



SYLLABUS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics

The guide contains the following information:

Curricular Requirements

The curricular requirements are the core elements of the course. A syllabus must provide explicit evidence of each requirement based on the required evidence statement(s).

The Unit Guides and the Instructional Approaches section of the *AP[®] U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description (CED)* may be useful in providing evidence for satisfying these curricular requirements.

Required Evidence

These statements describe the type of evidence and level of detail required in the syllabus to demonstrate how the curricular requirement is met in the course.

Note: Curricular requirements may have more than one required evidence statement. Each statement must be addressed to fulfill the requirement.

Samples of Evidence

For each curricular requirement, three separate samples of evidence are provided. These samples provide either verbatim evidence or descriptions of what acceptable evidence could look like in a syllabus.

Curricular Requirements

CR1	The teacher and students have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook and news media sources from multiple perspectives.	<i>See page:</i> 3
CR2	The course includes the required foundational documents and required Supreme Court cases as described in the AP Course and Exam Description.	<i>See page:</i> 5
CR3	The course is structured to incorporate the big ideas and required content outlined in each of the units described in the AP Course and Exam Description.	<i>See page:</i> 7
CR4	The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 1: Concept Application—apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.	<i>See page:</i> 9
CR5	The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application—apply Supreme Court decisions.	<i>See page:</i> 10
CR6	The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 3: Data Analysis—analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics.	<i>See page:</i> 12
CR7	The course provides opportunities for students to develop the text-based analysis skills in Skill Category 4: Source Analysis—read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based sources.	<i>See page:</i> 13
CR8	The course provides opportunities for students to develop the visual source analysis skills in Skill Category 4: Source Analysis—read, analyze, and interpret visual sources.	<i>See page:</i> 14
CR9	The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 5: Argumentation—develop an argument in essay format.	<i>See page:</i> 15
CR10	Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the AP Course and Exam Description that culminates in a presentation of findings.	<i>See page:</i> 17

Curricular Requirement 1

The teacher and students have access to a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook and news media sources from multiple perspectives.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must cite the title, author, and publication date of a college-level U.S. government and politics textbook.

AND

- The syllabus must include examples of news media sources from multiple perspectives.

Samples of Evidence

1. The primary textbook for this class is:

Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck (2018). *The Logic of American Politics (8th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, CQ Press.

Additionally, readings and related course activities where students engage with a variety of news media, text-based, quantitative, and visual sources will be taken from:

- *Vital Statistics on American Politics*, CQ Press
- *The Lanahan Readings in American Polity* by Serow and Ladd, Lanahan Publishers (text-based sources)
- Course textbook and online: visual sources such as political cartoons and maps
- MSNBC, CNN, FOX News

2. The primary textbook is Edwards, George C., and Wattenberg, Martin P., and Howell, William G. (2018). *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. (2016 Presidential Election, 17th Edition), Pearson.

Several news media resources will be consulted throughout the course. These news media sources include, but are not limited to:

Newspapers:

The Chicago Tribune

The Los Angeles Times

The New York Times

The Wall Street Journal

Televised news such as:

ABC: World News Tonight

CBS: CBS Evening News

NBC: NBC Nightly News

3. The primary college-level text for this course will be *American Politics Today*, 5E AP Edition, by Bianco and Canon, (2018).

Additionally, students have access to the following online resources:

- Oyez – This online database provides succinct and accessible overviews for all Supreme Court cases.

- The National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution – This online resource is an annotated U.S. Constitution that includes essays that frame the debates underlying key clauses and provisions of the U.S. Constitution. The National Constitution Center also has a blog, videos, and other resources that apply constitutional principles to current events.
- Khan Academy® – This site provides video clips of key course concepts in addition to practice questions with qualitative, quantitative, and visual stimuli.

Students will follow current events, using a variety of news media sources such as, MSNBC, Fox News, CNN, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times*.

Curricular Requirement 2

The course includes the required foundational documents and required Supreme Court cases as described in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must list the required foundational documents and Supreme Court cases even when readers are used.

