

us government ap

us government ap refers to the Advanced Placement (AP) course and exam centered on the structure, functions, and history of the United States government. This rigorous academic program is designed for high school students aiming to gain college-level understanding of American political institutions, constitutional principles, policymaking processes, and civil rights. The course emphasizes critical thinking, analytical writing, and a comprehensive grasp of the federal system, political behaviors, and the role of citizens in governance. Success in the US Government AP exam can earn students college credits and prepare them for further studies in political science, law, public administration, or related fields. This article explores the key components of the us government ap curriculum, the exam format, study strategies, and its significance in academic and civic contexts. The detailed examination of these topics provides students and educators valuable insights into mastering the subject and understanding its practical implications.

- Overview of the US Government AP Course
- Core Topics Covered in the Curriculum
- Exam Structure and Scoring
- Effective Study Strategies for Success
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Overview of the US Government AP Course

The US Government AP course is an advanced high school class that offers an in-depth study of the United States political system. It is part of the College Board's Advanced Placement program, which provides students an opportunity to earn college credit by passing a standardized exam. The course focuses on the principles, institutions, and behaviors that define the functioning of the US federal government. It includes a historical perspective to understand how the Constitution and political practices have evolved over time.

This course is structured to develop students' abilities in critical analysis, argumentation, and interpreting political data. It also encourages an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens within the American democratic framework. The content is designed to be challenging and comprehensive, preparing students for college-level coursework in political science and related disciplines.

Core Topics Covered in the Curriculum

The US government AP curriculum encompasses several fundamental areas essential to understanding American government and politics. These topics are systematically organized to cover the broad spectrum of political concepts and institutions.

Foundations of American Government

This section examines the philosophical and historical foundations that shaped the US political system. It includes the study of the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and key debates from the Constitutional Convention. Students learn about the principles of federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, and the role of the Bill of Rights.

Political Beliefs and Behaviors

Understanding how citizens form political opinions and participate in the democratic process is a critical part of the course. Topics include political socialization, public opinion, voting behavior, political parties, and interest groups. This section analyzes how these elements influence government policy and elections.

Institutions of National Government

This area covers the structure and function of the three branches of government: the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Students explore the roles and powers of Congress, the presidency, and the Supreme Court, including how laws are made, implemented, and interpreted.

Public Policy and Civil Rights

The curriculum also addresses the policy-making process, examining domestic and foreign policies, and the impact of government decisions on society. Additionally, it covers civil liberties and civil rights, highlighting landmark Supreme Court cases and legislation that have shaped individual freedoms and equality in America.

- Constitutional underpinnings and federalism
- Political participation and voter behavior
- Legislative processes and executive powers
- Judicial review and landmark court cases
- Policy formulation and implementation

- Civil rights movements and legal protections

Exam Structure and Scoring

The US Government AP exam is designed to assess students' mastery of the course content and their ability to apply political concepts analytically. The exam typically consists of multiple-choice questions and free-response essays, each testing different skill sets.

Multiple-Choice Section

This section includes approximately 55 questions that cover a range of topics. Questions test students' factual knowledge, comprehension, and the ability to analyze political data such as graphs, charts, and excerpts from political writings. The multiple-choice questions account for half of the total exam score.

Free-Response Section

The free-response section usually contains four questions: two short-answer questions and two longer essay questions. These responses require students to construct well-organized arguments, analyze political scenarios, and evaluate the significance of policy decisions or court rulings. This section also represents 50% of the overall exam score.

Scoring and College Credit

Scores on the AP exam range from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest. Most colleges award credit or advanced placement for scores of 3 or higher, although policies vary by institution. Performing well on the exam can save students time and money by fulfilling introductory college government course requirements.

Effective Study Strategies for Success

Achieving a high score on the US Government AP exam requires disciplined study and a strategic approach. Students should focus on mastering key concepts while developing skills in critical analysis and writing.

Utilizing Study Resources

Comprehensive textbooks, review books, and online resources tailored for the AP US Government course provide structured content review. Practice exams and question banks help familiarize students with the exam format and timing.

Building Analytical Skills

Students should practice interpreting political data, evaluating arguments, and writing concise essays. Engaging in class discussions and applying theories to current political events enhances understanding and retention.

