’s interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.
      1. **Engel v. Vitale** (1962) – no school sponsorship of religious activities
      2. **Wisconsin v. Yoder** (1972) – Amish cannot be compelled to school past 8th grade
      3. **Tinker v. Des Moines Ind. Comm. S.D.** (1969) – black armbands allowed to protest
      4. **Schenck v.** **U.S.** (1919) – “clear and present danger” test
      5. West Virginia Bd. Of Ed. v. Barnette (1943)
      6. Morse v. Frederick (2007)
      7. **NYT v. U.S.** (1971) – “heavy presumption against prior restraint”
      8. D.C. v. Heller (2008) – 2nd A. case
   4. Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.
      1. **Eighth Amendment**
      2. **Second Amendment**
      3. **Fourth Amendment**
2. Protections of the Bill of Rights have been selectively incorporated by way of the Fourteenth Amendment’s “due process” clause to prevent state infringement of basic liberties.
   1. Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation.
      1. **McDonald v. Chicago** (2010) – 2nd A. is applicable to states through 14th A.
      2. bans on polygamy and use of peyote
   2. Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.
      1. **Fifth Amendment**
      2. **Sixth Amendment**
      3. **Fourth Amendment**
      4. Riley v. California (2014)
      5. Partiot Act
      6. **Gideon v. Wainwright** (1963) – right to attorney
      7. **Roe v. Wade** (1973)
      8. Pierce v. Society of Sisters (1925)
      9. Hyde Amendment (1976) – barred federal funds for abortion (some exceptions)
      10. Bd. Of Ed. of Ind. S. Dist. No 92 of Pottawatomie v. Earls (2008)
3. The 14th Amendment’s “equal protection clause” as well as other constitutional provisions have often been used to support the advancement of equality.
   1. Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.
      1. **“Letter from a Birmingham Jail”**
      2. NOW and women’s rights movement
      3. Pro-life movement
      4. Title II – equal treatment in public accommodations
      5. Title VII – Equal Employment opportunities
      6. Title IX – women’s athletics
      7. Reed v. Reed (1971)
      8. Hatch Amendment (1981)
4. Public policy promoting civil rights is influenced by citizen-state interactions and constitutional interpretation over time.
   1. Explain how the government has responded to social movements.
      1. **Brown v. Bd. Of Ed.** (1954) – segregation violates 14th Amendment
      2. Civil Rights Act of 1964
      3. Title IX of Education Amendments Act of 1972
      4. Voting Rights Act of 1965
5. The Court’s interpretation of the U.S. Constitution is influenced by the composition of the Court and citizen-state interactions. At times, it has restricted minority rights and, at others, protected them.
   1. Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.
      1. Plessy v. Ferguson – separate by equal doctrine
      2. **Brown v. Board** (1954)
      3. Affirmative Action
         1. Milliken v. Bradley (1974)
         2. Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle Schools Dist. No. 1 (2007)
         3. Regents of University of CA v. Bakke (1978)
         4. Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter v. Bollinger (2003)

**Foundational Documents:**

The Constitution of the United States

“Letter from Birmingham Jail”

**Required Cases:**

Engel v. Vitale (1962)

Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)

Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)

Schenck v. United States (1919)

New York Times Co. v. United States (1971)

McDonald v. Chicago (2010)

Miranda v. Arizona (1966)

Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

Roe v. Wade (1973)

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

## Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

### Essential Questions:

* + How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
  + How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?

**Chapters in Sabato:**

Chapter 11: Political Socialization

Chapter 17: Social Welfare Policy

Chapter 18: Economic Policy

**What you need to know:**

1. Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.
   1. Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens (individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, and limited government) and attitudes about the role of government.
      1. “Democracy in America” – Tocqueville (Ch. 2-3)
      2. “The Origin of the Anglo-Americans” (1835)
      3. “Confronting the Submerged State” – Mettler (2011)
      4. “Statecraft as Soulcraft: What Government Does” (1983) - Will
   2. Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.
      1. Family, schools, peers, media, social environments (civic and religious organizations)
      2. Globalization
      3. “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital” (1995) – Putnam
      4. “The World is Flat 3.0” (2007) – Friedman
      5. “Making Globalization Work” (2006) – Stiglitz
      6. “Latino America: How America’s Most Dynamic Population is Poised to Transform the Politics of the Nation” (2014) – Barreto & Segura
      7. Generational and lifecycle effects
         1. “Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics” (2010)
2. Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.
   1. Describe the elements of a scientific poll.
      1. Type of poll – opinion, benchmark, tracking, entrance, exit
      2. Sampling techniques, identification of respondents, mass survey/focus group, sampling error
      3. Type and format of questions
   2. Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.
      1. Importance of public opinion as source of influence
      2. Reliability and veracity of p.o. data
         1. Carter-Reagan (1980)
         2. Obama-Romney (2012)
         3. Clinton-Trump (2016)
3. Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.
   1. Explain how ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.
      1. Democratic = liberal
      2. Republican = conservative
   2. Explain how U.S. political culture (values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.
      1. Balance individual liberty with government need to promote stability and order.
         1. “American Exceptionalism: A Double Edged Sword” – Lipset (1996)
         2. Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (1996)
         3. DREAM Act
         4. Multiculturalism v. assimilation
   3. Describe different political ideologies on the role of government in regulating the marketplace.
      1. Liberal – more regulation
      2. Conservative – less regulation
      3. Libertarian – little or no regulation
         1. Inheritance tax
         2. Minimum wage
   4. Explain how political ideologies vary on the government’s role in regulating the marketplace.
      1. Keynesian – monetary & fiscal policy
      2. Supply- side – monetary & fiscal policy
   5. Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of the government in addressing social issues.
      1. Liberal = personal privacy extends further
      2. Conservative = less government in social and economic policy
      3. Libertarian = protect private property & individual liberty only
         1. Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992)
         2. Zelman v. Simmons-Harris (2002)
         3. Obergefell v. Hodges (2015)
   6. Explain how different ideologies impact policy on social issues.

