Course Units

UNIT ONE: Constitutional Underpinnings
- Chapters 1, 2, 3

UNIT TWO: Political Socialization, Public Opinion, Political Parties
- Chapters 11, 12

UNIT THREE: Voting & Elections, Campaign Process, Media, Interest Groups
- Chapters 13, 14, 15, 16

UNIT FOUR: Institutions of National Government
(Congress, President, Bureaucracy, Federal Courts)
- Chapters 7, 8, 9, 10

UNIT FIVE: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- Chapters 5 and 6

UNIT SIX: Public Policy
- Chapters 17, 18, 19

Exam Format

Multiple-choice Scoring Format
- Number of questions: 60
- Time allotment: 45 minutes (45 seconds per question)
- Worth: 50% of overall test score
- Each correct answer is worth 1 point. The maximum score on this section is 60 points.
- There are five responses for each multiple-choice question.

Free Response Scoring Format
- Number of questions: 4
- Time allotment: 100 minutes
- Worth: 50% of overall test score
- Spend approximately 25 minutes on each Free-Response Question. The four essays are weighted equally and are all mandatory.

Scoring guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AP Test Score</th>
<th>Minimum number of points needed per section (max of 60)</th>
<th>Composite score needed on test</th>
<th>Percentage needed for AP test score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>48+</td>
<td>96-120</td>
<td>80%+</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>41-47</td>
<td>82-95</td>
<td>68-79%</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>33-40</td>
<td>66-81</td>
<td>55-67%</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>21-32</td>
<td>42-65</td>
<td>35-54%</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0-20</td>
<td>0-41</td>
<td>34% or lower</td>
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## Content Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basic Topics</th>
<th>General Areas within the Topics</th>
<th>Percent of Questions on Exam</th>
<th>Approx. # of Questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Beliefs and Behaviors</td>
<td>1. Citizen's beliefs and socialization 2. Public opinion 3. Voting and participation</td>
<td>10 – 20%</td>
<td>6-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media</td>
<td>1. Parties and elections: Functions, organization, development, effects, laws 2. Interest groups and PACs: Interests represented, activities, effects, characteristics, roles 3. Mass media: Functions, structure, impact</td>
<td>10-20%</td>
<td>6-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civil Rights and Civil Liberties</td>
<td>1. Basic rights and liberties 2. Development of rights and judicial interpretations 3. Selective incorporation and the 14th Amendment</td>
<td>5-15%</td>
<td>3-6</td>
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College Board website:
AP Government & Politics homepage

FRQ & rubric explanation (best FRQ website)
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2086.html

College Board Practice Exam
AP Exam Unit Review

Unit 1: Constitutional Underpinnings

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: majority rule, checks and balances, unitary system of government, rule of law, federalism, expressed powers, implied powers, reserved powers, cooperative federalism, devolution, grants-in-aid (categorical & block), mandates
- Basic principles of government
  - Providing for a common defense
  - Establishing justice
  - Insuring domestic tranquility
  - Promoting the general welfare
  - Securing the blessings of liberty- individual freedoms
- Influence of Enlightenment ideas- Locke/Hobbs- social contract
- Faults in the Articles of Confederation- and how the Constitution remedied the problem
- Basic principles of the Declaration of Independence:
  - National sovereignty, all men created equal (equality of opportunity), unalienable rights, government's purpose- securing rights, popular sovereignty
- U.S. Constitution:
  - Compromises: VA, NJ Plans & CT (Great) Compromise, Three-fifths
  - Basic principles
    - Limited government
    - Popular sovereignty
    - Separation of powers
    - Checks and balances
    - Federalism
  - Articles
    - I- Legislative Branch
    - II- Executive Branch
    - III- Judicial Branch
    - IV- Intergovernmental relationships- FF&C, P&I
    - V- Amendment process
    - VI- Supremacy of the Constitution
    - VII- Ratification process
- Amendments
  - 1-27
  - Informal methods of amending
- Federalist 10 & 51
- Marbury v. Madison
- Federalism- power sharing structure
  - 10th Amendment
  - Expressed, concurrent, reserved, & prohibited powers
  - Pro/cons of federalism
  - Different eras of federalism
  - Grants-in-aid- categorical vs. block
  - Full-faith and credit clause
  - Privileges and immunities clause
  - McCulloch v. Maryland & Gibbons v. Ogden
  - Federal mandates (unfunded)
Unit 2: Political Socialization, Public Opinion, & Political Parties