Creating a Study Schedule

Consistent study over several months is ideal. Breaking down the curriculum into manageable sections and reviewing regularly prevents last-minute cramming and promotes long-term retention.

Group Study and Tutoring

Collaborative learning through study groups allows for the exchange of ideas and clarification of complex topics. Seeking help from teachers or tutors can address specific challenges and reinforce difficult concepts.

1. Review course materials and notes daily
2. Take multiple practice exams under timed conditions
3. Focus on understanding rather than memorization
4. Engage with current events to connect theory and practice
5. Write practice essays and seek feedback

Importance of US Government AP in Education and Civic Life

The US government AP course serves a vital role in preparing young adults for informed citizenship

and higher education. It equips students with a thorough understanding of political structures and civic responsibilities essential for participation in a democratic society.

Academic Advantages

Beyond earning college credit, students develop critical reading, writing, and analytical skills applicable across multiple disciplines. The knowledge gained provides a strong foundation for careers in law, public policy, international relations, and political science.

Civic Engagement and Awareness

Studying the US government promotes awareness of citizens' rights and duties, encouraging active participation in elections, community involvement, and advocacy. It fosters an appreciation for the complexities of governance and the importance of democratic processes.

Preparation for Future Challenges

Understanding government operations and political dynamics enables students to navigate and contribute to contemporary issues such as social justice, public health, and national security. The course cultivates informed decision-making and responsible leadership.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the three branches of the U.S. government in AP Government?

The three branches are the Legislative Branch, the Executive Branch, and the Judicial Branch, each with separate powers and responsibilities.

What is the significance of the Federalist Papers in AP US Government?

The Federalist Papers are a collection of essays written to promote the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and explain the intent behind its provisions, which is essential for understanding constitutional principles.

How does the system of checks and balances work in the U.S.

government?

Checks and balances ensure that no single branch becomes too powerful by allowing each branch to limit the powers of the others, such as the presidential veto or congressional impeachment powers.

What is the role of the Supreme Court in the U.S. government AP curriculum?

The Supreme Court interprets the Constitution, reviews laws, and can strike down laws or executive actions that violate the Constitution through judicial review.

How are members of the House of Representatives and the Senate elected?

House members are elected every two years based on population from districts, while Senators serve six-year terms, with two Senators representing each state regardless of population.

What is federalism and why is it important in AP US Government?

Federalism is the division of power between national and state governments, allowing for a balance of power and addressing local versus national interests.

What is the significance of landmark Supreme Court cases in AP Government?

Landmark cases such as *Marbury v. Madison* and *Brown v. Board of Education* establish key legal precedents that shape constitutional interpretation and civil rights.

How does the electoral college function in U.S. presidential elections?

The electoral college is a body of electors from each state who formally elect the president; each state's electoral votes equal its total congressional representation, and a majority of 270 votes is needed to win.

Additional Resources

1. AP U.S. Government and Politics Crash Course

This book provides a concise and focused review of the key concepts covered in the AP U.S. Government and Politics course. It includes summaries of important topics, practice questions, and test-taking strategies to help students prepare efficiently for the exam. The Crash Course is ideal for last-minute review and reinforcing core ideas.

2. American Government: Institutions and Policies by James Q. Wilson and John J. DiIulio Jr.

A comprehensive textbook widely used in AP U.S. Government courses, this book offers detailed

coverage of American political institutions, policymaking processes, and political behaviors. It combines thorough explanations with current examples and case studies to help students understand how the government functions. The book's balanced approach makes complex topics accessible.

3. *AP U.S. Government and Politics Prep Plus 2024* by Kaplan Test Prep

Kaplan's Prep Plus book provides a full review of the AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum with practice tests, detailed answer explanations, and strategies tailored to the exam. The book includes updated content reflecting the latest political developments and exam trends. It is designed to build confidence through comprehensive practice.

4. *We the People: An Introduction to American Politics* by Benjamin Ginsberg et al.

This textbook emphasizes civic engagement and the principles underlying American democracy. It covers foundational topics such as the Constitution, federalism, civil liberties, and political participation with a clear and approachable style. The book's focus on real-world applications helps students connect theory to practice.

5. *AP U.S. Government and Politics All Access* by The Princeton Review

Offering in-depth content review, practice questions, and test-taking tips, this book is tailored specifically for AP U.S. Government students. It provides a thorough breakdown of political institutions, public policy, and civil rights, along with online resources and quizzes. The All Access format supports varied learning styles.

