

# Chino Valley Unified School District

## High School Course Description

A. CONTACTS	
<b>1. School/District Information:</b>	School/District: Chino Valley Unified School District Street Address: 5130 Riverside Dr., Chino, CA 91710 Phone: (909) 628-1201 Web Site: chino.k12.ca.us
<b>2. Course Contact:</b>	Teacher Contact: Office of Secondary Curriculum Position/Title: Director of Secondary Curriculum Site: District Office Phone: (909) 628-1201 X1630
B. COVER PAGE - COURSE ID	
<b>1. Course Title:</b>	Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics
<b>2. Transcript Title/Abbreviation:</b>	AP US Gov
<b>3. Transcript Course Code/Number:</b>	5H03
<b>4. Seeking Honors Distinction:</b>	Yes
<b>5. Subject Area/Category:</b>	Meets the UC/CSU "a" History/Social Science requirement
<b>6. Grade Level(s):</b>	12
<b>7. Unit Value:</b>	5 credits per semester
<b>8. Course Previously Approved by UC:</b>	No
<b>9. Classified as a Career Technical Education Course:</b>	No
<b>10. Modeled after an UC-approved course:</b>	Yes
<b>11. Repeatable for Credit:</b>	No
<b>12. Date of Board Approval:</b>	May 3, 2018
<b>13. Brief Course Description:</b> <p>The Advanced Placement Course in US Government and Politics is designed to give students a critical perspective on politics and government. This course includes both general concepts and relevant case studies for the purpose of interpreting politics and government in a critical way. It will also require an understanding of the institutions, groups, people, beliefs, and ideas that make up the past and current US political system. At the conclusion of the course, students will have the opportunity to take the Advanced Placement Examination in the hopes of receiving college credit for this course.</p>	
<b>14. Prerequisites:</b>	None
<b>15. Context for Course:</b> <p>This course is already approved by Chino Valley Unified School District as a year-long course. However, College Board allows AP US Government and Politics to be a semester-long course, which is the change being submitted. This change is being made so that AP US Government and Politics can be taught in conjunction with AP Comparative Government and Politics. Students would take both AP Comparative Government and Politics and AP US Government in Politics during their senior year as a "year-long" course.</p>	
<b>16. History of Course Development:</b> <p>This course introduces students to key political ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the political culture of the United States. The course examines politically significant concepts and themes, through which students learn to apply disciplinary reasoning, assess causes and consequences of political events, and interpret data to develop evidence-based arguments. The course is designed to prepare students for the Advanced Placement Exam in US Government and Politics.</p>	
<b>17. Textbooks:</b>	Wilson, James Q. <i>American Government</i> . 13 <sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2013.

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<b>18. Supplemental Instructional Materials:</b>	Throughout the course, students will be reading articles from a variety of academic journals, including, but not limited to the Economist, Foreign Policy, and others.
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### C. COURSE CONTENT

#### **1. Course Purpose:**

This course is designed to examine the institutions, participants, and processes which characterize political activity in the United States. The course has three objectives:

1. To introduce students to the basics of American national and state governments
2. To help students develop an analytical perspective toward the conduct of politics in the United States
3. To introduce students to the manner in which political scientists conduct research on politics, government, and the political process

#### **2. Course Outline:**

##### Unit 1: Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government

- Considerations that influenced the formation and adoption of the Constitution
- Separation of Powers
- Checks and Balances
- Federalism
- Theories of Democratic Government

##### Unit 2: Political Beliefs and Behaviors

- Beliefs that citizens hold about their government and its leaders
- Processes by which citizens learn about politics
- The nature, sources, and consequences of public opinion
- The ways in which citizens vote and otherwise participate in political life
- Factors that influence citizens to differ from one another in terms of political beliefs and behaviors

##### Unit 3: Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media

- Political Parties and Elections
  - Functions
  - Organization
  - Development
  - Effects on the Political Process
  - Electoral laws and systems
- Interest groups, including political action committees (PACs)
  - The range of interests represented
  - The activities of interest groups
  - The effects of interest groups on the political process
  - The unique characteristics and roles of PACs in the political process
- The mass media
  - The functions and structures of the news media
  - The impacts of the news media on politics
  - The news media industry and its consequences

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### Unit 4: Institutions of National Government: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts

- The major formal and informal institutional arrangements of power
- Relationships among these four institutions and varying balances of power
- Linkages between institutions and the following:
  - Public opinion and voters
  - Interest groups
  - Political parties
  - The media
  - State and local governments

