

**Advanced Placement U.S. Government and Politics Syllabus**  
McGill-Toolen Catholic High School  
2019-20

**Instructor:** Mr. Tenhundfeld

**Contact information:** tenhunm@mcgill-toolen.org

**Introduction to AP U.S. Government and Politics**

AP U.S. Government and Politics is a college-level year-long course that seeks not only to prepare you for success on the AP Exam in May but also to provide you with the political knowledge and reasoning processes to participate meaningfully and thoughtfully in discussions and debates that shape American politics and society both currently and in the future.

The course is designed to achieve the following two objectives:

- The first is for you to learn about the United States government and politics on a critical and analytical level, including the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system and people's rights and responsibilities as citizens.
- The second objective is to prepare you to earn a passing score and college credit on the AP U.S. Government and Politics exam.

AP U.S. Government and Politics accomplishes these goals by framing the acquisition of political knowledge around "enduring understandings" and "big ideas" about American government and politics that can be applied to a set of disciplinary practices through the use of a set of reasoning processes. Through the development of this set of political knowledge, disciplinary practices, and reasoning processes, by the end of the course, you should be able to analyze current and historical political events like a political scientist and develop factually accurate, well-reasoned, and thoughtful arguments and opinions that acknowledge and grapple with alternative political perspectives.

This year-long course will be organized around the following units of study (numbers of days dedicated to each unit are approximate):

- Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy (30 days)
- Unit 2: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (22 days)
- Unit 3: Political Participation (34 days)
- Unit 4: Interactions Among Branches of Government (45 days)
- Unit 5: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (20 days)

The political knowledge, enduring understandings, and big ideas acquired and developed in each unit will be applied to the disciplinary practices using the reasoning processes outlined below.

**Class rules**

The course will be guided by one operating principle, namely, "be thoughtful." This principle will be the basis for class rules governing student comportment throughout the year. Among other things, you will be expected to:

- Be open to new perspectives and information that you heretofore may not have considered;
- Arrive at whatever conclusions you reach after having considered alternative perspectives and formed reasoned bases for rejecting the alternatives;
- Express yourself in a thoughtful, constructive manner and treat all classmates with respect;
- Use your iPad solely for purposes related to the class and only at permitted times; and
- Come prepared each class and participate fully, with no sleeping or putting heads down on desks.

**Supplies**

You must have —

- a writing implement of your choice;
- a 3-ring notebook in which you will keep slides and other materials I will provide you at various times throughout the year;
- tabs to organize the various documents I will provide throughout the year
  - 16 numbered tabs (1 for each chapter)
  - 90 lettered tabs (1 for each document I will provide you)
- an iPad to be used when directed; and
- 3 x 5 index cards or other paper on which you will answer bell ringers.

**Primary text**

Wilson, James Q., Dilulio Jr., John J., and Bose, Meena. American Government: Institutions and Policies. 16th ed. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2019.

**Supplements**

Several supplementary texts and other resources will be used and discussed within the context of each unit. Since much of the fun of this course is in applying what you learn to current events, the assigned supplemental readings will change as events unfold.

### Important Websites

In addition to various national news sources (e.g., the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *CNN*, *Politico*, *Real Clear Politics*, *Fox News*, *The New York Times*, *Vox*, etc.), you are encouraged to use the following websites:

- National Constitution Center — This online resource offers an annotated U.S. Constitution that includes essays from multiple perspectives that frame the debates underlying key clauses and provisions of the U.S. Constitution. The National Constitution Center also has a blog that applies constitutional principles to current events. ([constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org))
- Oyez — This online database provides succinct and accessible overviews for all Supreme Court cases. ([oyez.org](http://oyez.org))
- College Board — AP United States Government and Politics course overview on Advances in AP website (<https://tinyurl.com/ya7x98qb>)
- Khan Academy — A good resource for enhancing understanding or reviewing what we've covered (<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-us-government-and-politics>)

