

American Government (Grades: 12)

Prerequisite: None

Credit: 1 year, 1 credit, required

Course Overview:

American Government is designed to give seniors a better understanding of our political system. The origin, development, organization, powers and actual workings of the government on the national, state and local level are discussed, studied and examined thoroughly. A mock legislative session is conducted during the school year to give the students a working knowledge of legislative procedure. During the last quarter, scenarios are created to simulate a hypothetical geopolitical crisis. Students then attempt to resolve the crisis through diplomatic and conflict resolution skills.

Social Studies Content Strands

The following strands contain instructional elements integrated throughout the social studies grade and subject level content standards and benchmarks. Focus areas for integrated elements are 1) participation and application skills and 2) citizenship skills. The depth of implementation in each strand area varies with grade/subject and developmental levels of students. The outlined elements will also help students understand the use of communication skills in learning information in all content areas.

I. Participation and Application Skills

A. Study and Organization Skills

1. Notetaking and Outlining

- Notetaking and outlining class lectures and discussions
- Suggested methods in classroom materials and those outlined by the instructor

2. Demonstrating a Sense of Chronology

- As introduced in each unit
- Supreme Court decisions
- Constitutional interpretation through a historical perspective
- Timeline activities
- Political cartoons

3. Identifying, Classifying and Summarizing Ideas

- Skills activities as they apply to identifying and classifying
- Determining the historical and political factors of the greatest significance

B. Communication Skills

1. Writing and Research

(Content Strands cont.)

- Research paper, book reports or positions papers
- Personality profiles of government leaders
- Worksheets
- Legislative bills
- Political cartoons
- 2. Listening and Oral
 - Attend lectures and participate in classroom discussions
 - Student oral presentations
 - Group discussions
 - Audio-visual presentations
 - News programs
- 3. Reading and Vocabulary
 - Reading and text comprehension
 - Supplementary readings
 - Key terms/concepts
- C. Map and Globe skills
 - Identify specific geographical areas in the news
 - Specific map skills
 - Geopolitics of US national security policy
- D. Group Participation Skills
 - 1. Conflict Resolution
 - As related to current events
 - Scenarios
 - 2. Simulations
 - Mock legislature
 - Mini-mock trial
 - As they apply to controversial world issues
 - 3. Class Discussion
 - Ongoing throughout the year relative to the daily lesson
 - discussion of issues that relate to lesson and to current events
 - Ongoing throughout the course
 - Both teacher and student developed topics and projects

II. Citizenship Skills

- A. Comparing and Evaluation of Political Process
 - Development of different political systems
 - compare and contrast political systems
 - Evaluation of political systems
- B. Investigating Historical and Geopolitical Interrelationships
 - Identify and analyze the geopolitical nature of governments and their historical contribution
 - The role of the US in the future of world geopolitics
- C. Evaluating the Contributions of Cultures and Regions

(Content Strands cont.)

- Ongoing process throughout the year in relation to specific lessons
- D. Comparing Different Values, Traditions and Religious Beliefs
 - Origins of political theory
 - Identify the sources of influence on political evolution
 - The development and implications of a theocratic state
- E. Exploring Social, Psychological and Economic Forces
 - Compare and contrast major economic systems
 - Interaction of social, psychological and economic forces on the politics and government of nations
- F. Critical and Analytical Skills
 1. Drawing Inferences
 - From text, lecture and current events
 - Political cartoons
 2. Distinguishing Fact, Bias and Propaganda
 - From text, lecture, broadcast news, newspapers, the Internet, and periodicals
 - Political cartoons
 3. Understanding cause and effect relationships
 - Throughout the year in class, projects, homework assignment, and news media
 4. Interpreting charts, graphs, tables, diagrams, and visuals
 - Throughout classroom materials and current event materials
 5. Developing hypotheses and gathering and evaluating data
 - Student research paper, position paper or book report
 - Mock legislature
 - Mini-mock trial
 6. Using primary and secondary sources
 - Through periodicals, audio-visuals, guest speakers, news media, and library materials
 - Internet research and use
 7. Relating the past to the present
 - Throughout the year in lecture/discussion
 8. Predicting the future using past and present trends
 - Evaluation of current events
 - Classroom discussion
 - Conflict resolution scenarios

Social Studies Content Standards and Benchmarks

Standard 1: Students will examine and develop the background and knowledge necessary to understand the foundations of the American government system. (SSCS—1-6)

Benchmarks

1.1 Students will analyze and discuss the theories on the origin of the state. (2.12.1, 2.12.3-4, 4.12.1-2)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.1.1	identify the characteristics of a state.	V, W, P	D
1.1.2	explain the four theories on the origin of the state.	V, W	I, D

1.2 Students will examine the different forms of government in existence today. (1.12.2, 2.12.1-2, 3.12.2-3)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.2.1	explain the different forms of government found throughout the world.	V, W, P for all.	D for all.
1.2.2	identify the characteristics that differentiate the various forms of government.		

