

## AP (Advanced Placement) Comparative Government and Politics

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### Course Description

The course will focus on six main countries of study: **UK (United Kingdom), Russia, China, Mexico, Iran, and Nigeria**. Through the study of these countries, students will develop a framework for comparing almost any governments that exist today. Additionally, the course focus will include current world events as they relate to the class themes/countries.

### AP – College Board

AP = Advanced Placement. Students will register with the College Board, complete AP Classroom assignments on-line, and are expected to take the AP Exam in May for the potential to earn college credit. There is a fee for this exam (\$96). Scholarships are available.

### Canvas

All assignments will be posted on Canvas. Students are responsible for paying attention to the READINGS and assignments that are posted. Not all assignments will have something to submit but reading/note-taking *counts as homework* and will be graded (late work = late grade). Tests and quizzes will be announced on Canvas.

### Teaching Methods

Class lectures, as well as videos by the College Board's AP Classroom, will be used to introduce content. Then, after its introduction, students will work individually and in small groups to connect present-day situations within our course countries to the course content. Students are expected to participate in whole-class discussions, small group discussions, and complete individual projects and presentations throughout the year.

### Learning Assessment Methods

Students will work to develop a portfolio which will include notes, definitions of terms and concepts, and a collection of relevant articles, including current event summaries. Engagement with the notes and articles will be made evident through active reading strategies (e.g., highlighting and annotating text, use of graphic organizers, creation of picture-based summaries, etc.). Deep connection to homework readings/assignments is necessary for participation in class activities and success in the course.

Quizzes will occur throughout the Modules. Tests will occur at the end of each Module. Tests will include vocabulary as well as critical-thinking, multiple-choice questions based on the material. AP-styled Free Response Question essays (FRQs) will also be used to assess student understanding of material. Students who have *approved* accommodations will have their testing times adjusted accordingly (typically 50% more time).

Approximately 75% of each term's grade will be based on classwork and homework points, including projects, and 25% will be based on quiz and test grades.



## **Student Accountability**

The expectation in the course is that students will take responsibility for their own learning. All effort should be made to attend class, complete all assignments on time, and participate regularly. Late assignments will lose points (one grade per day/up to 50% total). Students who plan to miss class, or are absent due to illness, must make individual arrangements and are expected to obtain notes from another student and retrieve all missed hand-outs upon return.

## **Academic Integrity**

A successful experience in this course is based on trust. You can trust that I will place value on providing instruction that is clear, varied, meaningful and interesting. I trust that you will approach this course with a solid work ethic, openness to learning, and a sense of personal responsibility.

Guidelines for *homework* accountability:

Course vocabulary and concepts: if they are complete, I assume you understand them (you may share/work together).

Reading notes and other homework assignments: discussion (in person or on-line) encourages and facilitates learning, but the words on the page should be your own.

Guidelines for *test /quiz* accountability:

If the answer is on your paper, I assume you *and only you* took part in its completion.

Academic integrity issues will be taken seriously.

## **Required Readings/Materials**

AP Classroom – Videos and Resources

Wood, Ethel, AP Comparative Government and Politics: An Essential Coursebook, 7th Edition (2015, WoodYard Publications).

Marshall, Tim, The Power of Geography: Ten Maps that Reveal the Future of Our World (Elliot and Thompson Ltd., 2021).

Marshall, Tim, Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics

The Choices Program, Curriculum Resources for the Social Studies Classroom at Brown University, Copyright 2020.

In order to gain multiple perspectives for comparison, students will read articles from a variety of sources, including BBC, CNN, Pravda, Xinhuanet, Al Jazeera, C-Span Classroom, CIA World Factbook, The Economist, and the Guardian. Information from PBS, NPR, and various YouTube sources and podcasts, including AP sponsored sources, will also be required.

For accessing data, students will use a variety of sources, including Freedom House, Pew Research Center, IDEA database, ElectionGuide.org, Gapminder.org, the Fragile States Index, Transparency International, and UN resources.