### Required Supreme Court Cases

This course will incorporate an analysis of the following 15 required Supreme Court cases:

1. *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)
2. *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)
3. *Schenck v. United States* (1919)
4. *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)
5. *Baker v. Carr* (1961)
6. *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
7. *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)
8. *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)
9. *New York Times Company v. United States* (1971)
10. *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)
11. *Roe v. Wade* (1973)
12. *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
13. *United States v. Lopez* (1995)
14. *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)
15. *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* (2010)

I will provide you with summaries of each case. Additional information can be found through the Oyez database online and other sites I will suggest. You will be required to complete multiple assignments analyzing and comparing these cases with other cases.

### Required Foundational Documents

This course will incorporate the analysis of the following nine required foundational documents to help understand the context and beliefs of the founders and their critics:

- The Declaration of Independence
- The Articles of Confederation
- The Constitution of the United States
- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Federalist No. 51*
- *Federalist No. 70*
- *Federalist No. 78*
- Brutus No. 1
- "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

I will provide you either with a redacted or unredacted version of each of these documents. You will be asked to identify common threads running through each of these as well as key points of distinction.

### Overview of the AP Exam and Keys to AP Exam Success

The AP U.S. Government and Politics Exam will be comprised of the following sections:

#### Multiple-Choice Questions:

Number of Questions: 55

Timing: One hour and 20 minutes

Percentage of Total Exam: 50%

Structure — The questions on multiple choice will ask you to:

- Analyze and compare political concepts;
- Analyze and interpret quantitative, text-based, and visual sources; and
- Apply course concepts, foundational documents, and Supreme Court decisions in a variety of hypothetical and real-world scenarios.

### Free-Response Questions:

Number of Questions: 4

Timing: One hour and 40 minutes

Percentage of Total Exam: 50%

Structure – The four questions on the free response will ask you to:

- Apply political concepts in real-world scenarios;
- Compare the decisions and implications of different Supreme Court cases;
- Analyze quantitative data; and
- Develop an argument using required foundational documents as evidence.

As the breakdown of the AP Exam highlights, success in this course and on the AP Exam requires far more than the memorization of political knowledge. Success in this course and on the AP Exam requires making connections with the aim of being able to analyze political information, regardless of the format the information is presented, and develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned opinion regarding this information. The different pieces of the course fit together in pursuit of this aim through course content and big ideas, reasoning processes, and disciplinary practices.

### **Course Content and “Big Ideas”**

The course content consists of the essential political knowledge that will be synthesized in the construction of enduring understandings and big ideas about American government and politics. The big ideas that connect the content in the course units include:

- Constitutionalism
- Liberty and Order
- Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy
- Competing Policy-Making Interests
- Methods of Political Analysis

### **Reasoning Processes**

The reasoning processes are the thought processes that will facilitate connection-making and analysis in the pursuit of effectively executing the disciplinary practices in the course. In other words, the reasoning processes form the cognitive bridge between the course content/big ideas and the disciplinary practices. The reasoning processes in this course include:

- Define/Classify: Demonstrating knowledge of course concepts
- Explain - Process: Explaining political processes
- Explain - Causation: Explaining causes and effects of political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors
- Explain - Comparison: Explaining similarities and differences among political principles, institutions, processes, and behaviors

### **Disciplinary Practices**

The disciplinary practices are the tasks you will apply to the course content using the reasoning processes. Becoming proficient in these disciplinary practices gives you the tools to analyze political information, regardless of the format, and to develop a factually accurate, thoughtful, and well-reasoned argument or opinion about an issue related to American government and politics. The disciplinary practices in this course include:

- Practice 1: Apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context
- Practice 2: Apply Supreme Court decisions
- Practice 3: Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics
- Practice 4: Read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based and visual sources
- Practice 5: Develop an argument in essay format

Every AP Exam question fuses course content, reasoning processes, and disciplinary practices. Thus, in-class and outside-of-class assignments will focus on the acquisition of course content and the application of course content to disciplinary practices using reasoning skills.

