This semester based course is a description, analysis, and evaluation of the foundations and structure of the local, state and national political system. This course is designed to increase student involvement and engagement with American political institutions. The Civics and Government course will be supported by an inter-disciplinary approach that includes history, economics, and geography. Students will discover what it means to be a citizen and how they can engage in civic life. This course asks students to describe the role that power, politics and government have in their lives. They will identify and assess comparative forms of government. Students are asked to identify and describe the operational behavior of the presidency, Congress and the Federal court system, as well as examine and explain the law making process. Students will examine and debate the role and responsibilities that public opinion, political parties, public interest groups, and the media play in our democratic society. Students will apply knowledge and understanding of Civics and Government to explore America’s economic, social and foreign policies and be prepared to take informed action on a local, state and Federal level.

Civics is a semester course (0.5 credit) that is required for graduation and is open to students in grades 11 and 12.
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & CIVICS
GRADES 11-12

UNIT 1: THE ROLE THAT POWER, AUTHORITY AND GOVERNMENT PLAY IN THE LIVES OF AMERICAN CITIZENS

**Objectives**
- Explain how power and responsibility are distributed, shared and limited in a government to meet the needs of its people.
- Describe the purpose and role of government.
- Compare and contrast different systems of government and their function in various parts of the world. Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of various political systems.
- Evaluate disparate economic systems and the government’s role in these systems.
- Increase competency in literacy, inquiry and research skills to promote their ability to analyze, evaluate and present information.
- Demonstrate civic competence in analyzing relevant contemporary political issues that require the synthesis of information, skills and perspectives.

**Essential Questions**
- Why should students understand the distribution of power and responsibility in governmental systems?
- Is the government’s role in meeting the needs of its citizens affective?
- Is it possible for disparate systems of government to function cohesively in a globalized world?
- Are certain economic systems better for specific forms of governmental systems?

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<td>• CIV 9-12.2 Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S political system with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans’ participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.</td>
<td>• Creation of student generated work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• CIV 9-12.4 Explain how the U.S. constitution establishes a system of government that has power, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.</td>
<td>• Peer reviews of student generated work (rubric assessed)</td>
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<td>• CIV 9–12.7 Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.</td>
<td>• Cooperative learning groups with student assigned roles.</td>
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<td>• CIV 9–12.8 Evaluate social and political systems in different contexts, times, and places that promote civic virtues and enact democratic</td>
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UNIT 2: AMERICAN POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS

Objectives
- Define and describe the historical, philosophical, and economic foundations of the American constitutional form of government and its political system.
- Define and evaluate the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, Civil liberties and the significance of each to American Government.
- Analyze basic institutions of American government and evaluate the interaction between the federal government and the state and local governments under the existing and developing federalist system.
- Increase competency in literacy, inquiry and research skills to promote their ability to analyze, evaluate and present information.
- Demonstrate civic competence in analyzing relevant contemporary political issues that require the synthesis of information, skills and perspectives.

Essential Questions
- The foundations of the American constitutional form of government were framed by a variety of social forces. What were the consequences of these ideological underpinnings to the formation of our system of governing?
- The framers of the constitution protected individual liberties and rights through the definitions provided in the Constitution. How were these rights defined and protected?
- How efficient is the federalist system in today’s America, and why?
- Is the federal system of government functioning as the founders intended?

Grade Level Expectations

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<td>• CIV 9-12.4 Explain how the U.S. constitution establishes a system of government that has power, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.</td>
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<td>• CIV 9–12.14 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.</td>
<td>• Debate- outcomes include deductive reasoning and analysis</td>
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<td>• HIST 9–12.1 Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.</td>
<td>• Multimedia presentations</td>
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## Objectives
- Discuss an individual’s participation in a democracy and how that provides for choice and opportunities in the American political system.
- Explore a variety of ways to take part in civic life.
- Explore paths to U.S. citizenship and the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens.
- Examine special interest groups, political parties, and social movements and their influence on American government.
- Assess the roots of American political parties and the role parties play in the political process.
- Examine the significance of special interest groups on American government and public policy.
- Analyze how political parties reflect political, economic and social movements.
- Debate the two party systems evolution and functionality in a changing America.
- Assess the roles of the media, political advertising, and rhetoric in the political process.
- Investigate emerging technological trends in social media and their impact and influence on the press and public interest groups.
- Investigate emerging technological trends and their relationship to voting behavior and voting trends.
- Examine the role of public opinion and the news media on public policy.
- Examine the development and function of our current political campaign and election process.
- Increase competency in literacy, inquiry and research skills to promote their ability to analyze, evaluate and present information.
- Demonstrate civic competence in analyzing relevant contemporary political issues that require the synthesis of information, skills and perspectives.

