

American Government

Course Syllabus



Supervising Teacher

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Course Description:

American Government 2 semesters

2 credits

Grade 12

Required for graduation. This course covers the major elements of American National Government beginning with a background of governments in general. It includes a survey of the specific functions of the 3 branches of the U.S. Government. Other sections deal with the various powers such as taxing and commerce, regulation of immigration and naturalization, civil rights, political parties, pressure groups, suffrage, nominations and elections. The final semester examines state and local government. This will include state constitutions, state finance, municipal government in action, and case studies involving cities of the future.

Recommended Textbook Options:

PEARSON - PRENTICE HALL Magruder's American Government SE 2007 Edition I-DEA TOP PICK

HARCOURT - HOLT American Government SE 2003 Edition I-DEA TOP PICK

MCGRAW-HILL - GLENCOE United States Government; Democracy in Action 2006 SE I-DEA TOP PICK

Recommended Supplemental Materials or Software:

This course has no required extra software. However, there are United Streaming videos that are great supplementary resources. Also, PLATO has a number of modules in American Government that would be helpful as well. See your contact teacher for more information about how to access these resources.

Supplies or Equipment:

No additional supplies or equipment is needed.

End of Course Assessment:

This course has 4 anchor assignments for each semester (8 total). These are the required assessment piece for this course.

Course Evaluation:

60% of the grade for this course will be determined by the parent. The other 40% will come from the grading of the anchor assignments.

Pacing Guide

The topics and standards for this course have been divided between the two semesters.

Semester 1(Fall)	Semester 2 (Spring)
Basic Principles of Government	Mass Media
The Constitution	Political Parties
Federalism	Voter History and Behavior
Congress (Legislative)	Interest Groups
The President (Executive)	Civil Liberties/Civil Rights
The Judiciary (Judicial)	Economic Policy
Federal Bureaucracy	Foreign Policy
Public Opinion	Idaho State and Local Government

In order to fulfill this pacing requirement, the recommended texts have been broken down by chapter. Covering the chapters in the order listed will insure that all topics on the final exam will be covered during the appropriate semester.

Prentice Hall/Magruder’s “American Government”

Semester 1(Fall)	Semester 2 (Spring)
Chapter 1-2	Chapter 8
Chapter 3	Chapter 5
Chapter 4	Chapter 6
Chapter 10-12	Chapter 9
Chapter 13-14	Chapter 19-21
Chapter 18	Chapter 23
Chapter 15	Chapter 22
Chapter 8	Chapter 24-25

Holt “American Government”

Semester 1(Fall)	Semester 2 (Spring)
Chapter 1-2	Chapter 16
Chapter 3	Chapter 18
Chapter 4	(needs supplementary instruction)
Chapter 5-6	Chapter 17
Chapter 7-8; 19	Chapter 13-15
Chapter 11-12	Chapter 9
Chapter 4	Chapter 10; 22-23
Chapter 16	Chapter 20-21

Glencoe “US Government; Democracy in Action”

Semester 1(Fall)	Semester 2 (Spring)
Chapter 1-2	Chapter 19
Chapter 3	Chapter 16
Chapter 4	Chapter 17
Chapter 5-7	Chapter 18
Chapter 8-9	Chapter 13-15
Chapter 11-12	Chapter 20; 26
Chapter 10	Chapter 22; 25
Chapter 18	Chapter 23-24

Additional Information from the Instructor:

The “Voter History and Behavior” section that is missing in the Holt textbook can be supplemented by having students research how age, race, religion, money, education, and gender affect voter patterns. Students should understand that these are only patterns and do not represent the preferences of all voters in that population. Students should also understand how each group affects the likelihood of the person voting.

I-DEA Student Honor Code:

With any form of valid proof of dishonesty with regard to student work or testing, the instructor may elect from a range of actions. Academic dishonesty could lead to a zero grade for the assignment or even failure for the entire course following consultation between the instructor, Secondary Supervisor, and Director.

All students must adhere to the **Honor Code:**

“On my honor, I will maintain the highest possible standards of honesty, integrity and personal responsibility. This means I will not lie, cheat or steal, and as a member of this academic community, I am committed to creating an environment of respect and mutual trust.”

Idaho Content Standards: American Government

Standard 1: History No goals or objectives in American Government.

Standard 2: Geography No goals or objectives in American Government.

Standard 3: Economics No goals or objectives in American Government.

Standard 4: Civics and Government

Goals:	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5
Goal 4.1: Build an understanding of the foundational principles of the American political system.	9-12.G.4.1.1 Describe the origins of constitutional law in western civilization, including the natural rights philosophy, Magna Carta (1215), common law, and the Bill of Rights (1689) in England.	9-12.G.4.1.2 Describe historical milestones that led to the creation of limited government in the United States, such as the Declaration of Independence (1776), Articles of Confederation (1781), state constitutions and charters, United States Constitution (1787), and the Bill of Rights (1791) in the United States.	9-12.G.4.1.3 Analyze the essential ideals and objectives of the original organizing documents of the United States including the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the United States Constitution.	9-12.G.4.1.4 Explain the central principles of the United States governmental system including written constitution, popular sovereignty, limited government, separation of powers, majority rule with minority rights, and federalism.	
Goal 4.2: Build an understanding of the organization and formation of the American system of government.	9-12.G.4.2.1 Identify the three branches of federal government, their powers, and responsibilities.	9-12.G.4.2.2 Explain the functions, powers, interactions, and relationships among federal, state, local, and tribal governments.	9-12.G.4.2.3 Analyze and explain sovereignty and the treaty/trust relationship the United States has with American Indian tribes with emphasis on Idaho, such as hunting and fishing rights, and land leasing.	9-12.G.4.2.4 Analyze the role of political parties and other political organizations and their impact on the American system of government.	9-12.G.4.2.5 Explain the electoral process at each level of government.
Goal 4.3: Build an understanding that all people in the United States have rights and assume responsibilities.	9-12.G.4.3.1 Explain the ways in which individuals become citizens and distinguish among obligations, responsibilities, and rights.	9-12.G.4.3.2 Explain the implications of dual citizenship with regard to American Indians.	9-12.G.4.3.3 Identify the ways in which citizens can participate in the political process at the local, state, and national level.	9-12.G.4.3.4 Analyze and evaluate decisions about rights of individuals in landmark cases of the United States Supreme Court, including <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> , <i>Miranda v. Arizona</i> .	

Idaho Content Standards: American Government

Goal 4.4: Build an understanding of the evolution of democracy.	9-12.G.4.4.1 Analyze the struggles for the extension of civil rights.	9-12.G.4.4.2 Analyze and evaluate states' rights disputes past and present.	9-12.G.4.4.3 Provide and evaluate examples of the role of leadership in the changing relationship among the branches of American government.	9-12.G.4.4.4 Discuss the interpretation and application of the United States Constitution.	
Goal 4.5: Build an understanding of comparative government.	No objectives in American Government.				

Standard 5: Global Perspectives

Goals:	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4
Goal 5.1: Build an understanding of multiple perspectives and global interdependence.	9-12.G.5.1.1 Compare different forms of government, such as presidential with parliamentary, unitary with federal, democracy with dictatorship.	9-12.G.5.1.2 Discuss the mutual impact of ideas, issues, and policies among nations, including environmental, economic, and humanitarian.	9-12.G.5.1.3 Describe the characteristics of United States foreign policy and how it has been made and implemented over time.	9-12.G.5.1.4 Identify and evaluate the role of the United States in international organizations and agreements, such as United Nations, NAFTA, and the International Red Cross.