



AP U.S. Government & Politics

Course of Study Approval

October 2026



Introductions



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Goal of Presentation



Social Studies is seeking approval for the AP United States Government & Politics course of study, a new course, for the 2027-28 school year.



10-15 min

Agenda



Background



Course & Program Overview



Budget



Next Steps

Background



2024-25

**Scope &
Sequence
Review**

Fall 2025

**Dialogue with
Coordinators**

2025-26

**Review &
Writing Teams**

July 2026

**Course of
Study Draft &
Textbook
Review**

Fall 2026

**Course of
Study and
Program of
Studies**



Course Overview

AP U.S. Government and Politics provides a **college-level, nonpartisan introduction** to key political **concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors** that characterize the **constitutional system and political culture of the United States**. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behaviors. Underpinning the required content of the course are several big ideas that allow students to create meaningful connections among concepts throughout the course. Students will also engage in skill development that requires them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments. In addition, they will complete a political science research or applied civics project.

- Course Description in 27-28 Program of Studies

Units of Study

1. Foundations of American Democracy
2. Interactions Among the Branches of Government
3. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
4. American Political Ideologies and Beliefs
5. Political Participation
6. Applied Civics Project



Course Overview

Units of Study	Big Ideas (Themes)
1. Foundations of American Democracy 2. Interactions Among the Branches of Government 3. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights 4. American Political Ideologies and Beliefs 5. Political Participation 6. Applied Civics Project	• Constitutionalism • Liberty and Order • Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy • Competing Policymaking Interests • Methods of Political Analysis

AP Government & Politics also calls for students to demonstrate an understanding of **13 Required Foundational Documents** and **14 Required Supreme Court Cases**.



Course Overview

Academic Skills Emphasized in AP U.S. Government & Politics	Assessment Skills Featured on the National Exam
• Concept Application • SCOTUS Application • Data Analysis • Source Analysis • Argumentation	Multiple-Choice Questions Short writing tasks featuring concept application, quantitative analysis, and comparison of Supreme Court cases. Long writing task (argumentative essay)

Course Overview

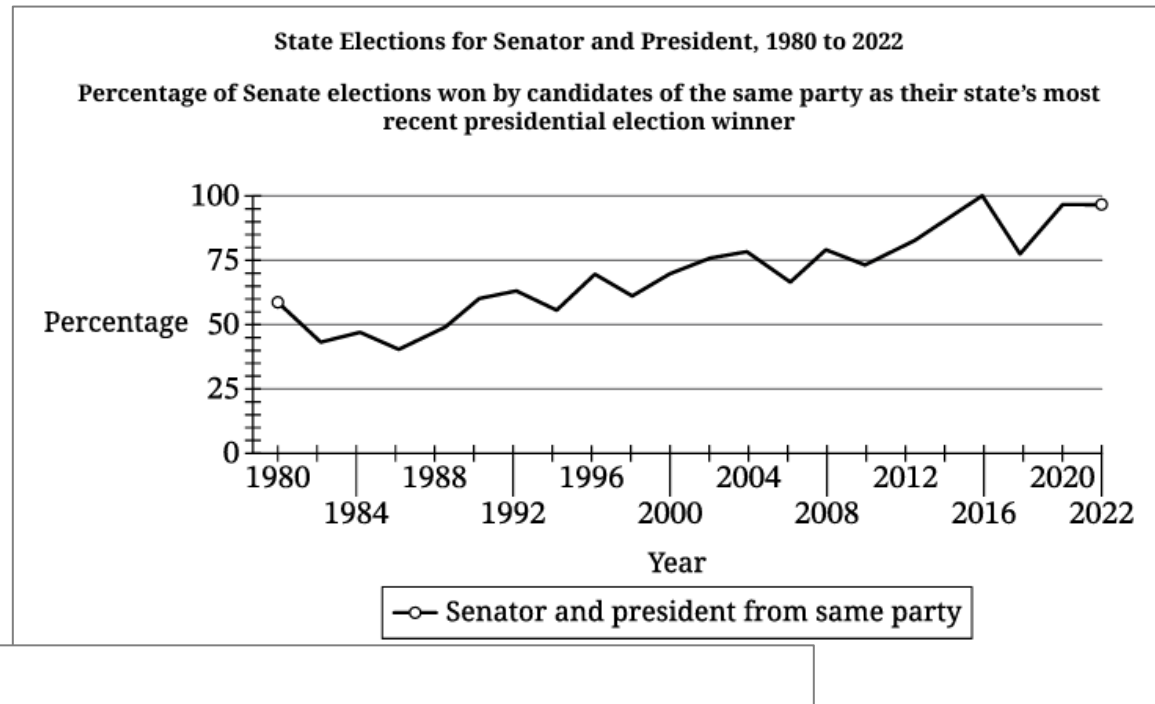


UNIT AT A GLANCE

Topic	Suggested Skill
1.1 Ideals of Democracy	1.D Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors illustrated in different scenarios in context.
1.2 Types of Democracy	4.A Describe the argument, perspective, evidence, and reasoning presented in the source.
1.3 Government Power and Individual Rights	1.A Describe political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
1.4 Challenges of the Articles of Confederation	4.B Explain how the argument or perspective in the source relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
1.5 Ratification of the U.S. Constitution	1.E Explain how political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors apply to different scenarios in context.
1.6 Principles of American Government	4.B Explain how the argument or perspective in the source relates to political principles, institutions, processes, policies, and behaviors.
1.7 Relationship Between the States and National Government	5.A Articulate a defensible claim/thesis.
1.8 Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism	2.A Describe the facts, issue, holding, reasoning, decision, and majority opinion of required Supreme Court cases.
1.9 Federalism in Action	5.B Support an argument or claim/thesis using relevant evidence.