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: political culture, political socialization, public opinion, political ideology, political efficacy, split-ticket voting, political party
- American Democratic Values
  - Majority rule with minority rights
  - Equality of individuals relating to the law and political process
  - Private property supported by the capitalist system
  - Individual freedoms- liberties
- Political ideology
  - Spectrum
  - Basic tenants of liberals/conservatives
- Political socialization
  - Factors in formulating political beliefs
- Public Opinion
  - Measuring public opinion- public opinion polls
    - Sampling methods
    - Valid questions
    - Delivery methods
    - Analyzing results
  - Types of public opinion polls
- Political Parties- linking citizens to the government
  - Role of political parties
    - Party in the electorate- Association of like-minded people
    - Party in the government- Elected government officials
    - Party in organization- Individuals at all levels who assist the party
  - Duties of political parties
    - Recruit candidates
    - Nominate and support candidates for office
    - Educate/provide information to the electorate
    - Mobilize voters
    - Organize the government
  - Party identification
    - Demographic factors that influence party affiliation
- Basic tenants of Republicans/Democrats
- Reasons for third parties
Unit 3: Voting & Elections, Campaign Process, Media, & Interest Groups

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: primary & general elections, plurality election, single-member district, critical election, party realignment, frontloading primary (presidential), divided government, interest group, political action committee (PAC), free riders, power elite theory, pluralist theory, mass media, linkage institutions, horse-race journalism

- Voting and Elections
  - Methods of political participation (linking the public to government)
    - Voting
    - Discussion and meetings
    - Associating with interest groups/PACs
    - Contacting public officials
    - Campaigning for a candidate/party
    - Contributing money
    - Running for office
    - Protesting
  - Expansion of suffrage- historical events & constitutional amendments

- Voter turnout
  - Types of elections
  - Reasons for low voter turnout
  - Who votes- demographics

- Types of elections
  - Primary v. general
  - Presidential v. congressional

- Electoral College basics- workings of, reasons for

- Campaigns
  - Reasons for incumbent advantage
  - Parts of a presidential campaign
    - Exploration
    - Announcement
    - Primaries/caucuses
    - Nominating conventions
    - General election
  - Critical elections
  - Campaign finance

- Media
  - Role of media- linking citizens to the government
    - Inform the public
    - Shape public opinion
    - Linking citizens and the government
    - Serve as a government watchdog
    - Agenda setting what becomes a political issue
  - Differences in covering the president and Congress
  - Media bias

- Interest Groups
  - Major interest groups and their causes
  - Functions- linking citizens to the government
    - Raise awareness
    - Represent membership linking the people with the government
    - Provide information to the government
    - Enable citizens to work together to enact change (common voice)
  - Political Action Committees
Unit 4: Legislative Branch

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: congressional redistricting, gerrymandering, incumbent, franking privilege, committees (standing, conference, House Rules, House Ways & Means), committee chairperson, filibuster, logrolling, oversight, delegate vs. trustee theory of representation
- Reasons for a bicameral legislature
- Legislative branch checks and balances
- Structure of Congress-
  - Reasons for bicameral structure
  - House v. Senate (differences in structure)
  - House v. Senate (specific powers)
  - Rules, qualifications
- Getting elected
  - House
    - Apportionment, reapportionment, redistricting, gerrymandering
  - Senate
    - 17th Amendment
- Incumbent advantage
- Congressional leadership
  - Speaker of the House/President pro tempore
  - Majority/minority leaders
  - Majority/minority whips
- Congressional committees
  - Reasons for/types of committees- standing, select, joint, conference
    - Important standing committees
      - Ways and Means, Appropriations, etc.
  - Role of committee chair
- Role of congressmen
  - Delegate v. trustee
- Legislative powers
  - Expressed (Article I, section 8 powers), implied (elastic clause), and limitation of legislative powers
- Lawmaking process
  - How a bill becomes law basics
  - Methods of legislative process
    - Pork barrel, logrolling, filibuster and cloture
Unit 4: Executive Branch