6. *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville

Though not an AP-specific textbook, this classic work provides profound insights into American political culture and democratic values. Tocqueville's analysis of the strengths and challenges of American democracy remains relevant for understanding the political environment studied in AP Government. The book offers historical context that enriches students' perspectives.

7. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy* by George C. Edwards III, Martin P. Wattenberg, and Robert L. Lineberry

This widely adopted textbook presents a detailed look at the U.S. government's structure, political behavior, and policy issues. It uses contemporary examples and data to illustrate concepts, making the material relatable and current. The text is well-organized to align with AP curriculum frameworks.

8. *AP U.S. Government and Politics Flashcards* by Barron's

A handy study aid for memorization and review, these flashcards cover key terms, landmark Supreme Court cases, and important concepts necessary for the AP exam. They are useful for quick drills and reinforcing knowledge on the go. Flashcards complement more detailed study guides by focusing on recall.

9. *Understanding American Politics and Government* by Samuel Kernell and Steven S. Smith

This book provides a clear and analytical introduction to American politics, emphasizing institutions, the Constitution, and political processes. It includes helpful charts, graphs, and case studies to clarify complex topics. The text is designed to engage students and deepen their understanding of governmental operations.

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us government ap: Barron's AP U.S. Government and Politics Curt Lader, 2016-02-01

In-depth preparation for the AP U.S. Government and Politics exam features: Two full-length model AP exams with answer keys and explanations An extensive subject review covering constitutional development, the branches of federal government, political parties, social welfare, foreign policy, and more Updated content includes recent Supreme Court decisions Newly revised free-response questions with rubrics The manual can be purchased alone or with an optional CD-ROM that presents two additional full-length practice tests with automatic scoring and fully explained answers.

us government ap: American Government: Stories of a Nation Scott Abernathy, Karen

Waples, 2018-12-05 This new offering from AP® teacher Karen Waples and college professor Scott Abernathy is tailor-made to help teachers and students transition to the redesigned AP® U. S. Government and Politics course. Carefully aligned to the course framework, this brief book is loaded with instructional tools to help you and your students meet the demands of the new course, such as integrated skills instruction, coverage of required cases and documents, public policy threaded throughout the book, and AP® practice after every chapter and unit, all in a simple organization that will ease your course planning and save you time. We've got you covered! With a program specifically tailored for the new AP® framework and exam. With a brief student edition that students will read and enjoy. With pedagogy and features that prepare students for the AP® exam like no other book on the market. With a teacher edition and resources that save you time in transitioning to the new course. With professional development to help you transition your instruction.

us government ap: AP U.S. Government and Politics Crash Course Larry Krieger, 2009-12-04

REA's Crash Course for the AP® U.S. Government & Politics Exam - Gets You a Higher Advanced Placement® Score in Less Time Crash Course is perfect for the time-crunched student, the last-minute studier, or anyone who wants a refresher on the subject. Are you crunched for time? Have you started studying for your Advanced Placement® U.S. Government & Politics exam yet? How will you memorize everything you need to know before the test? Do you wish there was a fast and easy way to study for the exam AND boost your score? If this sounds like you, don't panic. REA's Crash Course for AP® U.S. Government & Politics is just what you need. Our Crash Course gives you: Targeted, Focused Review - Study Only What You Need to Know The Crash Course is based on an in-depth analysis of the AP® U.S. Government & Politics course description outline and actual AP® test questions. It covers only the information tested on the exam, so you can make the most of your valuable study time. Our easy-to-read format gives you a crash course in the major ideas and concepts in government and politics, including constitutional underpinnings of the U.S. government, political culture, federalism, civil rights/civil liberties, elections & campaigns, congress, the presidency & the executive branch, and more. Expert Test-taking Strategies Written by a former AP® teacher, the author's question-level strategy and advice explains how to handle the multiple-choice and free-response questions so you can raise your overall point score! Key Terms You Must Know Mastering AP® vocabulary terms is an easy way to increase your total score. Our AP® expert gives you the key terms all AP® U.S. Government & Politics students must know before test day. Take REA's FREE Practice Exam After studying the material in the Crash Course, go to the online REA Study Center and test what you've learned. Our free practice exam features timed testing, detailed explanations of answers, and automatic scoring analysis. The exam is balanced to include every topic and type of question found on the actual AP® exam, so you know you're studying