1.3 Students will develop a working knowledge of the world’s existing political and economic systems. (2.12.2, 2.12.5, 3.12.4, 5.12.1, 5.12.3-4, 5.12.3-5, 6.1.12)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.3.1	analyze the difference between a command and market economy.	V, W, P for all.	M for all.
1.3.2	compare and contrast democratic, socialist and communist systems of government.		

1.4 Students will examine and analyze the background and creation of the United States governmental system. (2.12.1, 2.12.4, 4.12.1, 4.12.4, 6.12.1, 6.12.4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.4.1	identify the contributions of English heritage and discuss the events that precipitated the American Revolution.	V, W, P	M for all.
1.4.2	evaluate and analyze the Articles of Confederation, the Constitutional Convention and the inauguration of a democratic form of government.	V, W	

- 1.5** Students will develop a comprehensive background and understanding of the United States Constitution. (1.12.2, 2.12.1, 2.12.5, 4.12.1, 6.12.1, 6.12.4, 6.12.7)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.5.1	analyze the basic principles of the Constitution.	V, W, P for all.	D
1.5.2	develop a comprehension of the concepts of popular sovereignty, limited government separation of powers, checks and balances, judicial review, and Federalism.		M
1.5.3	describe processes of Constitutional change.		M

- 1.6** Students will recognize the background and function of the United States form of government. (2.12.3, 2.12.6)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
1.6.1	develop an understanding of the division of powers, 10 th amendment, delegated powers, reserved powers and the process of federal/state constitution.	W, W, O, P	M

Standard 2: Students will develop an understanding of the methods of obtaining US citizenship and a comprehension of the history of immigration and current issues in immigration policy today. (SSCS—1-2, 4, 6)

- 2.1** Students will evaluate the history of United States immigration policy. (1.12.1, 2.12.4-5, 4.12.1-2, 6.12.7-8))

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.1.1	analyze past/present US immigration policy.	V, W, P	M

- 2.2** Students will develop an understanding of current controversial issues in US immigration.. (2.12.5-8, 6.12.1-2, 6.12.6, 6.12.8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.2.1	clarify the significance of US public policies on legal immigration and illegal immigration as they relate to issues within the United States and the world around us.	V, W, P	D

- 2.3** Students will examine the methods of gaining US citizenship. (2.12.5-6, 2.12.8, 6.12.1)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.3.1	identify how US citizenship is obtained, its significance, and how it can be taken away.	V, W, O, P	M

- 2.4** Students will recognize the historical significance and background of the Civil Rights movement. (1.12.1-2, 2.12.3, 2.12.5-8, 6.12.1, 6.12.3-4, 6.12.8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.4.1	identify and analyze specific events and characters of the Civil Rights Movement.	V, W, P	M
2.4.2	demonstrate a background of knowledge of the Montgomery Bus boycott, Rosa Parks, NAACP, integration of public schools, Jim Crow Laws, Black Panthers, Martin Luther King, the Great Society and Civil Rights legislation.	V, W, O, P	D, M

- 2.5** Students will evaluate important Supreme Court cases that have affected Civil Rights in the US. (1.12.2, 2.12.4-6, 4.12.1, 4.12.4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.5.1	analyze and interpret the following cases: Plessy V. Ferguson (1896), Brown V. Topeka Bd. of Ed. (1954), Bakke V. U of California (1974).	V, W	D

- 2.6** Students will develop a working knowledge of the due process clauses as found in the 5th and 14th amendments. (1.12.2, 2.12.2, 2.12.5-8, 4.12.1, 4.12.3, 4.12.5, 6.12.1, 6.12.7)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.6.1	recognize the differences between substantive and procedural due process.	V, W, P	D
2.6.2	cite and explain specific Supreme Court cases that clarify due process of law.	V, W, O, P	I, D

- 2.7** Students will comprehend and be able to explain the significance of each amendment found in the Bill of Rights. (2.12.5, 4.12.4-5, 6.12.1, 6.12.7)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.7.1	evaluate the importance and significance of the bill of rights in relation to individual civil Rights and state rights.	V, W, P	D

- 2.8** Students will analyze the concept of “equal justice under the law” by evaluating Supreme Court cases that clarify issues relative to the rights of the accused and rights to a fair trial. (1.12.1, 1.12.3, 1.12.8, 2.12.4, 2.12.6-7, 3.12.3, 4.12.1-2, 4.12.4, 6.12.1, 6.12.4, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
2.8.1	recognize the difference between the equality of justice and the	V, W	D for all.