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: veto, line-item veto, executive agreement, executive privilege, lame-duck period, bureaucracy, executive order, iron triangle/issue network, policy agenda
- Constitutional & informal powers
  - Carry out & faithfully execute the law
  - Preside over the military as commander-in-chief
  - Appoint, remove, & commission executive officials & military officers
  - Negotiate treaties
  - Pardon
  - Recognize the sovereignty of nations
  - Meet with foreign heads of state and other top dignitaries
- “Hats”/duties of the president (formal and informal)
  - Head of the Executive Branch
  - Commander-in-Chief
  - Leader of Congress
  - Chief Economic Planner
  - Party Leader
  - Leader of Public Opinion
  - Head of State
    - Leader of rituals of American Democracy
  - Chief Diplomat
  - Leader of Free Nations
- Growth of presidential power- historic events, reasons for growth in power & influence, role of media
- Associated amendments
- Presidential elections- role of Electoral College
- Chief of Staff- duties, influence in politics and policymaking
- Executive Office of the President (EOP)
  - Role & influence
  - Office of Management and Budget
  - White House Office
  - National Security Council
- Federal bureaucracy- reasons for, growth of
  - Cabinet
    - Departments within
    - Role & influence
    - Implementation of law/policymaking
  - Independent Executive Agencies
  - Independent Regulatory Agencies
  - Government Corporations
  - Iron Triangles
- Checks and balances of the executive branch
Unit 4: Judicial Branch

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: appellate jurisdiction, senatorial courtesy, writ of certiorari, rule of four, solicitor general, amicus curiae brief, stare decisis, precedent, judicial restraint & activism
- Constitutional powers
- Judicial branch checks and balances
- Dual court structure
  - Courts of original-appellate-final jurisdiction
  - Case load of the various courts
- Factors in selecting federal judges/justices
- The path a case takes to reach the Supreme Court
- Impact of written case opinions
- Historic Supreme Court eras and associated cases
  - Marshall Court
  - Taney Court
  - Warren Court
  - Burger Court
  - Rehnquist Court
- Judicial philosophy
  - Activism v. restraint
  - Loose v. strict constructionist
Unit 5: Civil Rights and Liberties

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: civil liberties, civil rights, selective incorporation, establishment clause, free exercise clause, clear & present danger test, writ of habeas corpus, bill of attainder, ex post facto law, exclusionary rule, Miranda rights, affirmative action

- Related Constitutional Amendments
  - Bill of Rights with particular emphasis on the following:
    - 1st- freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, petition
    - 4th- unreasonable search and seizure
    - 5th- legal due process rights such as protection against double jeopardy & self-incrimination
    - 6th- right speedy public jury trial, right to counsel
    - 7th- common law jury trial
    - 8th- cruel and unusual punishment
    - 9th- unstated right to privacy
  - 14th Amendment- selective incorporation, due process rights guaranteed for all

- Freedom of religion
  - Establishment Clause
  - Free Exercise Clause

- Freedom of Speech
  - Pure & symbolic speech
  - Regulation of speech

- Rights of the accused
  - 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th Amendments

- Civil rights legislation
  - Civil Rights Act of 1964
  - Voting Rights Act of 1965
  - Affirmative action

- Significant Court cases
Unit 6: Policymaking

- Associated unit terminology with emphasis on: monetary policy, fiscal policy, entitlement program, Office of Management & Budget (OMB)
- Policymaking steps:
  - Agenda setting
  - Formulating the policy
  - Adopt the policy
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation
- Federal budget:
  - Discretionary v. non-discretionary (mandatory) spending in the budget
  - Deficit & debt
- Economic
  - Fiscal v. monetary policy
  - Raising revenue
- Environmental/Energy
  - EPA
  - Clean Air & Water Acts
  - Clean energy/energy independence
- Military
  - Historic events- Cold War-War on Terror
- Foreign
  - Different methods of
- Social welfare
  - Entitlements
  - Social Security & Medicare
  - Cost and impact
Unit Breakdown of AP Test Free Response Questions

