

Course: College Political Science

Grade Level: 12

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PS 101 is an introduction to the basic structures of the political process in the United States. It combines attention to political activity at the national (federal), state, and local levels. The topics covered include analyses of the U.S. Constitution, the American political economy, federal and state relationships, inter-branch matters between the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary branches, the elective process, activities of the public and interest groups, and government spending.

PS 102 is an introduction to the basic economic systems of the world and a comparison of the major political systems. Special attention will be given to capitalism, macro economics, liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, fascism, Nazism, green ideology, and liberation ideology.

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Essential Learning	#	Components	Suggested	
			Activities	Assessments
ACS - A A student should know and understand how societies define authority, rights, and responsibilities through a governmental process.	VCS 12.1.1	Understand the necessity and purpose of government.	Given a situation (e.g., earthquake or other natural disaster), students role play ways to ensure group survival.	
	VCS 12.1.2	Understand the meaning of fundamental ideas, including equality, authority, power, freedom, justice, privacy, property, responsibility, and sovereignty	Create a dictionary defining important terms as they are used in the media or newspaper.	
	VCS 12.1.3	Understand how nations organize their governments	Have foreign exchange students report on the governmental organization in their own countries in reference to economics, geography, and politics.	Compare and contrast
	VCS 12.1.4	Be able to compare and contrast how different societies have governed themselves over time and in different places	Read Mao and Hitler. Have students determine their respective values and contrast them with Jefferson's values.	Debate communism, Nazism, and republicanism

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ACS - B A student should understand the constitutional foundations of the American political system and the democratic ideals of this nation.	VCS 12.2.1	Understand the ideals of this nation as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights	Ask students to list Jefferson's "self evident truths." Discuss whether students consider these "natural laws." Place the discussion in the context of the Enlightenment.	
	VCS 12.2.2	Recognize American heritage and culture, including the republican form of government, capitalism, free enterprise system, patriotism, strong family units, and freedom of religion	Look at prominent national memorials to analyze what they stand for, how they came about, and the relationship between their form and intended meaning (i.e., why they are visually powerful).	
	VCS 12.2.3	Understand the United States Constitution, including separation of powers, the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government, majority rule and minority rights	Have students evaluate political cartoons and analyze the constitutional principles demonstrated in each.	Have students bring in political cartoons and explain their meaning
	VCS 12.2.4	Know how power is shared in the United States' constitutional government at the federal, state and local levels	Investigate law enforcement levels and the jurisdiction of each in your community.	

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	VCS 12.2.5	Understand the importance of individuals, public opinion, the media, political parties, associations, and groups in forming and carrying out public policy	Conduct daily reports on current issues.	Students are responsible for a daily current event
	VCS 12.2.6	Recognize the significance of diversity in the American political system	Read <i>The Conscience of a Liberal</i> by McCarthy and <i>The Conscience of a Conservative</i> by Goldwater. Discuss the role of the "engine" (change-makers) and the "brake" (status quo) in American politics.	
	VCS 12.2.7	Be able to distinguish between constitution-based ideals and the reality of American political and social life	Read the Second Amendment. Investigate gun-control laws (e.g., <i>Sullivan vs. New York</i>). Compare and contrast them.	
	VCS 12.2.8	Understand the place of law in the American political system	Conduct a mock trial.	
	VCS 12.2.9	Recognize the role of dissent in the American political system.	Read Thoreau's <i>Civil Disobedience</i> . Find current issues from the newspaper that Thoreau would likely become involved in.	

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ACS - C A student should understand the role of the United States in international affairs.	VCS 12.3.1	Be able to analyze how domestic politics, the principles of the United States Constitution, foreign policy, and economics affect relations with other countries	Contrast foreign policy in resource-rich and resource-poor regions of the world.	
	VCS 12.3.2	Be able to evaluate circumstances in which the United States has politically influenced other nations and how other nations have influenced the politics and society of the United States	Debate historical foreign policy positions such as .isolationism, world wars, fisheries treaties and trade, and evaluate their consequences on the U.S. and Alaska.	
	VCS 12.3.3	Understand the purpose and function of international governmental and non-governmental organizations in the world today	Read the Charter of the U.N. Write an essay, "What percentage of the United Nations budget should the U.S. fund?"	
	VCS 12.3.4	Be able to analyze the causes, consequences, and possible solutions to current international issues.	Analyze the role of the United Nations in responding to a particular international crisis.	