### **Assignment Types**

The following is a sampling of the types of assignments that will be given throughout the course:

- Tests — You will take exams throughout the year, at the conclusion of each chapter and after each unit. Tests will include multiple-choice and essay questions similar to what you will see on the AP Exam. Chapter tests will be worth 100 points, while unit tests will be worth 200 points.
- Key Concepts quizzes — In addition to the chapter and unit tests, you will take quizzes about key concepts from each chapter. These quizzes will be given early in the study of any given chapter so that you can teach yourself concepts that we will build on as the study of that chapter progresses. Key Concepts quizzes typically will be worth around 25 points each.
- Bell ringers — Most classes will begin with a bell ringer question worth 1 point that tests your understanding of material discussed in previous classes. You will answer these questions individually but may consult whatever resources you find useful.
- Reading responses — You will be given many reading assignments through the course. A frequent assignment will be to give a written response to a reading as prompted by me. This will typically include summarizing, checking for understanding, and personal thoughts and analysis of the reading. This will be particularly important in the Harvard Business School case studies that we will use when studying the Constitution and the fight for minority voting rights.

- Current political events analysis (“current events chats”) — You will be required to inform the class about a current event of interest to you that is related to government. You will offer opinions, debate possible alternatives, and tie the discussion to class material.
- Election assignments — You will complete assignments based on elections. This may include, for instance, taking sides on candidates and issues, debating, and voting.
- Debates — You will participate in at least one in-class debate. After the first debate, students will be required to prepare to argue either side and will flip a coin to determine sides before a debate.
- Case Studies — The Harvard Business School has made several case studies available to use that provide excellent lessons in topics such as the question of states rights in the Constitution and the role of Martin Luther King in the fight for voting rights. You will select one of these and, along with the other students who selected that case, will lead the discussion of the case study at the appropriate time.
- Congressional simulation — You may simulate the process by which a bill becomes law when we get to chapter 13.
- Graphs, charts, and maps — You will frequently receive statistical information in the form of graphs, charts, and maps. Assignments and tests will ask you to interpret the information or create graphical information based on data.
- Notebook checks — Each quarter I will check your binder for completion. 25 points will be awarded for a binder with each required document. 2 points will be subtracted for each missing document.

### **Grading**

Grades are calculated on a cumulative point basis. Each test, quiz, homework assignment, and project will be worth a given number of points according to the quality and level of completion of the work. At the end of a marking period, a grade average is determined by dividing the total points possible by points earned. Letter grades are assigned according to the McGill-Toolen Student Handbook.

### **McGill-Toolen Statement on Student Honesty**

You are expected to be academically honest at all times. No forms of dishonesty will be permitted. Cheating of any kind, including sharing of homework and plagiarism, violates our school policy. If you are guilty of academic dishonesty you will receive no credit for the assignment, the incident will be documented on your record, and your parents will be notified. For further detail, please see the Student Handbook.

### **The Course Plan**

The current course plan and schedule of assignments are set forth below. This plan will change based on current events and the need to spend more or less time on a given subject. Thus, while an estimate of the number of days we'll spend on each unit is provided, the precise length of time spent on any one unit will depend on current events and the interests and needs of you and the other students in the class.

### **Course Units**

**UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY** (25 instructional days, covering chapters 1, 2, and 3 of your textbook)

#### **Essential Questions:**

- How did the founders of the U.S. Constitution attempt to protect individual liberty, while also promoting public order and safety?
- How have theory, debate, and compromise influenced the U.S. Constitutional system?
- How does the development and interpretation of the Constitution influence policies that impact citizens and residents of the U.S.?