Unit 1 Constitutional Underpinnings
• 2014 #1 Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist views
• 2013 #1 Theories of representation (direct v. republic & trustee v. delegate)
• 2010 #4 Limited gov’t- checks & balances, federalism, Bill of Rights, 14th Amendment
• 2009 #1 Federalist 10
• 2007 #4 Federalism- grants, specific acts, terms, 10th Amendment
• 2005 #2 Expansion of federal power over the states, specific terms and laws
• 2003 #3 Federalism- Federal/state employment trends (graph), grants & mandates

Unit 2 Political Socialization, Public Opinion, Political Parties
• 2013 #2 Role & function of political parties + reasons why political parties are weakening
• 2011 #2 Public opinion polls linking the public to elected officials
• 2010 #3 Composition of Republicans and Democrats- (graph), demographic groups, southern vote
• 2004 #3 Role of third parties in elections (political cartoon)

Unit 3 Voting and Elections, Political Campaigns, Mass Media, & Interest Groups
• Voting & Elections
  o 2014 #2 Voting turnout based on constitutional amendments, laws & demographics
  o 2011 #3 Presidential primary election process
  o 2009 #1 17th Amendment, Primary Elections, expansion of suffrage
  o 2007 #1 Electoral College winner-take-all system
  o 2002 #3 Obstacles/opportunities for minorities regarding the political system
    regarding federalism, political parties, and the electoral system
  o 2002 #4 Voter apathy in midterm elections compared to presidential elections
• The Campaign Process
  o 2005 #4 Campaign finance reform
• The Media
  o 2009 #4 Media (news) influence (table)
• Interest Groups
  o 2012 #4 Role & methods of interest groups in serving the public interest
  o 2010 #1 Bill of Rights protections, methods of influence, government regulation of
  o 2006 #1 Goals/roles of interest groups and political parties in the political process
  o 2004 #2 Interest groups tactics, tactics used by specific IG’s to lobby Congress
• Unit overview
  o 2003 #2 Methods of citizen participation in political process other than voting
  o 2009 #2 Low voter turnout & other methods to connect citizens to the government
  o 2004 #4 Eroding trust in government & political consequences/ramifications

Unit 4 Legislative Branch
• 2014 #4 Party polarization in Congress (graph)
• 2012 #1 Duties of Congress
• 2009 #3 Congress structure law making
• 2008 #1 Congressional reapportionment/gerrymandering
• 2006 #4 Bicameral nature of Congress, powers of each house and why that power
• 2003 #4 Party leadership/committees and influence in legislative process
Unit 5 Executive Branch
- 2014 #3 Expansion & limits of presidential power in foreign policy
- 2011 #4 Checks and balances between Congress & the President
- 2010 #2 Bureaucracy- merit system, bureaucratic independence, checks on bureaucracy
- 2008 #2 Presidential influence/limitations over Congress regarding domestic policy
- 2007 #3 Congressional/Presidential powers during war / War Powers Act
- 2006 #3 Relationship between Congress and the bureaucracy in implementing policy
- 2004 #1 Informal powers of the President over Congress regarding foreign policy
- 2003 #1 Presidential approval ratings, reasons for fluctuations
- 2002 #1 Divided government- obstacles, ways the President and overcome these obstacles

Unit 6 Judicial Branch
- 2013 #3 Factors why presidents nominate federal judges
- 2012 #3 Insulation of judiciary- checks by public opinion, executive & legislative
- 2011 #1 Workings of the Supreme Court- judicial review, other legal terms
- 2005 #1 Insulation of judicial branch from the public but SC still accountable to public opinion

Unit 7 Civil Rights and Liberties
- 2012 #2 Minority representation in Congress, 24th Amendment, VRA of 1965 (graph)
- 2008 #4 15th Amendment & laws denying the black vote
- 2007 #2 1st Amendment Freedom of Religion/Supreme Court rulings
- 2005 #3 Selective incorporation 1st Amend, criminal rights, privacy rights

Unit 8 Public Policy
- 2013 #4 Formation, enactment, and implementation of public policy
- 2008 #3 Fiscal/monetary policy role of FED
- 2006 #2 Entitlement programs (Social Security, chart)
- 2003 #2 (Graph) Distribution of federal benefits, trends, reasons, consequences