## Essential Questions
- Is it possible for a citizen to make an impact on governmental policy in America today?
- What role do political parties have in the political process in America today?
- Have political parties and interest groups polarized America and created a sclerotic political system, or are they a necessary component of our political system to galvanize political forces into a coherent ideological force to create change?
- How have emerging technologies in the field of social media changed Americans relationship to the political process?
- How have campaign finance laws impacted public interest groups and campaigning for elections?
- Can citizens express their voice in the current electoral climate or are they hindered by gerrymandering, non-uniform voter registration laws, and campaign finance rules?
### Grade Level Expectations

1. **CIV 9-12.1** Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions.
2. **CIV 9-12.2** Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S political system with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans’ participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.
3. **CIV 9-12.5** Evaluate citizens and institutions effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and or international level.
4. **CIV 9–12.7** Apply civic virtues and democratic principles when working with others.
5. **CIV 9–12.9** Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.
6. **CIV 9–12.10** Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.
7. **CIV 9–12.11** Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved.
8. **CIV 9–12.12** Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.
9. **CIV 9–12.13** Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.
10. **HIST 9–12.1** Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.
11. **ECO 9–12.1** Analyze how incentives influence choices that may result in policies with a range of costs and benefits for different groups.
12. **GEO 9–12.1** Evaluate the impact of economic activities and

### Evidence of Learning

- Student generated unit lessons
- Peer reviews of student generated work (rubric assessed)
- Student led Socratic Seminars
- Peer learning groups
- Cooperative learning groups with student assigned roles.
- Creation of student generated outline
- Annotation assessments
- Teacher generated reading for information assessments
- Large group Socratic dialogue discussions, evaluated and assessed by rubric
- Small group active cooperative learning groups, producing student generated products
- Debate- outcomes include deductive reasoning and analysis
- Group presentations
- Video analysis
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<td>• INQ 9–12.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.</td>
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UNIT 4: CHECKS AND BALANCES: THE LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

Objectives
- Discuss how compromise and cooperation are a hallmark of our lawmaking process. Explain the role that the three branches of government play in creating laws.
- Analyze the checks and balances provided by the constitution on the branches of government.
- Examine how a bill travels through Congress.
- Identify factors that influence the lawmaking process.
- Assess the changing role of the modern president in a globalized world.
- Identify the organization, characteristics and functioning of the legislative branch of government.
- Evaluate the power of the president, the organization of the executive branch and the qualities of the modern president.
- Assess the main roles of the judicial branch, the dual court system, the Supreme Court and their functions.
- Identify the role that judges play in the court system and identify ways judges are appointed.
- Self-government rests on the assumption that citizens have a commitment to the rule of law. Evaluate and interpret the meaning of this idea.
- Increase competency in literacy, inquiry and research skills to promote their ability to analyze, evaluate and present information.
- Demonstrate civic competence in analyzing relevant contemporary political issues that require the synthesis of information, skills and perspectives.

Essential Questions
- Is the check and balance system ingrained in the creation of the three branches of government fail proof?
- What makes an effective legislator?
- How has the changing role of the presidency affected the legislative process?
- The American system of lawmaking is complex and bureaucratic. Would a system rooted in the philosophy of a business model be more effective?
- The American judicial system has been criticized for being unjust at times in American history. Is the organization of the American justice built to ensure justice?
- What defines a citizen’s commitment to the rule of law? Are there times that the rule of law should be disobeyed?
## AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & CIVICS
### GRADES 11-12

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<td><strong>CIV 9–12.9</strong> Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.</td>
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<td><strong>CIV 9–12.11</strong> Evaluate multiple procedures for making governmental decisions at the local, state, national, and international levels in terms of the civic purposes achieved.</td>
<td><strong>Student led Socratic Seminars</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CIV 9–12.12</strong> Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.</td>
<td><strong>Peer learning groups</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ECO 9–12.2</strong> Generate possible explanations for a government role in markets when market inefficiencies exist.</td>
<td><strong>Cooperative learning groups with student assigned roles.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ECO 9–12.3</strong> Describe the roles of institutions such as clearly defined property rights and the rule of law in a market economy.</td>
<td><strong>Creation of student generated outlines</strong></td>
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<td><strong>INQ 9–12.3</strong> Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a supporting question.</td>
<td><strong>Annotation assessments</strong></td>
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<td><strong>INQ 9–12.8</strong> Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantively from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.</td>
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<td><strong>INQ 9–12.9</strong> Refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.</td>
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UNIT 5: THE UNITED STATES ROLE IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD

Objectives
- The United States has a complex and constantly changing relationship to the global community. We will examine the United States role as a global economic and political leader in world affairs.
- Examine U.S. foreign policy goals.
- Assess the tools and power that the U.S. constitution gives to the president and Congress as it relates to foreign affairs.
- Evaluate America’s changing role in foreign policy leadership.
- Identify the purposes and functions of various types of international organizations.
- Assess America’s relationship to various international organizations.
- Debate the strengths and limitations of international organizations in an increasingly nationalistic modern time.
- Describe the United States ongoing balancing act between adhering to its constitutional and domestic policies and the relationship it has with the rest of the world.
- Increase competency in literacy, inquiry and research skills to promote their ability to analyze, evaluate and present information.
- Demonstrate civic competence in analyzing relevant contemporary political issues that require the synthesis of information, skills and perspectives.

Essential Questions
- What have been some of the primary goals of United States foreign policy and how have they evolved over time?
- How is foreign policy impacted by congressional input, the public’s sentiments and worldviews?
- How is American’s foreign policy being impacted by globalization?
- Is isolationism sometimes a necessary component of building a stronger America or does a disengaged America create a more troubled world?
- What are some of the primary global international organizations and what are their functions?
- Are global international organizations still relevant? Should the United States relationships to these organizations be reevaluated?
**Grade Level Expectations**

- CIV 9-12.3 Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.
- CIV 9-12.5 Evaluate citizens and institutions effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and or international level.
- CIV 9-12.6 Critique relationships among governments, social societies, and economic markets.
- CIV 9–12.9 Use appropriate deliberative processes in multiple settings.
- CIV 9–12.12 Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.
- CIV 9–12.13 Evaluate public policies in terms of intended and unintended outcomes, and related consequences.
- CIV 9–12.14 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.
- HIST 9–12.1 Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people’s perspectives.
- ECO 9–12.1 Analyze how incentives influence choices that may result in policies with a range of costs and benefits for different groups.
- INQ 9–12.2 Explain points of agreement and disagreement experts have about interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts and ideas associated with a compelling question.
- INQ 9–12.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- INQ 9–12.8 Identify evidence that draws information directly and substantively from multiple sources to detect inconsistencies in evidence in order to revise or strengthen claims.
- INQ 9–12.9 Refine claims and counterclaims attending to precision.

**Evidence of Learning**

- Student led Socratic Seminars
- Peer learning groups
- Cooperative learning groups with student assigned roles.
- Creation of student generated outlines
- Annotation assessments
- Teacher generated reading for information assessments
- Large group Socratic dialogue discussions, evaluated and assessed by rubric
- Small group active cooperative learning groups, producing student generated products
- Multimedia presentations
- Video analysis
- Final Exam (Socratic Seminar) Rubric based, RFI responses (written), DBQ responses (written) multiple choice critical thinking questions, illustration analysis.
Grade Level Expectations

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<td>INQ 9–12.12 Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).</td>
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<td>INQ 9–12.15 Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.</td>
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# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & CIVICS
## GRADES 11-12

## PACING GUIDE

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<th>Unit</th>
<th>1st Quarter / 3rd Quarter</th>
<th>2nd Quarter / 4th Quarter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1: The Role That Power, Authority and Government Play in the Lives of American Citizens</td>
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<td>Unit 2: American Political Foundations</td>
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<td>Unit 3: The Art of Politics in America, Citizen Participation and the Role of the Media</td>
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<td>Unit 4: Checks and Balances: The Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches of Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unit 5: The United States Role in a Globalized World</td>
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## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Other</th>
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| • Pre-teaching content vocabulary  
• Examining visuals prior to readings  
• Predicting reading content  
• Independent reading  
• Outlining/note taking strategies  
• Annotation strategies  
• Graphic organizer  
• Identifying text structures  
• Think aloud for difficult text  
• Summarize text  
• Paraphrasing  
• Expert groups  
• Word sorts  
• Written reading reflections  
• Shared readings  
• Model texts  
• Skimming/scanning as a research strategy  
• Activating prior knowledge  
• Differentiating texts | • Process writing  
• Free-writes  
• Shared writing  
• Guided writing lessons  
• Collaborative writing school-wide rubrics  
• Student generated collaborative writing rubrics  
• Focused peer editing  
• Modeling note cards  
• Noodletools (and other computer-based tools for writing)  
• Brainstorming  
• Blogs | • Peer teaching  
• Flip the classroom  
• Field observation  
• Creation of a survey  
• Differentiated instruction  
• Flexible grouping  
• Inquiry circle  
• Virtual classroom  
• Teacher/student developed rubrics  
• Classroom debates  
• Collaborative group activities  
• Role playing  
• Demonstrations  
• Large group teacher led Socratic Seminars  
• Student led Socratic Seminars  
• Stations  
• Student generated assessments  
• Teacher generated assessments  
• Students develop high level RFI’s  
• Small group active learner groups |
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<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• Focused lectures</td>
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<td>• Multimedia presentations</td>
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<td>• Teacher modeling</td>
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<td>• Collaborative group presentations</td>
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<td>• Modeling the process of finding appropriate sources for information gathering (use of library media specialist)</td>
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<td>• Fishbowl discussions</td>
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<td>• Independent practice</td>
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<td>• Jigsaw</td>
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<td>• Interactive notebook</td>
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<td>• Podcasts</td>
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<td>• Video instruction</td>
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<td>• Guest speakers</td>
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<td>• Community outreach</td>
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RESOURCES