#### Topic 1.1: Ideals of Democracy

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents: The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States

#### Topic 1.2: Types of Democracy

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 10* and excerpts from Brutus No. 1

#### Topic 1.3: Government Power and Individual Rights

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 10* and excerpts from Brutus No. 1

#### Topic 1.4: Challenges of the Articles of Confederation

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Foundational Documents: Excerpts from the Articles of Confederation

#### Topic 1.5: Ratification of the U.S. Constitution

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 1.6: Principles of American Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests  
Foundational Documents: Excerpts from *Federalist No. 51*

Topic 1.7: Relationship Between the States and the Federal Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 1.8: Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 1.9: Federalism in Action  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Required Cases: *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), *United States v. Lopez* (1995)

### **Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 1**

#### Articles of Confederation versus U.S. Constitution Case Study:

- **Framing Question:** To what extent does the U.S. Constitution fix the problems of the Articles of Confederation without creating a new set of problems?
- **Possible Activity Summary:** You will start by reading excerpts from the Articles of Confederation (Articles 2, 3, 6, and 9), the Constitution of the United States (with particular emphasis on Article 1, Section 8), and *Federalist No. 51*. You will compare national government and state government power and structure under both the Articles and the Constitution, along with explanations for why power should be divided in these different ways. After the comparison is complete, you will read a narrative overview of Shays's Rebellion, apply both documents in addressing Shays's Rebellion, and discuss which document better addresses the problems underlying Shays's Rebellion. The debrief of this discussion will push you to explain why Shays's Rebellion fueled the debate for greater federal government power. Then, you will apply both documents in addressing the current federalism policy debate underlying the legalization of marijuana and argue about which document better addresses the federalism dimension of the legalization of marijuana policy debate. You will then answer and discuss the framing question.

**UNIT 2: AMERICAN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND BELIEFS** (20 instructional days, covering chapters 4, 7, and 8 of the textbook)

#### **Essential Questions:**

- How are American political beliefs formed and how do they evolve over time?
- How do political ideology and core values influence government policy making?

Topic 2.1: American Attitudes about Government and Politics  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.2: Political Socialization  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.3: Changes in Ideology  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.4: Influence of Political Events on Ideology  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.5: Measuring Public Opinion  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.6: Evaluating Public Opinion Data  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Methods of Political Analysis

Topic 2.7: Ideologies of Political Parties  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 2.8: Ideology and Policy-Making  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 2.9: Ideology and Economic Policy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 2.10: Ideology and Social Policy

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

### Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 2

#### Political Culture and Political Ideology Party Platform Analysis:

- Framing Question: Which force will ultimately prevail – The core values that unite us or the attitudes and ideological beliefs that divide us?
- Possible Activity Summary: You will first explain how excerpts from Alexis de Tocqueville's Democracy in America help to describe core American political values such as individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, limited government, and popular sovereignty. You will then analyze excerpts from the most recent Republican Party Platform and Democratic Party Platform and explain how excerpts from both party platforms connect to these core American political values. Next, you will compare the attitudes and ideological beliefs of both parties with respect to these core values before answering and discussing the framing question, using their understanding of their policy from the civics engagement process and data on political polarization and public opinion with regards to core American political values as additional evidence in answering the question.

#### Polling Lessons Learned from The Literary Digest 1936 Presidential Election Poll:

- Framing Question: Under what circumstances should a public opinion poll be considered reliable and accurate?
- Possible Activity Summary: You will start by evaluating the polling methods used in The Literary Digest 1936 Presidential Election Poll, which predicted inaccurately that Alf Landon would defeat FDR. You will determine the type of poll and update the sampling methods to make the poll more reliable. You will then apply your takeaways from the evaluation of this poll to a series of 2016 presidential election polls and develop an explanation as to why polling in 2016 consistently struggled to project the outcome of both the party nomination and general elections and how these struggles might influence polling's use in campaigns and policy decisions.

### UNIT 3: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION (30 instructional days, covering chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12 of your textbook)

#### Essential Questions:

- How have changes in technology influenced political communication and behavior?
- Why do levels of participation and influence in politics vary?
- How effective are the various methods of political participation in shaping public policies?