### Unit 6: Public Policy

- Policymaking in the federal system
- The formation of policy agendas
- The role of institutions in the enactment of policy
- The role of the bureaucracy and the courts in policy implementation and interpretation
- Linkages between policy processes and the following:
  - Political institutions and federalism
  - Political parties
  - Interest groups
  - Public opinion
  - Elections
  - Policy networks

### Unit 7: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

- The development of civil liberties and civil rights by judicial interpretation
- Knowledge of substantive rights and liberties
- The impact of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment on the constitutional development of rights and liberties

### 3. Key Assignments:

- Reading Quizzes and Discussions
  - Students will take a reading quiz on each section and then discuss the readings in partners and then in groups to ensure they have comprehended what they read
- Notecards
  - Students will create a set of notecards to use to review key terms and people
- Students will assess and discuss current events occurring in US government and politics, in writing.
  - Current Event Write-Ups due, present in class.
- Students will interpret and assess at least 5 amendments to the US constitution and how those amendments have affect US government and politics, while working in groups.
  - Group research project – analyze 5-6 amendments and present to class, must include analysis of relevant supreme court cases and current examples.
- Students will define and explain the sources of American political culture, including: mistrust of government, political tolerance, religious roots, and class consciousness.
  - Group Research project on sources of political culture and how it affects public opinion.
    - Students must provide public opinion polls along with analysis of those polls to support their arguments.

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- Students will practice using the academic language in AP Free-Response questions, as it relates to the Judicial branch, Supreme Court cases, civil rights and civil liberties.
  - Practice FRQs
- Students will interpret political ideology and how it relates to their own political participation and ideals.
  - Political ideology Activity and Essay – students discover own political ideology
- Students will analyze the causes and effects of different levels of voter turnout and political participation.
  - “Who participates” survey project – students conduct their own surveys of adults in their lives and whether or not they participate politically
  - “Letter to Congressmen” Project – Students will participate in politics by writing letters to Congressmen about issues they are concerned about
- Students will describe the media process that contributes to awareness during campaigns.
  - Campaign Simulation – create their own platform, campaign ad, and prepare for mock debates
- Students will analyze how a President’s character affects campaigns, elections, policy making power, and public opinion ratings.
  - Create the perfect President project – traits and characteristics
- Students will compare and contrast at least 2 presidents and their approval ratings.
  - President research project
- Students will define and describe the bill making process in both houses, including how committees are organized and the tasks of staff members of Congress members.
  - Project and Simulation – Students will create a bill and simulate the process by which it needs to be passed
- Students will analyze the federal budget process, budget deficits, surpluses, and the cooperation between Congress and the Executive in passing economic policy.
  - Budget project – students will create a school budget and figure out where to allocate funds
- Unit Exams:
  - Students will answer multiple choice and free-response questions from each unit
  - Each exam will be cumulative and include questions from previous exams
- Midterm Exam:
  - Students will take a midterm exam with cumulative questions half way through the semester
  - The exam will include both multiple choice and free-response questions
- Final Exam:
  - Students will take a Final exam with cumulative questions at the end of the semester
  - The exam will include both multiple choice and free-response questions

#### **4. Instructional Methods and/or Strategies:**

##### *Activities:*

Debates, Mock Trials, Socratic Seminars, Simulations, Discussions, Reading Secondary and Primary Sources, Research Projects, Formal and Informal Writing Assignments, Taking notes on lectures

##### *Homework:*

Students will be expected to complete textbook and supplemental readings at home, as well as various research projects, and current events.

##### *Current Events:*

Aside from class activities, reading assignments, and notes, students will need to complete current event write-up once per week. Students will also be asked to present their current events to the class orally at least once a unit. The use of consistent current event analysis will allow students to better connect the concepts learned in class to the world in which they live.

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#### *Using Graphs, Maps, and Charts:*

Each unit will make use of a variety of data and stimuli, including graphs, maps, and charts that are relevant to the topic being studied. Students will also gain practice analyzing these stimuli for a variety of purposes.

#### **5. Assessment Including Methods and/or Tools:**

The evaluation of student progress and evaluation will be based on the following criteria outlined in Board Policy:

- Assessments: 60-75% of the final grade
  - Midterm/Final
  - Reading Quizzes
- Assignments and class discussions: 25-40% of the final grade
  - Projects
  - Free-Response Question Practice/Participation