

FREEHOLD REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

SOCIAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT

AP UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Grade Level: 11-12

Credits: 5

BOARD OF EDUCATION ADOPTION DATE:

AUGUST 22, 2011

[SUPPORTING RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN DISTRICT RESOURCE SHARING](#)

APPENDIX A: ACCOMMODATIONS AND MODIFICATIONS

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT EVIDENCE

APPENDIX C: INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

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AP US Government and Politics - Introduction

Introduction

Course Philosophy

Founded on the principles of democracy and equality, our American political system has undergone many changes since the 18th century. Despite constant challenges, our system has endured. Key to active civic participation is an understanding of this evolution.

Course Description

Students will examine our U.S. Constitution as the most legitimate source of political authority in our nation. Students will examine how this document has been interpreted over time. Central to this discovery is the analysis of American political culture, and the purpose and function of our three federal branches. Along with this comes an analysis of political sources both historical and contemporary with an emphasis on recognizing perspective and bias within these sources. In addition, students will look to our state and local governments to better understand how power is divided within our federalist system. This course prepares students to take the Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics Exam.

Course Map and Proficiencies/Pacing

Course Map

Relevant Standards	Enduring Understandings	Essential Questions	Assessments		
			Diagnostic	Formative	Summative
6.1.12.A.1.a, 6.1.12.A.10a-d&f, 6.1.12.A.10 b&c, 6.1.12.A.14a&h, 6.1.12.C.9.a	Founded on the principles of liberty, our Constitution provides the source of legitimate political authority in the United States	Why did certain controversies fuel debate at the Constitutional Convention? Why do we consider the Constitution to be a “living” document? Unique to the United States, how and why has the federalist system evolved since our founding?	Pre-test Anticipatory set questions	Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work	Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects

6.1.12.A.2.f, 6.1.12.A.14.c- e&g, 6.1.12.C.10.c, 6.1.12.C.14.b&c, 6.1.12.D.14.e	Throughout history, our American political culture has been shaped by diverse forces, institutions, and practices, present within our nation	What sociological forces affect the political ideologies of Americans? How does the electoral system shape political culture? Why should civic participation be important to all Americans?	Pre-test Anticipatory set questions	Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work	Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects
6.1.12.A.2.e, 6.1.12.A.3.g, 6.1.12.A.14.b&f 6.1.12.A.12.b 6.1.12.D.6.b	Each subject to checks and balances, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government work to uphold the principles defined in our Constitution	What motivated the Founders to delegate certain responsibilities to specific branches of government? How has the “necessary and proper” clause changed these responsibilities over time? What has caused the growth of the federal bureaucracy? Has separation of powers been effective in stabilizing the distribution of powers between the three branches?	Pre-test Anticipatory set questions	Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work	Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects
6.1.12.A.4.b, d, 6.1.12.A.5.c, 6.1.12.A.13.b, 6.1.12.D.13.a&c, 6.1.12.D.14.d	Throughout our nation’s history, our Constitution has been clarified through policy creation and case law to protect the liberties and rights of all citizens	How has judicial review served an important role in the clarification of civil liberties for all Americans? How have the courts used the 14 th Amendment and the commerce clause to clarify issues involving civil rights and civil liberties? What social forces surrounded the Civil Rights Movement for African Americans and other minority groups? Which groups within society have yet to achieve equality? What can we predict for the future of these groups?	Pre-test Anticipatory Set Questions	Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work	Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects

<p>6.1.12.A.12.c, 6.1.12.A.14.c&d, 6.1.12.B.13.b, 6.1.12.C.14.a&d 6.1.12.D.11.e, 6.1.12.D.14.a&b</p>	<p>Since our founding, political, social, economic, and diplomatic policies have shaped the lives of all Americans</p>	<p>How have societal forces influenced policy making decisions throughout our history?</p> <p>What has necessitated the creation of so many new policies throughout the 20th and 21st centuries?</p> <p>What policies do you see evolving in the near future? What would/could spark this evolution?</p>	<p>Pre-test Anticipatory set questions</p>	<p>Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work</p>	<p>Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects</p>
<p>6.1.12.A.2.c, 6.1.12.B.14.a-d</p>	<p>New Jersey's diverse and dense population influences the state's political climate</p>	<p>Demographically, how does New Jersey vary from region to region? How does this affect political decisions?</p> <p>How are state, county, and local governments structured?</p> <p>What powerful interests influence policy statewide and locally?</p> <p>What concerns New Jersey voters the most? Why? How can the economic future of New Jersey be improved for future generations?</p>	<p>Pre-test Anticipatory set questions</p>	<p>Vocabulary checks Reading checks Discussion questions Group work</p>	<p>Multiple choice test Free response questions Graded discussion Performance assessments Debates Projects</p>

Proficiencies and Pacing

Unit Title	Unit Understanding(s) and Goal(s)	Recommended Duration
Unit 1: The Foundation of American Democracy	<p>Understanding: Founded on the principles of liberty, the Constitution provides the source of legitimate political authority in the United States.</p> <p>Goal: Students will trace the creation of the Constitution and examine how it has impacted the American political system.</p>	3 weeks
Unit 2: American Political Culture	<p>Understanding: Throughout history, our American political culture has been shaped by diverse forces, institutions, and practices present throughout our nation.</p> <p>Goal: Students will examine what drives Americans to adopt certain political ideologies. In addition, they will analyze the steps taken to promote these ideologies within our governmental system through party involvement, elections, and media coverage.</p>	8 weeks
Unit 3: The Institutions of Government	<p>Understanding: Each subject to checks and balances, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government work to uphold the principles defined in the Constitution.</p> <p>Goal: Students will examine the Founders intentions for the three branches of government and discuss the respective powers and responsibilities.</p>	12 weeks
Unit 4: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	<p>Understanding: Throughout our nation's history, the Constitution has been clarified through policy creation and case law, to protect the liberties and rights of all citizens.</p> <p>Goal: Through exploration of the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, students will examine the social and judicial struggle to achieve equal rights for all.</p>	3 weeks
Unit 5: Public Policy	<p>Understanding: Since our founding, political, social, economic, and diplomatic policies have shaped the lives of all Americans.</p> <p>Goal: Students will analyze the purpose and evolution of key public policy issues throughout the 20th and 21st century America.</p>	2 weeks
Unit 6: State and Local Government	<p>Understanding: New Jersey's diverse and dense population influences the state's political climate.</p> <p>Goal: Students will develop an understanding of New Jersey politics from the local to state level. They will be able to compare this structure and function to other states in the region.</p>	4 weeks (to be taught after the AP Test)

Unit 01 - AP US Government & Politics

The Foundation of American Democracy

Enduring Understandings:

Founded on the principles of liberty, our Constitution provides the source of legitimate political authority in the United States.

Essential Questions:

Why did certain controversies fuel debate at the Constitutional Convention?

Why do we consider the Constitution to be a “living” document?

Unique to the United States, how and why has the federalist system evolved since our founding?

Unit Goals:

Students will trace the creation of the Constitution and examine how it has impacted the American political system.

Recommended Duration: 4 Weeks

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
What intellectual forces affected the founding of our nation?	The influence of the Enlightenment Locke Rousseau Social Contract Theory Montesquieu Declaration of Independence Articles of Confederation Shay's Rebellion	The Constitution What Would the Founders Do? Primary Sources (Locke, Rousseau, Montesquieu)	Create a chart comparing the ideas of Locke to the writings of Jefferson	Written assignment: Why couldn't the Enlightenment philosophers implement their ideas, yet the founders were successful?
What central problems existed in framing our Constitution?	Virginia and New Jersey Plans Connecticut Compromise Three-Fifths Compromise	The Constitution Madison's <i>Notes on the Federal Convention</i>	Federalists vs. Antifederalists Graphic Organizer	Constitutional Convention Role Play