2.8.2	equality of condition. analyze the importance of police power and how it may conflict with individual rights.	V, W, P	
2.8.3	comprehend the importance and role of security, freedom, and Constitutional rights as they relate to the individual and society.	V, W, O, P	
2.8.4	recognize and analyze how conflict within society can be resolved peacefully.	V, W, O, P	

Standard 3: Students will comprehend the importance of the two-party political system, independent political parties, voter behavior, the power of the ballot and the electoral process in choosing a President. (SSCS—1-4, 6)

3.1 Students will recognize the significance and development of the political party system in our democratic system of government. (1.12.2, 2.12.5, 2.12.8, 3.12.3, 4.12.1-2, 4.12.5, 6.12.7)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
3.1.1	demonstrate a background in the history, function and dynamics of political parties.	V, W, P	D for all.
3.1.2	explain the role of minor political parties and the power base of the two-party system.	V, W, P	
3.1.3	analyze the organization and structure of political platforms, federal laws, and campaign financing in relation to political parties.	V, W, O, P	

3.2 Students will comprehend the importance of the voting process and analyze the role of voter behavior in our representative form of government. (1.12.2, 2.12.1, 2.12.5-6, 2.12.8, 4.12.1, 4.12.4, 6.12.1, 6.12.4, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
3.2.1	discuss the Suffrage Movement and explain how it led to Constitutional change.	V, W	D
3.2.2	explain the significance and background to partisan politics, voter apathy, gridlock, campaign financing and the military industrial complex in American politics.	V, W, P	D
3.2.3	describe state and federal qualifications that must be met in order to be eligible to vote.	V, W, P	M
3.2.4	analyze the role of the media, money, primaries, campaigning and the electoral process in choosing a President.	V, W, O, P	D

Standard 4: Recognize the importance of the legislative branch of American government in translating the will of the people into public policy. (SSCS—1-2, 4, 6)

4.1 Students will comprehend the background information that is relevant to the creation, organization and duties of the federal legislative branch of government. (1.12.1, 2.12.1, 2.12.5-6, 2.12.8, 4.12.5, 6.12.3-4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
4.1.1	evaluate the foundation and significance of a bicameral legislature.	V, W	M for all.
4.1.2	comprehend the controversies and compromises that led to the Virginia Plan.	V, W, P	
4.1.3	discuss the terms, sessions, qualifications and compensation for Congressional members.	V, W, P	
4.1.4	describe the duties and responsibilities of members of Congress.	V, W, P	

4.2 Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of Congress in action. (1.12.2-3, 2.12.3, 4.12.4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
4.2.1	clarify the process of convening a new Congress and discuss the rules, organization, leadership positions, partisan nature and powers of Congress.	V, W, P	M

4.3 Students will illustrate the process of how a proposed bill becomes a law. (2.12.5)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
4.3.1	demonstrate how the committee system functions and through a simulated mock legislature demonstrate the making of public policy.	V, W, O, P	M

4.4 Students will recognize the specific powers of Congress and from where and how these powers are derived. (2.12.1, 2.12.5-6, 4.12.5, 6.12.1, 6.12.7)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
4.4.1	evaluate the scope of the expressed, implied and inherent powers of Congress.	V, W, P	M
4.4.2	appraise the role of Congress in domestic and foreign affairs.	V, W	D
4.4.3	recognize the non-legislative powers of Congress.	V, W, P	D

Standard 5: Students will develop a background of information enabling students to comprehend the role function, importance and operating procedures of the Executive Branch in the American democratic system of government. (SSCS—1-6)

5.1 Students will analyze and interpret the organization and duties of the President. (1.12.1, 2.12.1, 2.12.4, 5.12.3, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.1.1	explain the qualifications, tenure, compensation and roles of the Executive Branch.	V, W, P for all.	M for all.
5.1.2	analyze the Constitutional amendments that have impacted the tenure and succession of the Executive Branch (12 th , 20 th , 23 rd , 25 th).		

5.2 Students will analyze and interpret the roles and duties of the Vice-president. (1.12.1, 2.12.1, 2.12.3-4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.2.1	analyze and interpret the roles, duties and functions of the Vice-president.	V, W, P	M

5.3 Students will examine the process through which the Chief Executive is chosen. (2.12.1, 2.12.6, 6.12.1)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.3.1	recognize the Presidential nomination and election process.	V, W, P	M

5.4 Students will recognize the role and function of the Presidency in action. (1.12.3-5, 2.12.1, 2.12.7, 3.12.6, 4.12.4, 6.12.1, 6.12.3)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.4.1	explain the structure and organization of the Executive Branch.	V, W, P	D
5.4.2	analyze the importance of the delegation of power and relate the role it plays in choosing the cabinet and other Presidential advisors.	V, W	M
5.4.3	describe the role and function of the Executive staff.	V, W, P	D
5.4.4	identify the specific powers of the President and analyze the reasons for the growth of these powers.	V, W, O, P	M