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ACS - D A student should have the knowledge and skills necessary to participate effectively as informed and responsible citizens.	VCS 12.4.1	Know the important characteristics of citizenship	Describe and create (in writing or drawing) a perfect voter.	
	VCS 12.4.2	Recognize that it is important for citizens to fulfill their public responsibilities	Role play a situation in which you know a friend is involved in illegal activities. What are your responsibilities as a friend? As a citizen?	
	VCS 12.4.3	Be able to exercise political participation by discussing public issues, building consensus, becoming involved in political parties and political campaigns, and voting	Resolve a current problem (e.g., trash on the highway, graffiti, polluting cars, vandalism). Consider the effectiveness of the following measures in dealing with this problem: voting, attending political meetings, contacting public officials, working in campaigns, writing letters to political parties or interest groups.	
	VCS 12.4.4	Be able to establish, explain, and apply criteria useful in evaluating rules and laws	Consider drinking laws. Determine what criteria lawmakers should use in setting	

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			an age limit for alcohol consumption.	
	VCS 12.4.5	Be able to establish, explain, and apply criteria useful in selecting political leaders	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of candidates in terms of the qualifications required for the position.	
	VCS 12.4.6	Recognize the value of community service	Plan and implement a community service project in the school or community designed to serve one of the purposes of government.	
	VCS 12.4.7	Be able to implement ways of solving problems and resolving conflict.	Role play small claims court in the classroom, assigning the roles of judge, defendant, plaintiff, and attorneys. Role play mediation for the same problems. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each system.	

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ACS - E A student should understand the economies of the United States and the state and their relationships to the global economy.	VCS 12.5.1	Understand how the government and the economy interrelate through regulations, incentives, and taxation	Trace the effects of a tax on cigarettes on smoking behavior.	
	VCS 12.5.2	Be aware that economic systems determine how resources are used to produce and distribute goods and services;	Explain why wages are higher in Alaska than in other parts of the country.	
	VCS 12.5.3	Be able to compare alternative economic systems	Describe and analyze the different goals of the different economic systems.	
	VCS 12.5.4	Understand the role of price in resource allocation;	Find examples from the newspaper of the effects of price changes on purchasing behavior (e.g., housing, produce, etc.)	
	VCS 12.5.5	Understand the basic concepts of supply and demand, the market system, and profit;	Find examples from the newspaper that illustrate changes in supply and demand on prices.	

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	VCS 12.5.6	Understand the role of economic institutions in the United States, including the Federal Reserve Board, trade unions, banks, investors and the stock market	Play the stock market game.	
	VCS 12.5.7	Understand the role of self interest, incentives, property rights, competition, and corporate responsibility in the market economy;	Discuss the role of self interest in the allocation of resources in a market economy.	
	VCS 12.5.8	Understand the indicators of an economy's performance, including gross domestic product, inflation, and the unemployment rate.	Chart, compare, and discuss patterns over time of GDP price levels and unemployment rates over time.	
	VCS 12.5.9	Understand how international trade works.	Discuss the comparative advantage of Alaska and Japan using a resource inventory.	

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ACS - F A student should understand the impact of economic choices and be able to participate effectively in the local, state, national and global economies.	VCS 12.6.1	Be able to apply economic principles to actual world situations	Debate a current political issue using economic principles and information in the news and political advertisements.	
	VCS 12.6.2	Understand that choices are made because resources are scarce	Describe the resources used in a recycling program and the cost of those resources.	
	VCS 12.6.3	Be able to make informed choices on economic issues	Analyze trade-off involved in a government spending decision.	
	VCS 12.6.4	Understand that economic choices influence public and private institutional decisions	Participate in a legislative simulation by assuming roles of various interest groups and their economic interest in proposed legislation.	