## **Course Outline**

This year-long course will cover the following: two introductory modules, each lasting approximately four weeks (Term 1) and six country specific modules, each lasting two - three weeks. After the completion of the 8 Modules, students will complete comprehensive assignments that address all six countries in their review for the AP Exam.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **The Course Countries: An Introduction**

#### **Module 1 – Intro. to Comparative Government and Politics - Methods, Authority, and Institutions**

##### **AP Unit 1 – Political Regimes and Government**

###### **Foundation: The Big Ideas**

Reading: The Comparative Method (Wood, pp. 13 – 17)

Reading: Public Policy (Wood, pp. 73 - 78)

Reading: Sovereignty, Authority, and Power (Wood, pp. 17 – 31)

Reading: Democratization (Wood, pp. 37 –41)

##### **AP Unit 2 – Political Institutions**

Reading: Political Institutions (Wood, pp. 51; 59 – 67)

#### **Module 2 – Intro to Role of Citizens in Society, Systems and Change**

##### **AP Unit 3 – Political Culture and Participation**

Reading: Political Cultural and Ideologies (Wood, 31 – 35)

Reading: Citizens, Society, and the State (Wood, pp. 44 – 51)

##### **AP Unit 4: Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations**

Reading: Linkage Institutions (Wood, pp. 67 – 73)

##### **AP Unit 5: Political and Economic Changes and Development**

Reading: Political and Economic Change (Wood, pp. 35 – 44)

### **COUNTRY CASES**

**Module 3 – Advanced Democracies: Great Britain (Wood, pp. 99 – 190)**

**Module 4 - Communist and Post-Communist Regimes: Russia (Wood, pp. 191 – 269)**

**Module 5 – Communist and Post-Communist Regimes: China (Wood, pp. 270 – 339)**

**Module 6 – Newly Industrializing and LDC's: Mexico (Wood, pp. 340 – 415)**

**Module 7 - Newly Industrializing and LDC's: Iran (Wood, pp. 416 – 481)**

**Module 8 - Newly Industrializing and LDC's: Nigeria (Wood, pp. 482 – 545)**

## Course Themes:

This course will be approached through several themes, or Big Ideas. These Big Ideas will serve to provide a conceptual framework for students as they compare the six main countries of study.

**BIG IDEA 1: POWER AND AUTHORITY (PAU)** Political systems and regimes govern societies and determine who has power and authority. They shape the level of legitimacy and produce different policy outcomes.

**BIG IDEA 2: LEGITIMACY AND STABILITY (LEG)** Political legitimacy is the degree to which a government's right to rule is accepted by the citizenry. Governments that maintain high levels of legitimacy tend to be more stable and have an easier time enacting, implementing, and enforcing their policies.

**BIG IDEA 3: DEMOCRATIZATION (DEM)** Democratization is a process that involves the adoption of free and fair elections, the extension of civil liberties, and the establishment of the rule of law. Democratization is a long-term and often uneven process that typically results in increased governmental transparency and greater citizen access and influence over policy making.

**BIG IDEA 4: INTERNAL/EXTERNAL FORCES (IEF)** Internal forces, such as political culture, citizen participation, civil society, interest groups, environmental pressures, and internal divisions based on class, religion, ethnicity, and/or territory, can both challenge and reinforce regimes. External forces, especially globalization, include the increasing worldwide flow of goods, investments, ideas, and people in a manner that is largely unconstrained by national borders.

**BIG IDEA 5: METHODS OF POLITICAL ANALYSIS (MPA)** Political scientists collect data and make observations in order to describe patterns and trends and explain the political behavior of individuals, groups, organizations, and governments.

## Disciplinary Practices and Skills:

Throughout the course, students will develop practices and skills which will allow for an in-depth understanding. These practices will be utilized throughout the course:

Practice 1	Practice 2	Practice 3	Practice 4	Practice 5
Concept Application	Country Comparison	Data Analysis	Source Analysis	Argumentation