5.5 Students will examine how the President and various executive agencies coordinate their actions in the decision making process of the Executive level of government. (1.12.3, 2.12.3, 3.12.3, 6.12.1, 6.12.3)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
5.5.1	comprehend the role of the President, Security Council, and advisors through participation (role play) in a world crisis and related geopolitics.	V, W, P	D, M
5.5.2	comprehend the intricacies and difficulties in geopolitical conflict resolution.	V, W, O, P	D
5.5.3	recognize the importance of conflict resolution at the Executive level through mock conflict resolution or crisis intervention (optional).	V, O	D

Standard 6: Students will develop an understanding of how the Judicial Branch of American government is organized and how it functions. (SSCS—1-4, 6)

6.1 Students will analyze and examine the organization, role and function of the Federal Court System. (1.12.2-3, 2.12.3-6, 3.12.6, 4.12.1-2)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
6.1.1	identify and discuss the nature, nuances, and advantages of our dual court system.	V, W	D for all.
6.1.2	recognize the different types and roles of federal courts.	V, W, P	
6.1.3	describe the jurisdiction of courts as well as the term, selection, compensation of federal judges.	V, W	
6.1.4	recognize how the judicial system is administered.	V, W	

6.2 Students will analyze and evaluate the administration and dispensation of justice in our federal system of government. (2.12.6, 4.12.1, 4.12.4)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
6.2.1	develop a background of knowledge on how the Department of Justice is organized, functions, and administers justice.	V, W, P for all.	D for all.
6.2.2	discuss the roles and duties of the agencies of the Justice Department.		

6.3 Students will analyze and examine the organization, role, and function of the state court system. (1.12.3, 2.12.5-6, 2.12.8, 3.12.6, 4.12.4, 6.12.4, 6.12.6, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
6.3.1	explain the organization and jurisdiction of state courts.	V, W	D
6.3.2	develop a background in the selection, qualifications, terms, and compensation of judges.	V, W, P	M
6.3.3	analyze and discuss the jury system and the jury selection system.	V, W	M

Columbia Falls - SD6

6.3.4	analyze and discuss controversial issues in the field of justice such as mandatory sentencing, contingency fees, capital punishment, penal system, jury nullification, war on drugs, police brutality, and juvenile crime.	V, W, O, P	D
6.3.5	participate in a mock trial presentation if time permits.	V, W, P	D

Standard 7: Students will analyze and evaluate how foreign affairs and national security are directly linked to the social, economic, military, and political interests of the United States. (SSCS—1-6)

7.1 Students will recognize how US foreign affairs policy and defense are directly linked. (1.12.1-2, 2.12.1-3, 2.12.6-7, 3.12.1, 3.12.4, 3.12.6, 5.12.2, 5.12.6, 6.12.1, 6.12.4, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
7.1.1	analyze and discuss the role and function of the State Department in foreign affairs and the role of the Defense Department in national security.	V, W, P	D for all.
7.1.2	clarify the role of the President, National Security Council, Congress and cabinet members in foreign and defense policies.	V, W, P	
7.1.3	appraise and analyze the history of US foreign policy from isolationism through containment to the current policy of internationalism in today’s global village.	V, W, O, P	
7.1.4	recognize how regional and world peace is maintained through the policy of collective security.	V, W, P	
7.1.5	analyze and discuss US foreign crisis from the Korean War, Cold War, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, Persian Gulf, Crisis, Bosnia, and current world hotspots.	V, W, P	

7.2 Students will evaluate and analyze how the United Nations is organized and operates. (1.12.2-3, 2.12.1, 2.12.4, 6.12.1, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
7.2.1	explain and discuss the UN Charter, membership, basic organization, the General Assembly, and the Security Council.	V, W, P	D for all.
7.2.2	analyze how the UN actually facilitates and maintains world peace and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the current UN organizational system.	V, W, O, P	

7.3 Students will evaluate, discuss, and analyze how the current domestic crisis are effecting the United States. (1.12.1-3, 2.12.1, 2.12.4, 2.12.6-8, 3.12.3, 3.12.6, 4.12.1, 4.12.3-4, 5.12.4, 6.12.7-8)

Students will:

	Essential Learnings	Assessment	Map
7.3.1	recognize and discuss the causes, effects, and possible solutions	V, W, O, P	D for all.

Columbia Falls - SD6

7.3.2	to current domestic issues. understand that these issues are changing on a year to year basis. (issues: homeless problem, drug war, welfare, drug use, teen pregnancy, entitlements, education, budget cuts, balancing the budget aids, housing taxation, pollution and violence in America.	V, W, P	
7.3.3	appraise current domestic issues and formulate solutions through developing critical thinking skills in classroom discussions, brainstorming, group presentations and position papers.	V, W, O, P	