

(c) Introduction.

(1) United States Government builds on the historical foundations introduced in earlier grades by examining the principles, institutions, and constitutional structures that define the American constitutional federal republic. The United States Constitution is the required foundational text for this course, and together with the Declaration of Independence, serves as the enduring foundation for the study of American government. Students use the text of the Constitution throughout the course, using it as the primary source and organizing framework for understanding the organization, powers, limitations, and enduring principles of the American constitutional federal republic. The course emphasizes the Constitution as an enduring expression of natural rights, limited government, the rule of law, popular sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, and representative government. Students examine how these constitutional principles have preserved liberty while providing a durable framework for self-government and constitutional change.

The course examines the structure, functions, and powers of the national, state, and local governments established under the Constitution and analyzes how the constitutional balance of power has evolved through amendments, Supreme Court decisions, and historical developments while preserving the Constitution's enduring principles. Throughout the course, students regularly reference and interpret the text of the United States Constitution to examine governmental powers, civic institutions, and constitutional issues. Students also examine the unique structure of Texas government as an expression of federalism and its role in preserving the liberty interests of Texans.

Rationale: the theme expressed throughout the government standards is the central role of government to preserve liberty, whether that is at the federal or state level. Texas state government is structured, but the purpose is to serve the people with traditional state functions and to preserve liberty.

(2) Historical Roots of the Constitutional Republic. The student understands limited government. The student is expected to:

(A) explain Sir William Blackstone's view that human law should conform to the law of nature and God's revealed law found in the Hebrew Scriptures and New Testament (H, G/Civ);

(A) (B) identify characteristics of limited government, including constitutional constraints, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and checks and balances (G/Civ); and

(B) (C) analyze Montesquieu's explanation of how the separation of powers preserves political liberty in excerpts from Chapter 6, Book XI, of *The Spirit of the Laws* (G/Civ);

Rationale: Sir William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England* had a tremendous influence in the minds of the Framers on how to construct a constitution. His writings helped shape the minds of the framers in relation to individual rights, protections such as habeas corpus and ex post facto, and limiting government. During the debates and ratification of the

U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, he was cited by the framers more than John Locke and equal to Montesquieu. Blackstone gave importance to divine law where reason would reveal general principles that would create just human laws.

(3) Historical Roots and Founding Documents of the Constitutional Republic. The student understands the Declaration of Independence. The student is expected to:

(A) explain Locke's justification for natural rights and private property using excerpts from Chapter V of the Second Treatise of Civil Government (H, G/Civ);

(B) read the Declaration of Independence and identify natural rights referenced in the text in the Declaration of Independence, including "the laws of nature and of nature's God," and explain the Declaration's assertion that these rights are "endowed by their Creator." (G/Civ); and

Rationale: The Declaration of Independence is a metaphorical lawyer's brief identifying a source of law, or the natural law, that exists and applies to all persons, and such rights found in the natural law are derived from God and are unalienable, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

(4) Historical Roots of the Constitutional ~~Government~~ Republic: The student understands that the preservation of liberty in a constitutional republic depends upon limited government and responsible self-government. The student is expected to:

Rationale: Consistency.

(5) Historical Roots and Founding Documents of the Constitutional Republic. The student understands debates between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists that shaped the Constitution. The student is expected to:

(D) read and recite the Preamble to the United States Constitution and explain its purposes, including establishing justice, ensuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense, promoting the general welfare, and securing the blessings of liberty (H, G/Civ);

Rationale: The statute requires students to read the text of his document. If one recites the Preamble they have certain read it, but this language ensures statutory compliance.

(6) Historical Roots and Founding Documents of the Constitutional Republic. The student understands how the Articles of the Constitution and the Constitution shaped the constitutional republic. The student is expected to:

(B) read and explain how the seven articles of the United States Constitution establish the principles of popular sovereignty, republicanism, federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, and limited government (G/Civ);

(E) read and identify the number of amendments to the Constitution and that the Bill of Rights ~~are~~ is the first ten amendments (G/Civ);

Rationale: Statute directs students to read these documents. The Bill of Rights is a singular grouping of multiple enumerated rights. The verb refers to the singular “Bill” rather than the plural “Rights.”

(6)(C) explain how individual liberty is protected by the United States Constitution, including protections from ex post facto and a bill of attainder laws. (G/Civ);

Rationale: The constitutional provision prohibits Congress from making such laws.

(8) Three Branches of the Federal Government (Legislative, Executive, Judicial). The student understands separation of powers within the three branches of the Federal government. The student is expected to:

(A) describe the structure of the legislative branch established in Article I, including bicameralism, membership of the House of Representatives and Senate, leadership and committees, ~~and constitutional voting requirements~~ (G/Civ);

(B) describe the constitutional powers and procedures of the legislative branch, including enacting laws, declaring war, levying taxes, appropriating funds, oversight of the executive branch, impeachment, constitutional voting requirements and Senate confirmation of treaties and presidential appointments (G/Civ);

(C) describe the structure of the executive branch established in Article II, including the President, Vice President, Cabinet, and executive departments and agencies (G/Civ);

(D) describe the constitutional powers of the executive branch, including faithfully executing the laws, serving as commander in chief, conducting foreign policy, issuing vetoes and pardons, and appointing judges and executive officers (G/Civ);

(E) describe the structure of the judicial branch established in Article III, including the Supreme Court and lower federal courts ~~and the appointment, confirmation, and lifetime tenure of federal judges and Supreme Court justices~~ (G/Civ);

(F) describe the constitutional powers of the judicial branch, including resolving cases and controversies, interpreting the Constitution and federal law, and exercising the power of judicial review as established in Marbury v. Madison and the appointment, confirmation and lifetime tenure of federal judges and Supreme Court Justices. (H, G/Civ);

(G) explain how the constitutional powers of each branch provide checks and balances that preserve limited government and prevent the concentration of power (G/Civ).