Topic 3.1: Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 3.2: Voter Turnout

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Topic 3.3: Political Parties

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 3.4: How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 3.5: Third-Party Politics

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 3.6: Interest Groups Influencing Policy-Making

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 3.7: Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 3.8: Electing a President

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Topic 3.9: Congressional Elections

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Topic 3.10: Modern Campaigns

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Topic 3.11: Campaign Finance

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy  
Required Case: *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010)

Topic 3.12: The Media

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Topic 3.13: Changing Media

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

**Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 3**

**Creating a Policy or Strategy to Increase Voter Turnout:**

- Framing Question: Why do so many eligible voters find it “irrational” to vote, and what could either the federal government, state governments, or linkage institutions do to make the benefits of voting outweigh the costs for more voters?
- Possible Activity Summary: This activity frames the potential problem of low voter turnout through the lens of economic rationality. You will first consider the different factors that influence an individual’s decision to vote (attitudinal factors, government requirements, and institutional forces) and how these factors impact either the costs of voting or the benefits of voting. Then, in small groups, you will either take on the role of an interest group or political party planning a “get out the vote” drive or the state or federal government looking to craft a policy to increase voter turnout (like Motor Voter). You will design a policy or strategy, explaining how your plan will either raise the benefits or lower the costs of voting for more voters and whether your plan is constitutional (if you take the perspective of the state or federal government). The first part of the activity will culminate in you presenting your policy or plan to the class. You will then consider the implications of higher voter turnout in terms of changes in election outcomes and policies by considering what would happen if the U.S. adopted compulsory voting laws or policies similar to the ones designed by the you.

**UNIT 4: INTERACTIONS AMONG BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT** (45 instructional days, covering ch. 13, 14, 15, and 16 of your textbook)

**Essential Questions:**

- How do the branches of the national government compete and cooperate in order to govern?
- To what extent have changes in the powers of each branch affected how responsive and accountable the national government is in the 21st century?

Topic 4.1: Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 4.2: Structures, Powers, and Functions of Congress

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 4.3: Congressional Behavior

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Required Cases: *Baker v. Carr* (1961), *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)

Topic 4.4: Roles and Powers of the President

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 4.5: Checks on the President

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 4.6: Expansion of Presidential Power

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Foundational Documents: *Federalist No. 70*

Topic 4.7: Presidential Communication

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 4.8: The Judicial Branch

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States of America, *Federalist No. 78*, *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)

Topic 4.9: Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 4.10: The Court in Action  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 4.11: Checks on the Judicial Branch  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Topic 4.12: The Bureaucracy  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 4.13: Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 4.14: Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Topic 4.15: Policy and the Branches of Government  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

#### **Sample Activity for Unit 4**

##### **Simulation – Standing Committee Mark-Up:**

- Framing Question: Develop an argument that explains whether the legislative process best represents an example of participatory democracy, pluralist democracy, or elite democracy.
- Possible Activity Summary: You will be assigned different roles representing individuals or institutions that could influence the mark-up process and passage of a bill out of a congressional standing committee, along with a basic draft of a paragraph-long bill that proposes entitlement reform as a means of decreasing the federal budget deficit. Roles in the simulation include Chair of the Ways and Means Committee, Majority Party Members of Ways and Means, Minority Party Members of Ways and Means, Party Leadership in the House, Party Leadership in the Senate, interest groups representing various perspectives on the bill, relevant bureaucratic agency leaders (e.g., Social Security Administration), and the President of the United States. The Chair of the Ways and Means Committee will make decisions throughout the simulation, such as whether to pigeonhole the bill, whether to calendar the bill for mark-up, or whether to refer the bill to subcommittee. Regardless of this decision, the Ways and Means Committee will engage in a mark-up process of the bill as different representatives within the committee attempt to logroll and actors and institutions outside of the committee attempt to influence the bill and pursue their interests as the bill works its way through the committee process. You will then learn about the rest of the legislative process and use evidence from this simulation, along with evidence from foundational documents such as the U.S. Constitution and *Federalist No. 51*, to develop a thesis that answers the framing question and supports this thesis with evidence.