the smart way. Whether you're cramming for the test at the last minute, looking for extra review, or want to study on your own in preparation for the exams - this is the study guide every AP® U.S. Government & Politics student must have. When it's crucial crunch time and your Advanced Placement® exam is just around the corner, you need REA's Crash Course for AP® U.S. Government & Politics! About the Author Larry Krieger earned his B.A. and M.A.T. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his M.A. from Wake Forest University. In a career spanning more than 40 years, Mr. Krieger has taught a variety of AP® subjects including American History, World History, European History, American Government, and Art History. His popular courses were renowned for their energetic presentations, commitment to scholarship, and helping students achieve high AP® exam scores.

us government ap: *ASAP U.S. Government & Politics: A Quick-Review Study Guide for the AP Exam* The Princeton Review, 2017-12-12 Looking for sample exams, practice questions, and test-taking strategies? Check out our extended, in-depth prep guide, *Cracking the AP U.S. Government & Politics Exam!* LIKE CLASS NOTES—ONLY BETTER. The Princeton Review's ASAP U.S. Government & Politics is designed to help you zero in on just the information you need to know to successfully grapple with the AP test. No questions, no drills: just review. Advanced Placement exams require students to have a firm grasp of content—you can't bluff or even logic your way to a 5. Like a set of class notes borrowed from the smartest student in your grade, this book gives you exactly that. No tricks or crazy stratagems, no sample essays or practice sets: Just the facts, presented with lots of helpful visuals. Inside ASAP U.S. Government & Politics, you'll find: • Essential concepts, institutions, and policies for AP United States Gov & Politics—all explained clearly & concisely • Lists, charts, and graphs for quick visual reference • A three-pass icon system designed to help you prioritize learning what you MUST, SHOULD, and COULD know in the time you have available • Ask Yourself questions to help identify areas where you might need extra attention • A resource that's perfect for last-minute exam prep and for daily class work Topics covered in ASAP U.S. Government & Politics include: • The institutions of national government • Constitutional underpinnings • Political beliefs & behaviors • Civil rights & civil liberties • Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, and the federal courts • Public policy • Political parties, interest groups, and mass media ... and more!

us government ap: *CliffsNotes AP U.S. Government and Politics* Paul Soifer, 2010-07-26 Your complete guide to a higher score on the *AP U.S. Government and Politics About the book: Introduction Reviews of the AP exam format and scoring Proven strategies for answering multiple-choice questions Hints for tackling the essay questions FAQs Part I: Subject Area Reviews Covers all subject areas you'll be tested on Constitutional basis of U.S. government Political beliefs and behaviors Political parties, interest groups, and mass media Structure of government Public policy Civil rights and civil liberties Includes sample questions and answers for each subject Part II: AP U.S. Government and Politics Practice Exams 3 full-length practice exams with answers and complete explanations

us government ap: *Presidential Election Update American Government: Stories of a Nation* Scott Abernathy, Karen Waples, 2021-02-02 Finally, an AP® Gov textbook with support and practice! Written by an AP® U.S. Government and Politics teacher and exam reader, this book has been carefully built to meet the needs of AP® teachers and students. The text follows the course organization and focuses on course concepts, practices, reasoning skills, and required cases and documents. It also provides extensive practice for the AP® exam.

us government ap: *Barron's AP U.S. Government and Politics With CD-ROM* Curt Lader, 2016-02-01 Always study with the most up-to-date prep! Look for AP US Government and Politics Premium, ISBN 9781506258690, on sale January 07, 2020. Publisher's Note: Products purchased from third-party sellers are not guaranteed by the publisher for quality, authenticity, or access to any online entitles included with the product.

us government ap: *AP Government and Politics* Reseach and Education Associa, Research & Education Association, Jack Hamilton, Robert F Gorman, Robert F. Gorman, Scott J Hammond, Scott

