

Phoenix Christian United SST400H AP U.S. Government Course Scope & Sequence

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about the American political system. We will discuss political ideology, the development of the political system and our democratic institutions. Students will be able to evaluate the role of the national government and its relationship to the concept of liberty in a pluralistic society. The discussions will emphasize the changing political culture of American society and its effect on voting patterns, trends and the processes of government. In doing so we will examine certain critical elections in American history as well as recent political movements. The main thrust of the course, however, is to be able to apply an understanding of our political system to contemporary events through a Christian worldview.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND *KEY SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

American Government: James Q. Wilson and John J. Dilulio.

The Right Nation: Conservative Power in America by John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge

Crimes Against Nature: How George W. Bush & His Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country & Hijacking Our Democracy by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.

Online class forum: www.nicenet.org Once on the site, join the class forum named "PC AP Government and Politics" by entering our Class Key: SZ36Z23P52

COURSE SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

First Semester – The Constitution and Political Process

The Study of American Government 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Political Power and Democracy.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Constitution 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: The Problem of liberty, Articles of Confederation, the Challenges of the Constitutional Convention, Motives of the Framers, and Modern Views of Constitutional Reform.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Federalism 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Governmental Structure, The Founding, Debate of Meaning, Federal State Relations, Federal Aid and Federal Control, and the Devolution Revolution.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

American Political Culture 1 Week

Key Concepts: Political Culture, Comparing America with Other Nations, The Sources of Political Culture, Mistrust of Government, Political Efficacy, and Political Tolerance.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Public Opinion 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: The Origins of Public Opinion, Cleavages in Public Opinion, Political Ideology, and Political Elites, Public Opinion and Public Policy.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Political Participation 1 Week

Key Concepts: A Closer Look at Nonvoting, The Rise of the American Electorate, and Who Participates in Politics?

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Political Parties 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Parties - Here and Abroad, The Rise and Decline of the Political Party, The National Party Structure Today, State and Local Parties, The Two-Party System, Minor Parties, Nominating a President, and Parties Versus Voters.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Elections and Campaigns 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Presidential Versus Congressional Campaigns, Primary Versus General Campaigns, Money, What Decides the Election, and The Effects of Elections on Policy.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Interest Groups 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Explaining Proliferation, The Birth of Interest Groups, Kinds of Organizations, Interest Groups and Social Movements, Funds for Interest Groups, The Problem of Bias, The Activities of Interest Groups, and Regulating Interest Groups.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Media 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Journalism in American Political History, The Structure of the Media, Rules Governing the Media, The Effects of the Media on Politics, Governing and the News, and Interpreting Political News.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Biblical Integration: Biblical foundations of Mayflower Compact, English Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, US Constitution.

Second Semester

Congress 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Congress Versus Parliament, The Evolution of Congress, Who is in Congress? Do Members Represent Their Voters?, Ideology and Civility in Congress, The Organization of Congress: Parties and Caucuses, The Organization of Congress: Committees, The Organization of Congress: Staffs and Specialized Offices, How a Bill Becomes Law, Reducing Power and Perks, and Ethics and Congress.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Presidency 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Presidents and Prime Ministers, Divided Government, The Evolution of the Presidency, The Powers of the President, The Office of the President, Who Gets Appointed, Presidential Character, The Power to Persuade, The Power to Say No, The President's Program, Presidential Transition, and How Powerful Is the President?

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Bureaucracy 1 Weeks

Key Concepts: Distinctiveness of the American Bureaucracy, The Growth of the Bureaucracy, The Federal Bureaucracy Today, Congressional Oversight, Bureaucracy "Pathologies", and Reforming the Bureaucracy.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Judiciary 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: The Development of the Federal Courts, The Structure of the Federal Courts, The Jurisdiction of the Federal Courts, Getting to Court, The Supreme Court in Action, The Power of the Federal Courts, and Checks on Judicial Power.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

The Policy – Making Process 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Setting the Agenda, Making a Decision, Majoritarian Politics: Distributed Benefits, Distributed costs, Interest Group Politics: Concentrated Benefits, Concentrated Costs, Client Politics: Concentrated Benefits, Distributed Costs, Entrepreneurial Politics: Distributed Benefits, Concentrated Costs, The Case of Business Regulation, and Perceptions, Beliefs, Interests, and Values.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Economic Policy 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: The Politics of Economic Prosperity, The Politics of Taxing and Spending, Economic Theories and Political Needs, The Machinery of Economic Policy, Spending Money, The Budget, Reducing Spending, and Levying Taxes.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Social Welfare 1 Weeks

Key Concepts: Social Welfare in the United States, and Two Kinds of Welfare Politics.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Civil Liberties 1 Weeks

Key Concepts: Politics, Culture, and Civil Liberties, Interpreting and Applying the First Amendment, What is Speech?, Who Is a Person?, Church and State, and Crime and Due Process.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Civil Rights 1 Weeks

Key Concepts: The Black Predicament, The Campaign in the Courts, The Campaign in Congress, Women and Equal Rights, Affirmative Action, and Gays and the Supreme Court.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Foreign and Military Policy 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: Kinds of Foreign Policy, The Constitutional and Legal Context, The Machinery of Foreign Policy, Foreign Policy and Public Opinion, Cleavages Among Foreign Policy Elites, The Use of Military Force, The Defense Budget, The Structure of Defense Decision-Making, and Spending for the War on Terrorism.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Environmental Policy 2 Weeks

Key Concepts: The American Context, Entrepreneurial Politics: Global Warming, Majoritarian Politics: Pollution from Automobiles, Interest Groups Politics: Acid Rain, Client Politics: Agricultural Pesticides, The Environmental Uncertainties, and The Results.

Assessments: IDs, Debate, Quiz, Article Readings, Online Participation, and Exam.

Biblical Integration: The need for Faith Based Initiatives in Social Welfare and the biblical bases for the Civil Rights movement.