#### **UNIT 5: CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS** (20 instructional days, covering ch. 5 and 6 of your textbook)

##### **Essential Questions:**

- To what extent do the U.S. Constitution and its amendments protect against undue government infringement on essential liberties and from invidious discrimination?
- How have U.S. Supreme Court rulings defined civil liberties and civil rights?

Topic 5.1: The Bill of Rights  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order  
Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 5.2: First Amendment - Freedom of Religion  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)

Topic 5.3: First Amendment - Freedom of Speech  
Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order  
Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969), *Schenck v. United States* (1919)

Topic 5.4: First Amendment - Freedom of the Press

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971)

Topic 5.5: Second Amendment - Right to Bear Arms

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)

Topic 5.6: Amendments - Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States

Topic 5.7: Selective Incorporation

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)

Topic 5.8: Amendments - Due Process and the Rights of the Accused

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)

Topic 5.9: Amendments - Due Process and the Right to Privacy

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Liberty and Order

Foundational Documents and Required Cases: The Constitution of the United States, *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

Topic 5.10: Social Movements and Equal Protection

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

Foundational Documents: The Constitution of the United States, "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

Topic 5.11: Government Responses to Social Movements

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Competing Policy-Making Interests

Required Cases: *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)

Topic 5.12: Balancing Minority and Majority Rights

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

Required Cases: *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)

Topic 5.13: Affirmative Action

Big Idea and Learning Objective: Constitutionalism

## Sample Activities and Assignments for Unit 5

### Argument and Discussion – Who is Most Responsible for Advancing Civil Rights since the 1950s?:

- **Framing Question:** Argue whether Congress, the U.S. Supreme Court, or a social movement is most responsible for the advancement of civil rights since the 1950s.
- **Possible Activity Summary:** First, you will analyze the role of specific laws, U.S. Supreme Court rulings, and social movements in either advancing or hindering civil rights since the 1950s. U.S. Supreme Court cases you could analyze and use as evidence include: *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), *Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States* (1964), *Shaw v. Reno* (1993), *Craig v. Boren* (1976), *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), and *Roe v. Wade* (1973). Congressional actions that you could analyze and use include The Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Voting Rights Act of 1965, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Twenty-Fourth Amendment, and the Equal Rights Amendment. Social movements you will analyze include the African American Civil Rights Movement, led by Dr. Martin Luther King (this analysis will include excerpts from "Letter from Birmingham Jail") and the push for an Equal Rights Amendment championed by the National Organization for Women. After explaining the role of Congressional actions, U.S. Supreme Court rulings, and social movements in advancing civil rights since the 1950s, you will be divided into groups, and each group will be assigned to argue on behalf of either Congress, the U.S. Supreme Court, or social movements. At the conclusion of the discussion in which each group represents their assigned perspective, you will focus on the use of refutation, concession, and rebuttal in responding to opposing or alternative perspectives based on the points that various groups highlighted during the discussion.

### Mock Oral Arguments – High-profile case from 2019-20 docket

- **Framing Question:** Constitutionally, how do we balance the civil liberties of an individual with the civil rights of a group when the two come into conflict with one another?
- **Possible Activity Summary:** You will frame the mock trial by first reading the overview of the relevant clause from the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution. You then will be divided into three groups – petitioners, respondents, and Supreme Court justices. Within these groups, you will be assigned roles such as chief justice, lead attorney, and paralegal. You

will be given an overview of the facts of the case from the assigned case, along with a set of the constitutional questions underlying the case. After oral argument, you will reflect on how factors such as precedent and stare decisis, the ideological composition of the Supreme Court, and judicial activism and restraint might influence how the course rules in this case.

Following completion of all 5 units we will review for AP exam as time permits.

This is gonna be fun!