Databases
- Proquest – SIRS Researcher
- Newseum- front pages from 830 front pages of global newspapers from 88 countries. Newseum.org/todayfrontpages

Newspapers
- New York Times
- Wall Street Journal
- Washington Post
- Christian Science Monitor
- USA Today
- Chicago Tribune
- Dallas Morning News
- Financial Times
- Boston Globe

Magazines
- Economist
- The Guardian
- The Week
- Bloomberg Business Week
- The New Yorker
- Time
- Fortune
- Fast Company
- The Atlantic
- Forbes
- Barron’s

Textbooks
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & CIVICS
GRADES 11-12

Websites
- www.cnn.com
- www.pbs.org
- www.foxnews.com
- www.bbc.com
- www.worldpress.org – collects news and opinion from around the world
- www.cfr.org – Council on Foreign Relations
- www.politicalwire.com – American national politics
- www.fivethirtyeight.blogs.nytimes – data driven insights into political process, polling, spending, messaging and strategy
- www.electoral-vote.com – point analysis breakdown of state and national races
- www.realclearpolitics.com – aggregator of political news sources, conservative and liberal
- www.politico.com – aggregator and original writing on politics
- www.npr.org – National Public Radio
- www.usapoliticstoday.com
- National Archives: “The Declaration of Independence: A History”
- J.W. Peltason’s "The Need for the Constitution"

Videos
- TED Talks on contemporary American topics
- John Stossel videos on political issues in America
- C-SPAN – “U.S. Foreign Policy”
- Michael Nelson’s “Why the media love Presidents and the Presidents hate the media”

Videos at Saylor Academy (saylor.org)
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s “American Democracy and Citizenship” – Introduction to Democracy
- Introductory lecture on Democracy and American Government
- Introduction to Democracy part 2 – Meanings of Democracy
- The Regents of the University of California “The Constitution” – Core principles and structure of the U.S. Constitution
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & CIVICS
GRADES 11-12

- Dr. Patrick Scott’s “The U.S. Constitution” – Important terms and concepts for learning about the U.S. Constitution
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s “Federalism” – Discussions on Federalism
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s “Public Opinion” – public opinion and political socialization
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s slides for taking notes on lecture on media
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s lecture on the media and politics
- Regents of the University of California – “Political Parties” – History and Evolution of Political Parties in America
- Regent of the University of California – “Structure and Function of political parties in America”
- C-SPAN: “Role of Political Third Parties”
- The Regents of the University of California – “Party Identification”
- “Campaigns and Elections” “Elections” and “Campaign finance reforms”
- KHAN Academy – “Primaries and Caucuses”
- KHAN Academy – “Electoral College” Role of the Electoral College in Presidential elections
- U.S. Department of State: “Has the Electoral College outlived its usefulness?”
- Regents of the University of California: “Financial Participation in Elections”
- C-SPAN: “Impacts of Super PACS in campaigns”
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s “Interest Groups” – The role of interest groups in electing and defeating candidates
- C-SPAN: “Evolution of Congress” transformation of congress and the evolution of the two party system
- The Regents of the University of California: “Passage of a Bill” – How a bill makes its way through congress
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s: “The Presidency”
- The Regents of the University of California: “The nature of a President” – Presidency and the limits of Presidential power
- Dr. Thomas Woods’ “The American Presidency: Critical episodes in its growth”
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s: “The Judiciary”
- The Regents of the University of California: “The Federal Court System” Structure of the American Federal Court System”
- The Regents of the University of California: “The Nature of the Supreme Court”
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s: “Civil Liberties” Rights and freedoms of individuals in the Constitution
- KHAN Academy: “Government financial condition” “Deficit and Debt Ceiling”
- Dr. Patrick Scott’s: “Foreign and Defense Policy”