

Prerequisite courses: none

Grade level: 9-12

Course Description

This course introduces high school students to the foundations of American democracy, focusing on the role of individuals, government structures, and the principles that guide the U.S. political system. Students will explore topics such as citizenship, the Constitution, and the rights and responsibilities of individuals. The course examines the development of American government from early influences to the modern framework, including the Bill of Rights, the three branches of government, and the rights of citizens. In addition, students will study how media, interest groups, and civil rights movements shape public policy and the democratic process. Skills focuses include analyzing primary and secondary sources, interpreting charts and graphs, and interpreting Supreme Court cases.

This course is part of the Exceptional Students Course Suite, designed for high school students working three or more grade levels behind. The Exceptional Students courses are ideal for students whose IEPs allow them to earn credit for below-grade-level coursework.

Course Objectives

Students will meet the following goals in this course.

- Understand the key principles behind American democracy and government institutions.
- Explore the rights, responsibilities, and roles of citizens in the U.S. political system.
- Analyze the historical foundations of the U.S. government, including influences from early democratic ideals.
- Examine the structure and function of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and key amendments.
- Investigate the impact of interest groups, civil rights movements, and media on government and society.
- Develop skills in media literacy, focusing on evaluating sources and information, especially in the digital age.

Student Expectations

This course requires the same level of commitment from students as a traditional classroom course. Students are expected to spend approximately 5–7 hours per week online on:

- interactive lessons, which include a mixture of instructional videos and tasks.
- assignments, in which they apply and extend learning in each lesson.
- assessments, including quizzes, tests, and cumulative exams.

Civics and Government Essentials

Communication

Teachers will communicate with students regularly through discussions, emails, chats, and system announcements. Students will also communicate with classmates, either via online tools or face to face, to collaborate, ask and answer questions in peer groups, and develop speaking and listening skills.

Grading Policy

Students will be graded on work completed online and work submitted electronically to the teacher. The weighting for each category of graded activity is listed below.

Grading Category	Weight
Assignments	20%
Lesson quizzes	30%
Unit tests	30%
Cumulative exams	20%

Scope and Sequence

When students log on to Imagine Edgenuity, they can view the entire course map—an interactive scope and sequence of all topics under study. The units of study are listed below

Course Units
Unit 1: Foundations of Government
Unit 2: A New Government
Unit 3: Branches of Government
Unit 4: Rights of the People
Unit 5: Influencing the Government