

Course Description for **AP-Advanced Placement Principles of Democracy (37690)**

DEPARTMENT: Social Science

GRADE: 12

LENGTH: One Semester

CREDITS: Five

PREREQUISITE: A semester grade of “A” in U.S. History. A grade of “B” or better in Honors/AP U.S. History, plus teacher recommendation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is a detailed study of American government and politics. It is structured to meet the guidelines of the Advanced Placement examination in American Government and politics as well as state graduation requirements. Students are encouraged to take the Advanced Placement examination. This course will earn a weighted grade point for University of California credit based on the scale of A=5, B=4, C=3. A course and AP test description guide is available upon request.

EXIT CRITERIA: By the end of the semester students are expected to apply their knowledge and problem solving skills in relation to:

The Goal of Knowledge and Cultural Understanding

1. Historical and Cultural Literacy

- a. Students will interpret the principles of American government expressed or implied in the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution, court decisions, and laws.
- b. Students will analyze the major ideas and historical events from which the American political system has evolved.
- c. Students will develop awareness that each generation of Americans has made contributions to our American governmental system.
- d. Students will compare and contrast the major governmental philosophies.

2. Geographic Literacy

- a. Students will understand world regions and their historical, cultural, economic, and political characteristics.
- b. Students will understand human and environmental interaction.

3. Sociopolitical Literacy

- a. Students will analyze the organization, functions, and decision-making processes of the branches of government at local, state, and national levels.

Course Description for **AP-Advanced Placement Principles of Democracy (37690)**

- b. Students will analyze the comparisons of the United States system of government with other systems.
- c. Students will analyze the electoral process of all levels and the role of political parties in that process.
- d. Students will identify and explain the principles underlying law in a free society.
- e. Students will understand the relationship between individual rights and the public good.
- f. Students will understand the close relationship between social and political systems.
- g. Students will gain an understanding of the constitutional underpinnings of U.S. Democracy, which includes; Federalism, separation of powers, and other considerations that influence the formulation and adoption of the Constitution.
- h. Students will assess the various factors that influence citizens to differ from one another in terms of their political belief and behaviors.
- i. Students will recognize and assess the relationships between Congress, the Presidency, the bureaucracy, and the federal courts and their links with political parties, interest groups, the media, sub-national governments and public opinion.
- j. Students will develop an understanding of the mechanisms that facilitate the communication of interest and preferences by like-minded citizens such as; political parties, elections, and interest groups.
- k. Students will gain an understanding of policymaking and processes in a federal system.

The Goal of Democratic Understanding and Civic Values

1. Civic Values and Responsibilities

- a. Students will identify and explain the rights and responsibilities of individuals in the United States.
- b. Students will identify and explain how actions that individuals and groups take influence the political process.
- c. Students will analyze the importance of civil liberties and the protection of minority views.
- d. Students will synthesize the values of patriotism, which promote a democratic political community.
- e. Students will promote the value of patriotism, which includes desirable pluralistic and individualistic elements in a democratic political community.

Course Description for **AP-Advanced Placement Principles of Democracy (37690)**

- f. Students will gain an understanding of judicial interpretation and its establishment of civil liberties and rights.

The Goal of Skill Attainment and Social Participation

1. Basic Study and Critical Thinking Skills

- a. Students will define and clarify problems in order to resolve conflicts and draw conclusions.
- b. Students will develop skills involved in obtaining information.
- c. Students will organize and express thoughts clearly in writing and speaking.
- d. Students will develop the ability to identify and analyze issues that require social action.

2. Social Participation

- a. Students will identify and promote individual social participation through voting, jury service, volunteerism, and involvement in community organizations.
- b. Students will develop personal group interaction skills.

3. Advanced Placement Government Skills and Abilities

- a. Students will develop knowledge of facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to U.S. government and politics.
- b. Students will develop an understanding of typical patterns of political processes and typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences.
- c. Students will compile an assessment portfolio that relates to the readings, class discussions, examinations, essays, and projects, which will be, based on Advanced Placement criteria for test preparation.

GRADING CRITERIA:	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
	Assessments	30%
	Performance Participation	10%
	Senior Portfolio	30%
	Career Interview	10%
	Homework	20%

TEXTBOOK:

Government in America

Publisher: Addison-Wesley/Prentice-Hall
 Author: George C. Edwards/Martin P. Wattenberg/Lineberry
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This course will incorporate the extensive use of primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, which will include the following:

All the President's Men, Bernstein, Woodward
Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process, Oleszek
Declaration of Independence
Democracy in America, de Tocquville
Emancipation Proclamation
Gideon's Trumpet, Lewis
Huey Long, Lewis
Landmark Supreme Court Decisions
Magna Carta
The New Federalist, Madison, Jay
The New Federalism, Reagan, Sanzone
The Palace Guard, Wallace
There ought to be a Law! How Laws are Made and Work, Switzer
U.S. Constitution/Bill of Rights
To Kill a Mockingbird, Lee

Revised: 5/6/99