What interests motivated the Federalists and Antifederalists?	Madison, Jay, and Hamilton Jefferson Habeas Corpus Bill of Attainder Ex Post Facto Bill of Rights	The Constitution Federalist 10 and 51	Federalist/antifederalist debate	Discussion: How would our nation be different if the antifederalist argument had prevailed?
What has caused dual federalism to be replaced by cooperative federalism?	McCulloch v. Maryland Necessary and Proper Clause The New Deal <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>	Amendment 10	Creation of timeline of increased federal power	Multiple choice test: federalism
How has the grants-in-aid system changed the role of federal politics?	Block Grants Categorical Grants Mandates Americans with Disabilities Act Clean Air/Water Act No Child Left Behind Act	Relevant political television shows/articles	Grants-in-aid at work in our local communities research project	Project presentation

- SOC.9-12.6.2 All students will know, understand and appreciate the values and principles of American democracy and the rights, responsibilities, and roles of a citizen in the nation and the world.
- SOC.9-12.6.2.12 A Civic Life, Politics, and Government
- SOC.9-12.6.1.12 Analyze how historical events shape the modern world.
- A.1
- SOC.9-12.6.2.12 Analyze how reserved and jointly held powers in the United States Constitution result in tensions among the three branches of government and how these tensions are resolved (e.g., *Marbury v. Madison*-1803; *Federalist #78*; *United States v. Nixon*-1974, claims of Executive Privilege by Presidents Nixon, Clinton, and Bush).
- A.1
- SOC.9-12.6.2.12 Analyze major historical events and important ideas that led to and sustained the constitutional government of the United States, including the Constitutional Convention of 1787, the Judiciary Act of 1789, the first Cabinet under George Washington, and Amendments 1-15.
- B.1

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. For example, in this unit rather than having all students complete a multiple choice test the teacher may permit students the opportunity to construct a performance assessment that adapts to their particular learning styles and communication strengths. Another idea for differentiation is to structure a Socratic seminar with an inner circle of participants and an outer circle of evaluators in the place of the discussion identified in the unit plan.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. For example, for this unit the teacher may opt to bring the students to a computer lab to conduct research on the writings of Locke and Jefferson. The chart identified in the unit plan can also be produced using desktop software such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, or Microsoft Publisher.

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. The study of grants in this unit provides an excellent opportunity for students to research how both private sector and public sector workplaces in the region may be impacted by federal grants.

Unit 02 - AP US Government & Politics

American Political Culture

Enduring Understandings:

Throughout our history American political culture has been shaped by diverse forces, institutions, and practices, present within our nation.

Essential Questions:

What sociological forces affect the political ideologies of Americans?

How does the electoral system shape political culture?

Why should civic participation be important to all Americans?

Unit Goals:

Students will examine what drives Americans to adopt a certain political ideology. In addition, they will analyze the steps taken to promote these ideologies within our governmental system through party involvement, elections, and media coverage.

Recommended Duration: 10 weeks

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
What does the political spectrum look like in our country today?	Difference between political ideology and political culture Difference between liberals and conservatives Political socialization The evolution of our two party system 3rd parties	Political Ideology Surveys Pew Research Political Typology	Creation of a class-wide political spectrum based on survey results	Test assessing the students' ability to determine where hypothetical Americans might fall on the political spectrum
Why do most Americans classify themselves as moderates?	Political culture Political socialization	Political ideology surveys Pew research political typology	"What does it mean to be moderate?" class activity	Class discussion-How will the moderation of American politics affect our political culture as a whole?

How are elections won and lost in the United States?	Primary Caucus Differences between a primary campaign and a campaign for general election Delegates Super delegates Convention Campaign finance reform McCain-Feingold Matching funds 527s and 501c4s PACs	Campaign advertisements Documentary: <i>So Goes the Nation</i>	Introduction of potential candidates for federal elections	Project: Run a potential candidates' campaign for an upcoming election
What initiatives have been created to enhance political participation? Has there been resistance towards these initiatives? Have they been successful?	Registration Motor voter Rock the vote and other celebrity voting campaigns	Media footage of popularized voting advertisements	Timeline of get out the vote initiatives	Design an effective ad campaign that motivates young people to vote in an upcoming election
How has the evolution of media technology changed the way Americans think about politics?	Spin Linkage institutions	Major print, television and internet political media sources	Analyze spin in recent news reports about specific political events	Media portfolio project

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. For example, in this unit the teacher may provide students multiple options for putting together their media portfolio projects. Another suggestion for differentiation is to allow for multiple roles for the campaign project. The class may be divided into candidates, media, campaigners, and activists. Each student could be grouped based on interest and skill set.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. For example, this lesson provides students the opportunity to design an effective ad campaign aimed at increasing the vote. Multimedia software would provide an excellent means for delivering this product.