Samples of Evidence

1. The following required foundational documents are incorporated within the course:
 - *Federalist No. 10: The Same Subject Continued—The Utility of the Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection*
 - *Brutus No. 1: To the Citizens of the State of New York*
 - The Declaration of Independence
 - Articles of Confederation
 - *Federalist No. 51: The Structure of Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments*
 - The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and following Amendments)
 - “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
 - *Federalist No. 70: The Executive Department Further Considered*
 - *Federalist No. 78: The Judiciary Department*

The following required cases are incorporated within the course:

- *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)
- *United States v. Lopez* (1995)
- *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)
- *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)
- *New York Times Company v. United States* (1971)
- *Schenck v. United States* (1919)
- *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)
- *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)
- *Brown v. Board of Education, I* (1954)
- *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* (2010)
- *Baker v. Carr* (1961)
- *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
- *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)

2. The required foundational documents and required U.S. Supreme Court cases will be accessed online through AP Classroom, The Avalon Project, and Oyez. Primary focus will be on the following documents and cases:

- *Federalist No. 10*
- *Brutus No. 1*
- The Declaration of Independence
- Articles of Confederation
- *Federalist No. 51*
- The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and following Amendments)
- “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)
- *Federalist No. 70*
- *Federalist No. 78*
- *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)
- *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)
- *Schenck v. United States* (1919)
- *Brown v. Board of Education, I* (1954)
- *Baker v. Carr* (1961)
- *Engel v. Vitale* (1962)
- *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963)
- *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969)
- *New York Times Company v. United States* (1971)
- *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972)
- *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
- *United States v. Lopez* (1995)
- *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010)
- *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)* (2010)

3. This course includes the required foundational documents and additional classic and contemporary scholarly writings in political science to promote the comparison of political ideas and their application to recent events. These include: *Federalist No. 10*; *Brutus No. 1*; The Declaration of Independence; The Articles of Confederation; The Constitution of the United States (including the Bill of Rights and subsequent Amendments); *Federalist No. 51*; “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (Martin Luther King, Jr.); *Federalist No. 70*; and, *Federalist No. 78*.

This course includes the following required Supreme Court cases: *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), *United States v. Lopez* (1995), *Engel v. Vitale* (1962), *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971), *Schenck v. United States* (1919), *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010), *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010), *Baker v. Carr* (1961), *Shaw v. Reno* (1993), and *Marbury v. Madison* (1803).

Curricular Requirement 3

The course is structured to incorporate the big ideas and required content outlined in each of the units described in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED).

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must include an outline of course content by unit title or topic using any organizational approach to demonstrate the inclusion of required course content and associated big ideas. All five big ideas must be included.

Note: If the syllabus demonstrates a different approach than the units outlined in the *AP U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description (CED)*, the teacher must indicate where the content and big ideas of each unit in the CED will be taught.

Samples of Evidence

1. The AP U.S. Government and Politics course is organized around the five units, which focus on the required content and big ideas in the AP Course and Exam Description.

The units are:

- Foundations of American Democracy (big ideas: Constitutionalism, Liberty and Order, and Competing Policymaking Interests)
- Interactions Among Branches of Government (big ideas: Constitutionalism and Competing Policymaking Interests)
- Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (big ideas: Constitutionalism, Liberty and Order, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, and Competing Policymaking Interests)
- American Political Ideologies and Beliefs (big ideas: Competing Policymaking Interests and Methods of Political Analysis)
- Political Participation (big ideas: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests, and Methods of Political Analysis)

2. The course includes the following units and focus of study based on the AP Course and Exam Description:

A. Foundations of American Democracy Unit (big ideas: Constitutionalism, Liberty and Order, and Competing Policymaking Interests)

- ♦ Balance of governmental power and individual rights
- ♦ Debate and ratification of the U.S. Constitution
- ♦ Checks and balances and competitive policymaking process
- ♦ Federalism

B. American Political Ideologies and Beliefs Unit (big ideas: Competing Policymaking Interests and Methods of Political Analysis)

- ♦ Development of political beliefs
- ♦ Measurement and political influence of public opinion
- ♦ How ideology shapes policy outcomes

C. Political Participation Unit (big ideas: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests, and Methods of Political Analysis)

- ♦ Protections, barriers, demographics, and other political participation factors
- ♦ Political parties, interest groups, and social movements

- ♦ Federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules
 - ♦ Media’s influence on political participation
- D. Interactions Among Branches of Government Unit (big ideas: Constitutionalism and Competing Policymaking Interests)
- ♦ Congress
 - ♦ The presidency
 - ♦ Judicial branch and judicial review
 - ♦ Federal bureaucracy
- E. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Unit (big ideas: Constitutionalism, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, and Competing Policymaking Interests)
- ♦ Interpretation of the Bill of Rights
 - ♦ Fourteenth Amendment due process and selective incorporation
 - ♦ Fourteenth Amendment equal protection and advancement of equality
 - ♦ Influence of citizen-state interactions and constitutional interpretation on public policy
 - ♦ Supreme Court’s protection and restriction of minority rights over time
3. The syllabus reflects an organizational approach based on the study of the Constitution and makes an explicit connection to required course content and big ideas in the AP Course and Exam Description (CED). For example:

Unit Title	AP CED Units	Big Ideas
Unit 1: The Preamble— Fundamental Concepts, Political Culture, and Data Analysis	AP Units 1, 4, 5	Constitutionalism, Liberty and Order, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests, Methods of Political Analysis
Unit 2: Article I—The Constitution and Federalism	AP Unit 1	Constitutionalism, Liberty and Order, Competing Policymaking Interests
Unit 3: Article I—Structure and Powers of Congress, Political Parties, Elections, Special Interests, and the Media	AP Units 2, 4, 5	Constitutionalism, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests, Methods of Political Analysis
Unit 4: Article II—The President, Policy, and the Bureaucracy	AP Unit 2	Constitutionalism, Competing Policymaking Interests
Unit 5: Article III—The Courts	AP Units 2, 3	Constitutionalism, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests
Unit 6: The Bill of Rights—Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	AP Unit 3	Constitutionalism, Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy, Competing Policymaking Interests

Curricular Requirement 4

The course provides opportunities for students to develop **Skill Category 1: Concept Application**—apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of at least one assignment/activity in which students apply political concepts and processes to scenarios in context.
- The description(s) must be labeled with Skill Category 1.

Samples of Evidence

1. Students will read and discuss Section II and Section III of the War Powers Resolution of 1973. Students will be divided into groups such that half of the class will discuss and report out the constitutional powers that Congress is exercising while the other half of the class will discuss and report out the formal and informal powers that the president may use to respond to the Resolution. **(Skill Category 1: Concept Application)**
2. **Skill Category 1: Concept Application**
In pairs, students will read a variety of scenarios that reflect possible or current legislation and discuss how a member of Congress would likely decide based upon their view of their role of representation as either a delegate, trustee, or politico.
3. Students write an in-class essay in which they explain how communication technology has changed the president's relationship with either the public or Congress. **(Skill Category 1: Concept Application)**

Curricular Requirement 5

The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application—apply Supreme Court decisions.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must include a brief description of at least one assignment/activity in which students explain how one or more elements of a required Supreme Court case (facts, issue, holding, reasoning, and decision of the majority opinion) relate to:
 - a **non-required case addressing a similar issue**. Corresponding activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application.”

AND

- a **foundational document or another primary or secondary source**. Corresponding activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application.”
- The activities must be labeled with Skill Category 2.

Note: The curricular requirement may be met with a single assignment/activity which combines the two bullets above or in separate assignments/activities.

Samples of Evidence

1. **Combined Activity:** Students compare the majority opinion and summaries of *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976) and the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 with that of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010) to consider the impact these rulings have had on federal elections and campaigns. Students then work in groups to discuss the issues involved with free speech and fair and competitive elections in the U.S., drafting a group essay that defends the *Citizens United* holding or advocates other possible reforms to campaign finance laws. Each group should support its argument with evidence from foundational documents such as the Bill of Rights and *Federalist No.10*. (**Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application**)

2. **Separate Activities:**

Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application

Activity 1: Students read the U.S. Supreme Court opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education* and the Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. The class will then connect elements of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision to the Tenth Amendment and the Fourteenth Amendment. Students then discuss the opportunities and challenges associated with implementing *Brown v. Board of Education* based on their connections between the SCOTUS decision and the Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments.

Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application

Activity 2: Students will compare the SCOTUS decisions in *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969) and *Morse v. Frederick* (2007). Students will outline the case outcomes and the U.S. Supreme Court’s reasoning in each case. Students will then complete a quickwrite outlining why they believe that the decision and reasoning in *Tinker v. Des Moines* differed from the decision and reasoning in *Morse v. Frederick*.

3. Separate Activities:

Using the Interactive Constitution and the National Constitution Center’s lesson entitled “Federalism, the Commerce Clause and the Tenth Amendment,” students work in pairs to complete all the activities within the lesson. The lesson provides opportunities to relate *U.S. v. Lopez* to *New York v. U.S.* (**Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application**)

In addition, when students read the Matters of Debate articles included in the lesson, they will be reading secondary sources that address the constitutional issue in both cases listed above. Note: A link to the National Constitution Center website is included in AP Course and Exam Description. (**Skill Category 2: SCOTUS Application**)

Curricular Requirement 6

The course provides opportunities for students to develop in Skill Category 3: Data Analysis—analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of at least one assignment/activity in which students analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, or infographics.
- The syllabus must identify the source of the data used for the assignment/activity.
- The assignments/activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 3: Data Analysis.”