Rationale: Resorting and re-grouping ideas.

(9) Federalism. The student understands how the United States Constitution allocates powers between the national and state governments and how federalism preserves both national unity and state sovereignty. The student is expected to:

(C) explain how Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 (the Necessary and Proper Clause) authorizes implied powers and ~~analyze~~ explain how McCulloch v. Maryland interpreted the clause to expand the authority of the national government (H, G/Civ);

Rationale: Streamlining for time.

(I) ~~explain~~ analyze how New Deal interpretations of the Commerce Clause expanded federal authority over economic activities and transformed ~~the balance of power between the national and state governments~~ federalism (H, G/CIV, E);

Rationale: Higher order pedagogy. Simplify language.

(12) Electing Federal Officials. The student understands the constitutional provisions governing the election of federal officials, the role of political parties in the electoral process, and the responsibilities of citizens in a constitutional republic. The student is expected to:

(A) identify the constitutional authority for elections, including Article I, Section 4 of the United States Constitution and the role of state constitutions in establishing state and local offices (G/Civ);

(B) identify the constitutional qualifications, terms of office, and succession or vacancy procedures for the President, Vice President, United States Senators, and Representatives (G/Civ);

(C) explain why the Constitution establishes two-year terms for Representatives and six-year staggered terms for Senators including accountability to the people (G/Civ);

(D) ~~explain why the Senate has traditionally been described as the "cooling-saucer" of the legislative process~~ (H, G/Civ);

(E) explain how representative districts are crafted and reapportioned, including by using census data and demographic patterns (G/Civ, Geo/C);

(F) explain the purpose of the United States Electoral College established in Article II, Section 1 of the United States Constitution as a federalist system that balances the interests of small states and the people in presidential elections (H, G/Civ);

(G) explain the United States Electoral College process of choosing electors to elect the President and Vice President including the controversial elections of 1800, 1824, 1876, 1888, 2000 and 2016 (H, G/Civ);

(H) explain how the 15th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th Amendments expanded voting rights and opportunities for participation in the democratic process, fulfilling the Constitution's commitment to representative government (H, G/Civ);

- (I) explain the emergence of political parties in the United States and how political party nomination processes became incorporated into state election laws (H, G/Civ);
- (J) identify that Texas law authorizes political parties to nominate candidates through primary elections and conventions, and describe the state's primary, runoff, and general election process (H, G/Civ);
- (K) explain the purpose and significance of the constitutional oath required of public officials as a commitment to uphold the Constitution rather than a political party, officeholder, or personal interest (G/Civ);

Rationale: The idea is good, but is somewhat incongruent with the knowledge and skill statement and other SE's, which address elections, not the nature of the upper house. Perhaps not quite as essential.

(13) State and Local Government. The student understands Texas state and local governments compared to the United States government. The student is expected to:

- (B) identify that the Texas Legislature is made up of 150 state representatives and 31 state senators elected from districts that are apportioned based on information from the census in ways that are similar to members of the United States Congress, and that the ~~presiding officer~~ President of the Texas Senate is the elected Lieutenant Governor (G/Civ);

Rationale: The presiding officer of the senate can be any senator who is asked to preside. The Lieutenant Governor carries an official title as President of the Senate. In rare instances of a vacancy, the Senate elects a President of the Senate, who also functions as Lieutenant Governor.

(14) Federal, State, County, and Local Elected Officials. The student understands how to identify their elected officials and how to vote. The student is expected to:

- (A) describe the requirements, including ~~proof of~~ U.S. citizenship, photo identification and voter registration; timeline requirements, and the process to become a registered voter, including obtaining photo identification or identification alternatives for purposes of voting, ~~including~~ and how to change registration when one moves or obtain an absentee ballot (G/Civ, S);

Rationale: in the absence of a driver license, other government identification may be acquired. The intent of the addition is to instruct students how this may be obtained.

(15) ~~Modern Campaigns, Elections, Media, Political Parties and Participation.~~ The student understands the role of ~~modern~~ campaigns, elections, media, political parties and participation in United States and Texas government. The student is expected to

(A) explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens in United States elections, including becoming informed about candidates and issues and participating in primary and general elections, (G/Civ), and

(B) explain the factors that contribute to the two-party system in the United States, including winner-take-all elections, and describe the impact of the Populist, Bull Moose and Reform parties on major party platforms and elections (H,G/Civ) and

(C) explain how the decennial census determines congressional reapportionment among the states and how states redraw congressional districts through redistricting (G/Civ) and

(D) analyze how Texas election laws and procedures support the integrity and accessibility of elections through voter registration, early voting, primary, run-off and general elections and political party conventions (H, G/Civ, S) and

(E) explain how campaigns are financed, and the role of the Federal Election Commission and the Texas Ethics Commission with enforcing campaign finance limits, restrictions, and reporting requirements (G/Civ, E); and

(F) analyze how traditional media, including newspapers, broadcast media along with digital and social media has shaped how candidates communicate with voters and how citizens access political information (H, G/Civ, S)

Renumber Public Meetings as (16)

Rationale: Compliance with TEC 28.002 and empowering students with knowledge for participation in the process.

(16) Public Meetings. The student understands decorum expectations and procedures used to conduct meetings of governing bodies. The student is expected to:

(A) explain that Robert's Rules Newly Revised is a ~~code of ethics~~ system of rules designed to facilitate democratic process and is considered the parliamentary standard for most organizations and governing bodies (G/Civ);

Rationale: Upon recommendation of Kay Crews and Will Hickman.