

Contact Information:

Phone: 397-2900 ext. 2935
E-mail: KirkEllison@pickens.k12.sc.us

Course Description:

Government is a required course for graduating high school in the state of South Carolina. AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level course. At the end of the course each student is required to take the advanced placement exam. The goals of the course are to increase understanding of the American political system, its framework, traditions and values. The principle processes and institutions of government will be examined in detail. Additionally, economic and social policies established and implemented by government institutions will be covered.

The AP Government & Politics class/exam has undergone a redesign that will take effect this fall (2018).

Exam Overview

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam is three hours long, divided into two sections as shown in the table below.

Section	Number of Questions	Timing	Percentage of Total Exam Score
I: Multiple Choice	55 questions	1 hour and 20 minutes	50%
II: Free Response	4 questions	1 hour and 40 minutes	50%
Concept Application		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
Quantitative Analysis		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
SCOTUS Comparison		20 minutes (suggested)	12.5%
Argument Essay		40 minutes (suggested)	12.5%

Multiple-Choice Questions

Section I of the AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam consists of 55 multiple-choice questions, including:

- Quantitative Analysis: Analysis and application of quantitative-based source material
- Qualitative Analysis: Analysis and application of text-based (primary and secondary) sources
- Visual Analysis: Analysis and application of qualitative visual information
- Concept Application: Explanation of the application of political concepts in context
- Comparison: Explanation of the similarities and differences of political concepts
- Knowledge: Identification and definition of political principles, processes, institutions, policies, and behaviors

Multiple-choice questions will contain four answer options. A student's total score on the multiple-choice section is based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points are not deducted for incorrect answers or unanswered questions.

Free-Response Questions

Section II of the exam consists of four questions that prompt students to:

- Concept Application: Respond to a political scenario, explaining how it relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior
- Quantitative Analysis: Analyze quantitative data, identify a trend or pattern, draw a conclusion from the visual representation, and explain how the data relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior
- SCOTUS Comparison: Compare a nonrequired Supreme Court case with a required Supreme Court case, explaining how information from the required case is relevant to that in the nonrequired one
- Argument Essay: Develop an argument in the form of an essay, using evidence from one or more required foundational documents

Required Summer Work **Due the first day of class/must be hand-written**

1. Research the 15 court cases listed. For each case, you should answer the following: 1. What is the case about? Info/background 2. What is the "Constitutional Question" brought up by the case? 3. What was the opinion of the court and long-term results? Information can be found on several websites. My favorite is oyez.org.

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

Established supremacy of the U.S. Constitution and federal laws over state laws

United States v. Lopez (1995)

Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime

Engel v. Vitale (1962)

School sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause

Wisconsin v. Yoder (1972)

Compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause

Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District (1969)

Public school students have the right to wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War

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

Bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a "heavy presumption against prior restraint" even in cases involving national security

Schenck v. United States (1919)

Speech creating a "clear and present danger" is not protected by the First Amendment

Gideon v. Wainwright (1963)

Guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent

Roe v. Wade (1973)

Extended the right of privacy to a woman's decision to have an abortion

McDonald v. Chicago (2010)

The Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms for self-defense is applicable to the states

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

Race-based school segregation violates the equal protection clause

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010)

Political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment

Baker v. Carr (1961)

Opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and the development of the "one person, one vote" doctrine by ruling that challenges to redistricting did not raise "political questions" that would keep federal courts from reviewing such challenges

Shaw v. Reno (1993)

Legislative redistricting must be conscious of race and ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act of 1965

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

Established the principle of judicial review empowering the Supreme Court to nullify an act of the legislative or executive branch that violates the Constitution

2. Read and be conversant with the U.S. Constitution and its 27 amendments.