J. Hammond, P Babbitt, Elliot Kalner, Wesley Phelan, J Hamilton, Gerald G. Watson, Keith Mitchell, 1992-12-09 A NEWER EDITION OF THIS TITLE IS AVAILABLE. SEE ISBN: 978-0-7386-0267-7 Get the AP college credits you've worked so hard for... Our savvy test experts show you the way to master the test and score higher. This new and fully expanded edition examines all AP US & Comparative Government & Politics areas including in-depth coverage of branches of the US government and US voting behaviors. The comprehensive review covers every possible exam topic: the entire US Federal government; a comparative review of the governments of England, France, the former Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China; US political institutions, public opinion, voting behavior and more. Features 3 full-length practice exams with all answers thoroughly explained. Follow up your study with REA's test-taking strategies, powerhouse drills and study schedule that get you ready for test day. DETAILS - Comprehensive, up-to-date subject review of every US & Comparative Government & Politics area used in the AP exam - 3 Full-Length Practice Exams: All exam answers are fully detailed with easy-to-follow, easy-to-grasp explanations - Study schedule tailored to your needs - Packed with proven exam tips, insights and advice TABLE OF CONTENTS About Research & Education Association Study Schedules Study Schedule for the AP Exam in U.S. Government & Politics Study Schedule for the AP Exam in Comparative Government & Politics Chapter 1 - Succeeding on the AP Government & Politics Exams About the Advanced Placement Program The AP United States Government & Politics Exam The AP Comparative Government & Politics Exam About the Review Sections Scoring the Exam Scoring the Multiple-Choice Section Scoring the Free-Response Section The Composite Score Scores that Earn College Credit and/or Advanced Placement Studying for Your AP Examination Test-Taking Tips Chapter 2 - United States Government & Politics Review Constitutional Framework The Federal Government Public Policy Political Institutions and Special Interests Public Opinion and Voter Behavior Civil Rights and the Supreme Court Answer Key Chapter 3 - Comparative Government & Politics Review Britain France The Former Soviet Union (Commonwealth of Independent States) The People's Republic of China Answer Key Practice Test 1 - AP Examination in U.S. Government & Politics Answer Key Detailed Explanations of Answers Practice Test 2 - AP Examination in U.S. Government & Politics Answer Key Detailed Explanations of Answers Practice Test 3 - AP Examination in Comparative Government & Politics Answer Key Detailed Explanations of Answers Glossary ANSWER SHEETS APPENDICES including Annotated Articles of Confederation and United States Constitution Chapter 1 - Succeeding on the AP Government & Politics Exams This book will prepare you for the Advanced Placement Examinations in Government and Politics by giving you, first and foremost, an accurate and complete representation of the actual exams for both United States Government and Politics and Comparative Government and Politics. But REA doesn't stop there: we give you thorough yet concise topical reviews, a series of targeted drills, and an up-to-date glossary that comprises the full range of terminology with which you should be familiar. If you are taking the United States Government and Politics exam, you'll want to concentrate on the first part of this book. The second part of the book is devoted to the Comparative Government and Politics exam. In both cases, you'll find a lively course review keyed to exactly the material you'll need to know to score well on the test, complemented by our handy glossary to help you get the most out of your study time. Two complete practice exams are provided for U.S. Government and Politics, while one full-length practice exam is provided for Comparative Government and Politics. Each REA practice exam features an answer key and detailed explanations for every question. The explanations not only provide the correct response but also tell you why the remaining answers shouldn't be chosen. By going over the appropriate review section(s), taking the corresponding exam(s), and studying our detailed explanations, you will discover your strengths and weaknesses and prepare yourself to score well on the AP Government and Politics exams. About the Advanced Placement Program The Advanced Placement Program is designed to provide high school students with the opportunity to pursue college-level studies while still attending high school. The program consists of two components: an AP course and an AP exam. In addition, the AP in Government and Politics curriculum is divided into two courses: United States Government & Politics and Comparative

Government & Politics. If you wish to pursue an Advanced Placement in Government and Politics course you may enroll in the United States course, the Comparative course, or both. You will be expected to leave the course(s) with college-level writing skills and knowledge of government and politics. Upon completion of the course(s), you may then take the corresponding AP exam(s). Test results are then used to grant course credit and/or determine placement level in the subject when you enter college. AP exams are administered every May. The exam schedule has been designed to allow you the opportunity to take both exams, if you are enrolled in both courses. If the United States exam is given during the morning administration, the Comparative exam will be given during the afternoon administration. The AP United States Government & Politics Exam