Samples of Evidence

1. After studying political ideologies, students will work on building their political science analysis skills by analyzing a series of graphs that reflect responses that Americans have made to polls about their ideology (found on the Pew Research Center website). For each graph, the students will apply Skill Category 3 by answering the following questions: What does this data show? What trends and patterns can you identify from the data? What conclusions can you draw by comparing the trends you found in the data? What is the reasoning behind your conclusion? How does this data relate to a political process? What could political parties learn from this data that would affect how they operate? What does the data not tell you? How does the way the data is presented limit its value? (**Skill Category 3: Data Analysis**)
2. **Skill Category 3: Data Analysis**
Big Idea: Methods of Political Analysis
To better understand how political scientists might study the impact that state registration laws and procedures can have on voter participation, students look at data collected prior to the passing of the Wisconsin voter ID law using data collected by the Wisconsin Election Commission. They then compare this to data of voter participation after the legislation and draw conclusions about the relationship between such laws and political participation.
3. Students will analyze presidential approval ratings using the Gallup Poll’s “Interactive Presidential Job Approval Center.” Students will compare the approval ratings of two presidents representing two political parties across three partisan groups (Democrat, Independent, Republican) at the same point in their presidency (e.g., one year, six years for reelected presidents, etc.). Students will participate in a think-pair-share focusing on the implications of the similarities and differences between presidents and across partisan groups. (**Skill Category 3: Data Analysis**)

Curricular Requirement 7

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the *text-based* analysis skills in Skill Category 4: Source Analysis—read, analyze, and interpret foundational documents and other text-based sources.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of at least one assignment/activity in which students analyze text from a primary and/or secondary source to explain how it relates to political principles, institutions, processes, or behaviors.
- The syllabus must identify the source used for the assignment/activity.
- The assignments/activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 4: Source Analysis.”

Samples of Evidence

1. Students will read an excerpt of the Declaration of Independence (e.g., the first five sentences, beginning with “He,” following the Preamble of the Declaration of Independence) and write a list identifying where and how the U.S. Constitution addresses and reflects the issues raised in the Declaration of Independence in its processes and institutions. **(Skill Category 4: Source Analysis)**
2. Students are given a media analysis assignment. Each student is assigned to read five headlines from newspapers across the US. Each student will read a headline from the following newspapers: *Chicago Tribune*, *Houston Chronicle*, *New Orleans Times Picayune*, *The New York Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. They then analyze the story, making note of the facts provided, the subjects of the story, the viewpoints expressed, and the tone of the story. Students report their results in class and engage in a discussion on the media’s role as gatekeeper and the coverage across the different sources. **(Skill Category 4: Source Analysis)**
3. Students will read “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” by Martin Luther King, Jr. This letter is composed of 10 main sections, as well as an introduction and a conclusion. Students will use a jigsaw activity to read different sections of the Letter and determine whether the purpose of their section was to provide information, respond to a charge, or make a challenge to the intended audience. Following reports from each group, students will engage in a discussion about the effectiveness of Dr. King’s letter on the writing and the use of persuasion to influence policymaking. **(Skill Category 4: Source Analysis)**

Curricular Requirement 8

The course provides opportunities for students to develop the *visual source analysis* skills in Skill Category 4: Source Analysis—read, analyze, and interpret visual sources.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must provide a brief description of at least one assignment/activity in which students analyze a visual source.
- The syllabus must identify the source used for the assignment/activity. Visual sources may include maps, images, cartoons, or information graphics.
- The assignments/activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 4: Source Analysis.”

Samples of Evidence

1. Skill Category 4: Source Analysis

Big Idea: Civic Participation in a Representative Democracy

In small groups, students are to choose six cartoons from *The Week* magazine. They need to find two cartoons that demonstrate each of the three models of representative democracy: participatory, pluralism, and elitism, and explain why it best represents that model.