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. Colleges and workplaces both require students to read data and draw appropriate conclusions from that data. This unit presents the opportunity for students to access and analyze Pew Research data and to draw relevant conclusions base on their analysis.

Unit 03 - AP US Government & Politics

The Institutions of American Government

Enduring Understandings:

Each subject to checks and balances, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government work to uphold the principles defined in our Constitution.

Essential Questions:

What motivated the Founders to delegate certain responsibilities to specific branches of government?

How has the "necessary and proper" clause changed these responsibilities over time?

What has caused the growth of the federal bureaucracy?

Has separation of powers been effective in stabilizing the distribution of powers between the three branches?

Unit Goals:

Students will examine the Founders intentions for the three branches of government and discuss the respective powers and responsibilities.

Recommended Duration: 12 weeks

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
How is each branch of government structured? Has this structure been changed since our founding? How and why?	The growth of the federal bureaucracy Oversight Checks and balances Separation of powers	The Constitution Articles from political print sources News clips from political television programs	Research common iron triangles	Quiz: Create iron triangles or issue networks out of a list of agencies/congressional committees/interest groups and justify your choices
Why is Congress sometimes referred to as the "broken" branch? What would our Founders' response be to current Congressional controversies?	Incumbency advantages Gridlock How a bill becomes a law Congressional Leadership The Committee System	The Constitution Articles from political print sources News clips from political television programs	Graphic organizer: Differences between houses	Multiple choice test: Congress

How do interest groups shape our political system?	Lobbying Litigation Electioneering Revolving Door	Websites of prominent interest groups Articles from political print sources News clips from political television programs	Visit the website of various interest groups and gauge their effectiveness	Ratings game assignment
How have 20th century presidents shaped the executive branch?	War powers resolution Executive privilege The Cabinet The White House office	The Constitution "The Founders Great Mistake" from Atlantic monthly Articles from political print sources News clips from political television programs	Graphic organizer: How has _____ shaped the office of the presidency	Presidential museum project
Is the Supreme Court insulated from public opinion?	Dual court system The Rule of Four Writ of Certiorari Amicus Curiae Stare decisis	The Constitution Federalist 78 Articles from political print sources News clips from political television programs	Explore cases being heard before the Supreme court for the current year	Supreme court case project

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. For example, in this unit, students may be grouped according to their relative content strengths and given a sample Advanced Placement free response prompt to answer. In a jig-saw activity students could then share with the other groups. Another example would be to allow alternatives to the Presidential museum project and the Supreme Court case project such as research papers or other alternatives proposed by students.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. In this unit students could use the Internet to research examples of iron triangles and to create digital representations of each. In addition, students could use online discussion forums to debate the impact of interest groups, specific presidential powers, and/or the role of the Supreme Court.

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. This unit requires careful analysis of the three branches of government. The projects and other assessments detailed above are at the college level and require the critical thinking that is necessary at college and in the workplace.

Unit 04 - AP US Government & Politics

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Enduring Understandings:

Throughout our nation's history, our Constitution has been clarified through policy creation and case law to protect the liberties and rights of all citizens.

Essential Questions:

How has judicial review served an important role in the clarification of civil liberties for all Americans?

How have the courts used the 14th Amendment and the commerce clause to clarify issues involving civil rights and civil liberties?

What social forces surrounded the Civil Rights Movement for African Americans and other minority groups?

Which groups within society have yet to achieve equality? What can we predict for the future of these groups?