The United States exam is 145 minutes in length and is divided into two sections: I. Multiple-Choice (50% of your grade): This 45-minute section is composed of 60 questions designed to measure your understanding of facts, concepts, and theories pertinent to United States government and politics. Your ability to analyze and understand data, and the patterns and consequences involved with political processes and behaviors will also be tested. In addition you must have knowledge of the various institutions, groups, beliefs, and ideas relevant to United States government and politics. II. Free-Response (50% of your grade): This 100-minute section consists of four mandatory questions, each of which accounts for one-fourth of your total free-response score. You should allot roughly 25 minutes - or one-quarter of the total time in the free-response segment - for each essay. Each question normally asks you to interrelate ideas from different content areas from among the topics listed below. In addition, you may also be asked to evaluate and define fundamental concepts in the study of United States politics, and possibly to analyze case studies that bear on political relationships and events in the United States. You will be required to demonstrate mastery of political interpretation, and analytic and organizational skills through writing. In addition, you may be presented with graphs, charts and tables from whose data you would be asked to draw logical conclusions. Here's a breakdown of coverage on the United States exam: Topics / % of Exam

I. Constitutional Underpinnings of United States Government / 5-15% II. Political Beliefs and Behaviors / 10-20% III. Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media / 10-20% IV. Institutions of National Government: The Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Federal Courts / 35-45% V. Public Policy / 5-15% VI. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties / 5-15%

The AP Comparative Government & Politics Exam

The Comparative exam is 145 minutes long and is divided into two sections: I. Multiple-Choice (50% of your grade): This 45-minute section is composed of 60 questions designed to measure your understanding of facts, concepts, and theories pertinent to Comparative government and politics. Your ability to analyze and understand data, and the patterns and consequences involved with political processes and behaviors will also be tested. The countries normally tested in the multiple-choice questions include Great Britain, France, the former Soviet Union (Commonwealth of Independent States), and China; these are referred to as the core countries tested on the exam. For certain questions, basic knowledge of the United States will be assumed. II. Free-Response (50% of your grade): This 100-minute section consists of four mandatory questions, each of which accounts for one-fourth of your total free-response score. You should allot roughly 25 minutes - or one-quarter of the total time in the free-response segment - for each essay. Comparative Free-Response questions may require you to compare one or two of the core countries (Great Britain, France, China, and the former Soviet Union) with the developing nations of either India, Mexico, or Nigeria. To do this, you must be able to demonstrate knowledge of the politics of one of these developing nations. Here's a breakdown of coverage on the Comparative exam: Topics / % of Exam

I. The Sources of Public Authority and Political Power / 5-15% II. Society and Politics / 5-15% III. The Relationship Between Citizen and State / 5-15% IV. Political and Institutional Frameworks / 35-45% V. Political Change / 15-25% VI. The Comparative Method / 5-10%

About the Review Sections As mentioned earlier, this book includes two reviews: one for United States Government and Politics, the other for Comparative Government and Politics. The United States Government and Politics Review covers all of the key information you'll need to score well on the United States exam. These topics include: - Constitutional Framework - The Federal Government - Political Institutions and

Special Interests - Public Opinion and Voter Behavior - Civil Rights and the Supreme Court We also provide a glossary for the United States Government and Politics exam. Included are the key historical figures, court cases, programs, laws, etc., that often appear on this AP exam. The Comparative Review provides a thorough discussion of the material most often tested on the Comparative exam. Special emphasis is placed on the governments and politics of: - Britain - France - The former Soviet Union - The People's Republic of China A glossary for the Comparative Government and Politics exam enables you to brush up on terms that you are likely to encounter on this test. Scoring the Exam After the AP administrations, more than 1,700 college professors and secondary school teachers are brought together to grade the exams during the first two weeks of June. These readers are chosen from around the United States for their familiarity with the AP program. The Multiple-Choice sections of the Comparative Government & Politics and U.S. Government & Politics exams are scored by granting one point for each correct answer and deducting one-fourth of a point for each incorrect answer. Unanswered questions receive neither credit nor deduction. The Free-Response answers are read and scored using a specific set of objective criteria, but the actual points available for each question may vary from administration to administration. For purposes of this discussion - and REA's practice tests - the Comparative exam questions will yield a score between 0 and 9 (with 0 being the lowest and 9 the highest) on Free-Response Part I, and a score of between 0 and 5 (with 0 being the lowest and 5 the highest) on Free-Response Part II. All four Free-Response items on our U.S. Government practice exam are scored on the 0-to-9 scale. Once the responses are graded, the scores can be converted. The AP Government and Politics exam is based on a 120-point scale. The breakdown of the percentages and points is as follows (note that the available free-response points will vary): Once raw scores have been obtained for each section, they are weighted to produce a composite score. Then the composite scores for each section are added together to form a total composite score for the exam. The range for the composite score is from 0 to 120. Finally, the composite score is translated into a range of from 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest.