Course Overview



2. Respond to parts A, B, C, and D.

- A. Identify the percentage of Senate elections won by candidates of the same party as their state's most recent presidential election winner in 2018, according to the data in the line graph.
- B. Describe the overall trend in the data shown in the line graph.
- C. Draw a conclusion about the level of partisanship among voters since 1980, using the data shown in the line graph.
- D. Explain how the overall trend shown in the line graph could reflect changes in how people acquire political news.



Program Overview

Our goal is to promote choice while also building a program that offers a well-rounded experience for our students.

AP U.S. Government and Politics complements our existing program, offering an AP course that aligns with AGES, our on-level Social Studies course.

Our High School Program	
9th Grade Modern U.S. History	10th Grade Modern World History
11th Grade American Gov't and Economic Systems	12th Grade Global Relations
Advanced Placement Courses satisfy the credit requirements for certain grade levels in our High School Program. • Comparative Government • Economics (Macroeconomics and Microeconomics) • European History • Psychology • U.S. Government and Politics [starting in 2027-28] • U.S. History	
Elective Courses offer additional opportunities to better understand individuals, communities, systems, and their interactions across time and place. Geography Introduction to Law Psychology Sociology	



Program Overview

Civics & Politics in the High School Program (Changes since 1995)

Before 2009	American Political Systems 0.5-credit course for Grade 10 (AP U.S. History also satisfied this requirement)
Scope & Sequence Review, 2007-08	American Government and Economic Systems 1.0-credit course for Grade 11 (AP U.S. History also satisfied this requirement)
Act 35 of 2018	Civics Assessment required by PDE. We satisfy requirement by implementing that task in Grade 11.
Minor Program Change 2019-20	AP Macroeconomics, AP Microeconomics, or AP Comparative Government added as courses satisfying civics & politics requirement)



Program Overview

SOCIAL STUDIES SEQUENCES			
Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Advanced Placement Sequence / Most Rigorous This sequence is designed for college-bound students who are applying to colleges designated as most competitive and/or planning to major in history, business, law, social sciences, or humanities.			
U.S. History – Honors prepares grade 9 students for Advanced Placement coursework in grades 10-12.	AP European History	AP U.S. History AP U.S. Gov't & Politics AP Macroeconomics*	AP Comparative Gov't AP Microeconomics AP Psychology
Honors Sequence This sequence is designed for students who intend on immediately continuing their education in college after graduation from Central Bucks.			
U.S. History – Honors	Modern World History – Honors	American Government and Economic Systems – Honors	Global Relations – Honors
Academic Sequence A well-rounded understanding of history and the social sciences invites our students to an active and engaging life as citizens in their communities and country. This sequence prepares students for success in college, a career in the Armed Forces, or employment in the labor force.			
U.S. History – Academic	Modern World History – Academic	American Government – Economic Academic	Global Relations –Academic
*AP Macroeconomics can satisfy either the Grade 11 required social studies credit when taken in 11 th grade OR the Grade 12 required social studies credit if taken in 12 th Grade.			

Updated High School
Program based on 2024-
25 Scope & Sequence
Review



Program Overview

Changes to Program Offerings available to Grade 11 Students (effective Class of 2029)	Considerations for Grade 12
Core Required Course: Amer. Gov't & Econ. Systems – Academic and Honors	Core Required Course: Global Relations – Academic and Honors
AP Electives Satisfying the Grade 11 Credit for Social Studies • AP U.S. Government & Politics • AP Macroeconomics • AP U.S. History	AP Electives Satisfying the Grade 12 Credit for Social Studies • AP Comparative Government • AP Macroeconomics • AP Microeconomics • AP Psychology
Note: AP Microeconomics and AP Comparative Government no longer satisfy the Grade 11 Credit for Social Studies	



Program Overview

Program Considerations and Rationale **Promoting a well-balanced program with student choice**

- Address concern that many students are missing U.S. civics & politics instruction.
- Aligns AP Course Options with standards addressed in core course.
- Continues to offer choices to our students.
- Recognizes enrollment patterns in our current AP courses.
- Provides greater enrollment stability.

Budget



Anticipated Costs for AP U.S. Government & Politics

- Training (summer APSI no charge)
- Textbooks
- Changes in Enrollment Patterns



Budget



Anticipated Textbook Purchase

- 250 – 300 copies; will confirm after program planning
 - Print and Online Textbook: Approx. \$215
 - Online Only: Approx. \$190
- Anticipated cost; \$60,000
- Budgeted for 2026 – 2027 purchase

Budget



Course and Average Enrollment, 2020-2026	Notes
AGES-Honors (384) Grade 11 Only	Students who enroll in AP U.S. Government will likely come from groups that have enrolled in these courses.
AP U.S. History (222) Grade 11 Only	
AP Macroeconomics (393) Includes Grades 11-12	
AP Microeconomics (131) Includes Grades 11-12	These courses will become an exclusive Grade 12 option. We anticipate minor impact on enrollment.
AP Comparative Government (130) Includes Grades 11-12	



Next Steps