2. In pairs, students will reference an image in their textbook identified by the teacher that represents state and local spending on public education. Students are to write a multiple-choice question that addresses how the visual elements of the image relates to a political principle, institution, process, policy, or behavior. **(Skill Category 4: Source Analysis)**
3. Working in small groups, students will review Article I, Section 4, of the U.S. Constitution and the map “Criminal Disenfranchisement Laws Across the U.S.” available in the Brennan Center for Justice report “Restoring the Right to Vote” by Erika Wood. Based on their review of the map as well as the powers of Congress and the states pertaining to election laws as outlined in Article I Section 4, each group will be assigned a position to take outlining whether the federal or the state governments should be responsible for deciding criminal disenfranchisement laws. Students will develop their assigned position using evidence and report their developed position to the class. **(Skill Category 4: Source Analysis)**

Curricular Requirement 9

The course provides opportunities for students to develop Skill Category 5: Argumentation—develop an argument in essay format.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must describe at least one assignment/activity in which students develop an argument essay about political systems, principles, institutions, processes, policies, and/or behaviors. An argument essay requires the student to:
 - Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning
 - Support an argument or claim/thesis using relevant evidence.
 - Use reasoning to organize and analyze evidence, explaining its significance to justify an argument or claim/thesis.
 - Respond to opposing or alternate perspectives with rebuttal or refutation.
- Assignments/activities must be labeled with “Skill Category 5: Argumentation.”

Samples of Evidence

1. Students develop an argument essay supported by evidence about which of the three role conceptions (trustee, delegate, politico) best relates to constituent accountability in the U.S. House of Representatives. Required foundational documents will include Article I of the U.S. Constitution and *Federalist No. 51*. (**Skill Category 5: Argumentation**)

2. **Skill Category 5: Argumentation**

Students analyze arguments from *Federalist No. 78*, Article II of the U.S. Constitution, and Supreme Court cases indicating that the president’s power needs to be curtailed or limited in specific areas such as *U.S. v. Nixon*, Andrew Jackson’s response to *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (30 U.S. 1), and *Zivotofsky v. Kerry*. Students compare these arguments with other sources that support a position that presidential power should be enhanced to deal with contemporary technology and/or events such as national emergencies. Students then write a thesis statement taking one position or another on presidential power.

Students swap statements with a partner to ensure each has a clear and defensible position before listing the evidence and logic supporting it. They then find two other students taking the same position to compare statements and evidence. The students then look at several opposing statements and lists of evidence in order to plan how they might defend and refute these alternative position(s). Finally, they incorporate these steps in an essay that they complete individually.

3. Using information from *Federalist No. 51*, Article I and Article II of the United States Constitution, and the Supreme Court decision in *Marbury v. Madison*, develop an argument as to whether the constitutional system of checks and balances available to Congress, the Supreme Court, and the President are effective in regulating the growing power of the national government. Develop an argument as to which branch is the most powerful within the current structure of the U.S. government. (**Skill Category 5: Argumentation**)

In your essay, you must articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning. Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant evidence:

- At least ONE piece of evidence must be from one of the following foundational documents:
 - ♦ Article I.
 - ♦ Article II.
 - ♦ *Federalist No. 78*.
- Use a second piece of evidence from another foundational document from the list above or from your study of course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.
- Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal. **(Skill Category 5: Argumentation)**

Curricular Requirement 10

Students are provided with an opportunity to engage in a political science research or applied civics project tied to the AP Course and Exam Description that culminates in a presentation of findings.

Required Evidence

- The syllabus must describe an opportunity where students engage in a political science research or applied civics project that culminates in a presentation of findings.

Samples of Evidence

- 1. Political Science Research Project:** Students will identify two public policy issues common to the Democratic and Republican platforms when there is an incumbent running for reelection (e.g., incumbent Republican v. Democratic challenger, such as 2004; incumbent Democrat v. Republican challenger, such as 2012). The public policy issues may be selected from: foreign policy, social welfare, economic policy, civil rights, and criminal justice. Students will compare each party's position on the two issues across the two election types and reflect on why they believe the issue positions were similar to or different from one another. The political science research project will culminate with students presenting their research to the class in a gallery walk.
- 2. Model Congress Simulation:** Throughout the semester, students will write a bill of their choosing about a current federal topic integrating what they have learned in multiple units throughout the course. The week before winter break students will participate in the Model Congress simulation where students will present their bill first in small committees and, if it passes, to the full House.
- 3. Research Project:** With teacher approval, students conduct individual or collaborative research projects that may include attending local/state/federal governmental meetings, collecting information from different sides on a local political issue, or serving in a local political election campaign. They then create an oral report with visual aids and/or quantitative data to present back to the class or another audience, tying their research and experience back to course concepts. Students who engage in collaborative research projects will be responsible for individual presentations.