Scoring the Multiple-Choice Section Use this formula to calculate your raw score for the multiple-choice section: $(\# \text{ right answers}) - (\# \text{ wrong} \times 1/4) = \text{raw score round off to nearest whole number}$; if the number is less than zero, enter zero

Scoring the Free-Response Section The following guide explains typical free-response scoring criteria:

Score Explanation of Score 8-9 The thesis is extremely well developed and is supported with concrete evidence; all aspects of the question have been addressed thoroughly; discussions presented are balanced.

6-7 The thesis is defined and supported; the evidence provided is very organized; the essay may be slightly imbalanced with one strong argument and one weak argument and/or discuss one topic more thoroughly than the next; sporadic factual errors may appear.

5 A basic argument or thesis is provided; evidence given supports the argument or thesis, but does not clearly connect with the argument or thesis; only the formal facets of the question are dealt with, and informal facets are not adequately covered; not all aspects of the question are discussed.

4 The thesis is not organized and is not referred to in the essay; the essay is little more than a recounting of facts and events; the essay may be overloaded with data; only one facet of the questions may be discussed; numerous factual errors may appear.

3 The thesis is weak; evidence provided in support does not apply to the thesis; factual errors are apparent.

2 The thesis is very weak; little or no factual evidence is provided to support the thesis; irrelevant and inaccurate information appears.

1 An attempt is made to answer the question, but the support given is insignificant and the coverage of topics is incomplete.

0 The question is not answered with any significance.

Free-Response Part II (Comparative only)

Score Explanation of Score 5 The thesis is extremely well developed and is supported with concrete evidence; all aspects of the question have been addressed thoroughly; discussions are presented in a balanced way.

4 The thesis is defined and supported; the evidence provided is very organized; the essay may be slightly imbalanced, with one strong argument and one weak argument; likewise, one topic may be more thoroughly explored than another; may be marred by sporadic factual errors.

3 A basic argument or thesis is presented; evidence given supports the argument or thesis, but does not clearly connect with the argument or thesis; only the formal facets

