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# PETERS TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

## COURSE SYLLABUS: AP US GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

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### Course Overview and Essential Skills

This course is designed to give students an analytical perspective on government and politics in the United States. It involves both the study of general concepts used to interpret US politics and the analysis of specific case studies. The course requires familiarity with the various institutions, groups, beliefs and ideas that impact politics in the United States.

### Course Textbook and Required Materials

- American Government: Roots and Reform (2013). ISBN #978-0-205-86579-6
- American Government: Readings and Cases (2013). ISBN #978-0-205-11614-0
- Notebook and three-ring binder are necessary

### Course Outline of Material Covered:

Unit or Topic	Concepts/Skills/Resources	Timeframe
Constitutional Underpinnings of the US Government	Knowledge of facts, concepts and theories pertaining to the foundations of US government and politics. Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Articles from approved news and political sites and sources.	About 6-8 weeks
Political Beliefs and Behaviors	Understanding of typical patterns of political processes and behavior and their consequences Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Articles from approved news and political sites and sources.	About 4 weeks
Linkage Institutions	Evaluating the impact of groups and institutions which connect citizens to their government; namely, interest groups, political parties, elections, campaigns, and the media. Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Articles from approved news and political sites and sources.	About 5-7 weeks
Institutions of the National Government	Understanding of the four major institutions of the national government, and their relationships with each other. Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Articles from approved news and political sites and sources. Excerpts from "That Used to Be Us" and "How Congress Works and Why You Should Care"	About 8-10 weeks
Public Policy	Analysis of the policy-formulating process, and the major policy initiatives that have been enacted throughout modern American history. Written analysis of US government and politics subject matter. Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Articles from approved news and political sites and sources.	About 2 weeks
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	Analysis of the various rights and protections afforded by the Bill of Rights and the 14 <sup>th</sup> amendment, and how these have been interpreted by the Supreme Court Analysis and interpretation of chart/table/graph, and map data and their relationship to US government politics. Ability to distinguish between various points of view, and utilize media and technology to compare, contrast, analyze and evaluate political topics and perspectives.	About 5 weeks

	Articles from approved news and political sites and sources. Frontline documentary on the NSA	
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*\*Depending on the needs of the class or changes in the school year, the course outline is subject to change.*