Unit Goals:

Through exploration of the Bill of Rights and subsequent amendments, students will examine the social and judicial struggle to achieve equal rights for all, and to incorporate liberties into state policy.

Recommended Duration: 3 weeks

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
How has selective incorporation propelled Supreme Court decisions?	Selective incorporation Barron v. Baltimore Gitlow v. NY	Bill of Rights Supreme Court decisions	Link the principles of federalism to that of key Supreme court decisions	Writing assignment: What separated the opinion of the court during Barron and that of Gitlow?
How have civil liberties been tested in times of crisis?	Habeas corpus Patriot Act	Bill of Rights Supreme Court decisions	Hypothetical situations: In times of crisis, how far should we go to limit civil liberties while protecting our nation?	Debate: Is the Patriot Act still necessary ten years after 9/11?
How have 20th century challenges to individual freedoms been clarified by the Supreme Court?	Engle v. Vitale Schenk v. United States NY Times v. Sullivan Tinker v. Des Moines Gideon v. Wainwright Miranda v. Arizona Furman v. Georgia Due Process Clause	Bill of Rights Supreme Court decisions	Examine the majority and minority opinions in the cases	Simulation: Presentation of these key cases to the Supreme Court

How did the Civil Rights Movement redefine federalism?	Dred Scott v. Sanford Plessy v. Ferguson Brown v. Board of Education Civil Rights Acts Voting Rights Act Equal Protection Clause	Bill of Rights Supreme Court decisions	Timeline: The Civil Rights Movement	Multiple choice quiz: The Civil Rights Movement
How have women, people with disabilities, Native Americans, homosexuals, etc. been involved in the quest for equal rights?	Griswold v. Connecticut Roe v. Wade Right to privacy	Bill of Rights Supreme Court decisions	Examine challenges to <i>Roe</i> within individual states	Discussion: The future of <i>Roe v. Wade</i> in 21st century America
Is affirmative action still necessary in the 21st century?	The Regents of the University of California v. Bakke Quotas University of Michigan ruling	Relevant television clips and news articles	Timeline of affirmative action	Affirmative action debate

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. For example, this unit can be differentiated by allowing students to research different Supreme Court cases and present their findings using a medium that is familiar to them such as a poem, a short story, a multimedia presentation, a series of Twitter posts, etc.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. For example, in this unit students can use multimedia software to create digital timelines of key events in the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, students will likely need to use the Internet to conduct the research necessary to answer the debate question: “Is the Patriot Act still necessary ten years after 9/11?”

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. This unit calls for information gathering, information analysis, presentation of information, debate, and collaborative discourse. These skills honed in this unit are universally transferrable to both college and workplace environments.

Unit 05 - AP US Government & Politics

Public Policy

Enduring Understandings:

Since our founding, political, social, economic, and diplomatic policies have shaped the lives of all Americans.

Essential Questions:

How have societal forces influenced policy making decisions throughout our history?

What has necessitated the creation of so many new policies throughout the 20th and 21st centuries?

What policies do you see evolving in the near future? What could/would spark this evolution?

Unit Goals:

Students will analyze the purpose and evolution of key public policy issues throughout 20th and 21st century America.

Recommended Duration: 3 weeks

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
What policy creation and changes exemplify the growth of federal power over American social and economic life?	Entitlements Social Security Medicare Business regulations Independent regulatory agencies The Federal Reserve Securities and Exchange Commission The FCC Income Tax Fiscal vs. Monetary Policy	Readings	Debate: The Privatization of Social Security	Research assignment: The Future of Entitlement Programs
How has foreign policy changed throughout the past century and what historical forces have driven these changes?	United Nations Cold War Interventionist forces Vietnam The War on Terror	Relevant media sources	Creation of foreign policy timeline based the years covered in the course curriculum	Quiz: American Foreign relations in the 20th and 21st centuries

What policies are the legislature and executive branches considering currently? What are the pros and cons of the adoption of these policies?	Relevant current events issues	Relevant media sources	Graphic Organizer: Policies being considered by the federal government	Multiple choice Test: Public Policy
How has/does the media drive policy making?	Spin Agenda setting	Relevant television and web based sources	Top 10 list of policies that the media has covered extensively in the past two years	From the top 10 list, accumulate footage of how the media has portrayed this and present your findings

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. For example, rather than requiring all students to produce a graphic organizer on current policies, the teacher may permit students to work in small groups to produce a variety of products that answer the relevant guiding question.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. For example, in this unit the teachers may have students look at the trends in entitlement spending and make predictions about future spending. These numbers can be inputted into a digital spreadsheet from which a digital graph can be created.