of the question are dealt with, and informal facets are not adequately covered; not all aspects of the question are discussed. 2 The thesis is weak; evidence provided in support does not apply to the thesis; factual errors are apparent. 1 An attempt is made to answer the question, but the support given is insignificant and the coverage of topics is incomplete. 0 The question is not answered with any significance. It would be extremely helpful to find someone who is willing to score your essay - your teachers or anyone who is familiar with the test material. If you do, ask the person to assign each of your U.S. and Comparative (Part I) essays a score of 0 to 9. For your Comparative (Part II) essays, use the 0-to-5 scale. If you must grade your own essays, try to be objective! In addition, you may want to give your essays three different grades. For instance, if you feel you did well, try giving the essay a score of 5, 6, or 7 to represent the various scores you may receive. By underestimating what your score may be, you are more likely to receive a better score on the actual exam. Use the following formulae to determine your raw score for the Free-Response section: United States Exam (Free-Response) Response (1) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Response (2) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Response (3) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Response (4) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Comparative Exam Response (1) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Response (2) score $\times 1.66$ = raw score Response (3) score $\times 3$ = raw score Response (4) score $\times 3$ = raw score The Composite Score Once you have obtained your raw scores for both the Multiple-Choice and the Free-Response sections, add the scores together to get your composite score: United States Exam Multiple-Choice raw score + Free-Response raw score = composite score (round to nearest whole number) Score Essay 1 + Score Essay 2 + Score Essay 3 + Score Essay 4 = raw score Comparative Exam Multiple-Choice raw score + Free-Response raw score = composite score (round to nearest whole number) Now compare your composite score with the scale below: Composite Score / AP Grade 88 - 120 / 5 74 - 87 / 4 54 - 73 / 3 35 - 53 / 2 0 - 34 / 1 AP grades are interpreted as follows: 5-extremely well qualified, 4-well qualified, 3-qualified, 2-possibly qualified, and 1-no recommendation. Scores that Earn College Credit and/or Advanced Placement Most colleges grant students who earn a 3 or above college credit and/or advanced placement. You should check with your school guidance office about specific college requirements. Studying for Your AP Examination It is never too early to start studying. The earlier you begin, the more time you will have to sharpen your skills. Do not procrastinate! Cramming is not an effective way to study, since it does not allow you the time needed to learn the test material. It is very important for you to choose the time and place for studying that works best for you. Some students may set aside a certain number of hours every morning to study, while others may choose to study at night before going to sleep. Other students may study during the day, while waiting on a line, or even while eating lunch. Only you can determine when and where your study time will be most effective. But, be consistent and use your time wisely. Work out a study routine and stick to it! When you take the practice exam(s), try to make your testing conditions as much like the actual test as possible. Turn your television and radio off, and sit down at a quiet table free from distraction. Make sure to time yourself. As you complete the practice test(s), score your test(s) and thoroughly review the explanations to the questions you answered incorrectly, but do not review too much during any one sitting. Concentrate on one problem area at a time by reviewing the question and explanation, and by studying our review(s) until you are confident that you completely understand the material. Since you will be allowed to write in your test booklet during the actual exam, you may want to write in the margins and spaces of this book when practicing. However, do not make miscellaneous notes on your answer sheet. Mark your answers clearly and make sure the answer you have chosen corresponds to the question you are answering. Keep track of your scores! By doing so, you will be able to gauge your progress and discover general weaknesses in particular sections. You should carefully study the reviews that cover the topics causing you difficulty, as this will build your skills in those areas. To get the most out of your studying time, we recommend that you follow the Study Schedule which corresponds to the exam you are taking. It details how you can best budget your time. If you are taking both exams, do not try to study for each at the same time. Try alternating days by studying for the United States exam one day and the Comparative exam the next. Test-Taking Tips Although you may be unfamiliar with tests such as the Advanced Placement exams,

there are many ways to acquaint yourself with this type of examination and help alleviate your test-taking anxieties. Listed below are ways to help yourself become accustomed to the AP exam, some of which may also be applied to other standardized tests. Become comfortable with the format of the AP Examination in Government and Politics that you are taking. When you are practicing to take the exam(s), simulate the conditions under which you will be taking the actual test(s). You should practice under the same time constraints as well. Stay calm and pace yourself. After simulating the test only a couple of times, you will boost your chances of doing well, and you will be able to sit down for the actual test much more confidently. Know the directions and format for each section of the exam. Familiarizing yourself with the directions and format of the different test sections will not only save you time, but will also ensure that you are familiar enough with the AP exam to avoid nervousness (and the mistakes caused by being nervous). Work on the easier questions first. If you find yourself working too long on one question, make a mark next to it in your test booklet and continue. After you have answered all of the questions that you can, go back to the ones you have skipped. Use the process of elimination when you are unsure of an answer. If you can eliminate three of the answer choices, you have given yourself a fifty-fifty chance of getting the item correct since there will only be two choices left from which to make a guess. If you cannot eliminate at least three of the answer choices, you may choose not to guess, as you will be penalized one-quarter of a point for every incorrect answer. Questions not answered will not be counted. Be sure that you are marking your answer in the circle that corresponds to the number of the question in the test booklet. Since the multiple-choice section is graded by machine, marking the wrong answer will throw off your score.

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as your study tool, you will develop the necessary skills and will be well prepared for the course and exam. Scoring well on AP exams is important for admission to college. To achieve a high score on AP U.S. Government and Politics, you need to develop skills and competence in American political culture, structures and governmental functions, as well as understanding of the relationships between the governing and linkage institutions on the exam. The content is developed and edited by highly qualified political science teachers, and researchers. The content was systematized and organized by education specialists to ensure the adherence to the curriculum and skills outlined by the College Board for the AP U.S. Government and Politics course. All content was examined for quality and consistency by our team of editors who are experts on teaching and preparing students for standardized tests.

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