## Unit 5: Political Participation

### Essential Questions:

* + How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
  + Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary?
  + How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policies?

**Chapters in Sabato:**

Chapter 12: Political Parties

Chapter 13: Voting and Elections

Chapter 14: The Campaign Process

Chapter 15: The Media

Chapter 16: Interest Groups

**What you need to know:**

1. Factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.
   1. Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation.
      1. **Fifteenth Amendment**
      2. **Seventeenth Amendment**
      3. **Nineteenth Amendment**
      4. **Twenty-Fourth Amendment**
      5. **Twenty-Sixth Amendment**
   2. Describe different models of voting behavior.
      1. Rational choice – citizen’s individual interest
      2. Retrospective voting – re-elect based on recent past
      3. Prospective voting – predict how a candidate will perform in the future
      4. Party-line voting- all candidates from one party
   3. Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.
      1. Voter turnout
         1. U.S. = Structural barriers, political efficacy, demographics
         2. Worldwide = nation v. state elections, registration laws, incentives or penalties, election type
      2. Voter choice
         1. Party identification
         2. Candidate characteristics
         3. Political issues
         4. Demographics: religion, gender, race
            1. “Stepping Up: The Impact of the Newest Immigrant, Asian and Latino Voters” (2013) – Paral
            2. “The Diversifying Electorate – Voting Rates by Race ad Hispanic Origin in 2012”
            3. “Issue Salience and Party Choice” – (1971)
2. Political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policy-makers.
   1. Describe linkage institutions.
      1. Parties
      2. Interest groups
      3. Elections
      4. Media
   2. Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.
      1. Mobilization and education of voters
      2. Party platforms
      3. Candidate recruitment
      4. Campaign management: fundraising & media strategy
      5. Party leadership in legislatures
         1. 2012 Dem & Rep Party Platforms
   3. Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.
      1. Critical elections & regional realignments
      2. Campaign finance laws
      3. Communication changes / data-management technology
         1. Mitt Romney – ORCA
         2. Obama – Narwhal
   4. Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidate success.
      1. Winner-take-all system
      2. Incorporation of agendas into major party platforms
   5. Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.
      1. Benefits
         1. Educate voters & office holders
         2. Conduct lobbying
         3. Draft legislation
         4. Mobilize membership
      2. Potential Problems
         1. “Iron Triangles” – exert influence
            1. Bureaucratic agencies
            2. Interest groups
            3. Congressional committees
   6. Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.
      1. Inequality of political and economic resources
      2. Unequal access to decision makers
      3. “Free rider” problem
      4. “The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups” (1965) – Olson
      5. “The Semisovereign People: A Realist’s View of Democracy in America” (1960) - Schattschneider
   7. Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.
      1. Single-issue groups
         1. Emily’s List – pro-choice candidates
         2. Club for Growth – limits on taxation
      2. Ideological/social movements
      3. Elections and political parties
      4. Professional organizations
      5. Military
      6. Bureaucratic agencies
3. The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.
   1. Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential election.
      1. Incumbency advantage phenomenon
      2. Open and closed primaries
      3. Caucuses
      4. Party conventions
      5. General elections
      6. The Electoral College
   2. Explain how the Electoral College facilitates and/or impedes democracy.
      1. Winner-take-all (except ME and NE)
   3. Explain how the different processes work in U.S. Congressional elections.
      1. Incumbency advantage phenomenon
      2. Open and closed primaries
      3. Caucuses
      4. General elections
   4. Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.
      1. Dependence on professional consultants
      2. Rising campaign costs / intensive fundraising efforts
      3. Duration of election cycles
      4. Social media – communication and fundraising
      5. “Victory Lab: the Secret Science of Winning Campaigns” (2012) – Issenberg
   5. Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.
      1. Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002
         1. Banned soft money
         2. Reduced attack ads - “Stand By Your Ad” provision
            1. “I’m \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I approve this message.”
      2. **Citizen’s United v. Federal Election Commission** (2010)
         1. Political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions = protected speech
      3. PACs
         1. Influence elections through fundraising and spending
4. The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.
   1. Explain the media’s role as a linkage institution.
      1. Investigative journalism
      2. Election coverage
      3. Political commentary
      4. Polling results – “horse races”
   2. Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.
      1. Media bias / media ownership / partisan news sites
      2. Increased media choice
      3. Ideologically oriented programming
      4. Consumer-driven media outlets and emerging technologies
      5. Credibility of news sources and information

**Foundational Documents:**

The Constitution of the United States

**Required Case:**

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010)