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. This unit calls for students to research how the media influences the policy making process and to present findings to the class. The research and presentation skills are necessary prerequisites for success in college and the workplace.

Unit 06 - AP US Government & Politics

State and Local Politics

Enduring Understandings:

New Jersey's diverse and dense population influences the state's political climate.

Essential Questions:

Demographically, how does New Jersey vary from region to region? How does this affect political decisions?

How are state, county, and local governments structured?

What powerful interests influence policy statewide and locally?

What concerns New Jersey voters the most? Why?

How can the economy of New Jersey be improved for future generations?

Unit Goals:

Students will develop an understanding of New Jersey politics from the local to the state level. Students will be able to compare the structure and functions of New Jersey to other states in the region.

Recommended Duration: 4 weeks (Post AP Test)

Guiding/Topical Questions	Content/Themes/Skills	Resources and Materials	Suggested Strategies	Suggested Assessments
Due to the uniqueness of our state, how do politicians approach campaigns and policy making?	NJ Gubernatorial and Legislative elections and campaigns NJ voter turnout results Poll results from recent elections	Local newspapers	Invite candidates running in the local primaries to discuss what it takes to win an election in the state of New Jersey	Free response: What does it take to win an election in New Jersey?
What decisions get made on state, county, and local levels? Why different governmental levels are afforded certain responsibilities?	NJ Constitution Governor Assembly State Senate NJ State Court System NJ Supreme Court	Local newspapers	Comparison chart: 3 Branches NJ vs. Federal Government	Multiple choice test: The Function of the State Government

How has union prominence affected New Jersey politics?	CWA NJEA	Local newspapers	Interview a union member about the connection between membership and their political ideologies	Debate: Are labor unions benefit or detriment in 21st century America?
What caused the fiscal crisis in New Jersey, and how can it be solved?	Property Tax Cap Abbott v. Burke Civil Service Reform Arbitration Reform	Local newspapers	Discuss proposed reform to state spending making a chart of pros and cons	Forum: "The Future of Our State's Fiscal Health"
How do our local municipalities differ politically, economically, and socially? What accounts for these differences?	Demographic information for local communities	Local newspapers	Invite local politicians in to speak to students	Presentations: The communities of the FRHSD

Differentiation

Students with individual learning styles can be assisted through adjustments in assessment standards, one-to-one teacher support, additional testing time, and use of visual and auditory teaching methods. A wide variety of assessment strategies complement the individual learning experience. Because this unit will be taught after students complete the Advanced Placement exam there is ample room for differentiation. The need for free response and multiple choice formats is lessened as test preparation is no longer a concern. It is recommended that teachers employ student collaboration and project based learning that allows students to build on their strengths and explore areas of interest to them.

Technology

Students will be encouraged throughout the course to use technology to access media sources to support our discussions within class. In addition, various technological strategies will be used to implement lesson plans and assess student performance. For example, in this unit students may use a digital recording device to record their interview with a union member. Students can then use computer applications to transcribe those interviews and write a summary paper based on their findings.

College and Workplace Readiness

This entire course equips students with civics skills to become contributing members of their communities and beyond. Comprehension of the material informs them of the importance of becoming a participant within the American political system and explains the process in which average Americans can make a difference. In addition, higher level thinking and writing skills provide students with opportunities to analyze complex societal problems which will be a foundation for future academic or professional study. For example, this unit requires students to analyze proposed policies for both their potential positive and negative impacts. Such critical analysis will serve students will both at college and in the workplace.