

New Paltz Central School District

Advanced Placement Comparative Government and Politics

| Time | Essential Questions | Content | Assessments |
|-------------|--|--|---|
| September | <p><u>UNIT 1: Introduction to Comparative Politics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of government • The State • Comparing political systems • Common policy challenges | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is comparative politics and why study it? • What is the purpose of government? • What is a state? Why do citizens accept the state as legitimate? • Why do citizens differ in the degree and type of political involvement, and what factors affect this? • How do we compare political systems? • Why does the AP course use the six countries selected? • Why are some countries democracies while others are not? • What are some common policy challenges for all countries? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 article summaries – summer project (3 articles per country) • Check for learning – short quiz |
| September | <p><u>UNIT 2: Industrialized Democracies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the industrialized democracies? • Characteristics of democracies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scope of government activities ○ The role of society and politics ○ The role of political parties and interest groups ○ The nature of political change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a democratic state? • Why did democracy become remarkably durable in the second half of the 20th century? • How are presidential and parliamentary versions of democracy alike and different? • How does the policy-making process work? • What are the sources, nature, and consequences of political change in a democracy? • What are the roles played by citizens in political life? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for learning-short quiz • News articles, continued: focus on industrialized democracies |

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| September – October | <p><u>UNIT 3: Great Britain</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sovereignty, authority, and power • Political institutions • Citizens, society, and state • Political and economic change • Public policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the British government doesn't have a written constitution, how can it be considered one of the strongest constitutional systems in the world? • What is the structure of the existing British government? • What is the source of legitimacy of the British government? What makes the system stable? • What are the significant aspects of British political socialization and how does this process affect political orientation values? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AP essay on British government • Test on Great Britain and introduction • Comparative chart on Great Britain and the United States • News articles on Great Britain |
| October | <p><u>UNIT 4: The European Union</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries involved • Decision-making process • The political and economic role for Europe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the European Union a “United States of Europe”? • Is there anything to all this? • Who's in? Who's out? Who wants in and why? • How is public policy made in the European Union? • Is the European Union a vehicle of globalization? • Does the European Union conflict with national sovereignty? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News articles on the European Union |
| October | <p><u>UNIT 5: The Crisis of Communism-Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current and former Communist regimes • 1989: The year that changed the world • The role of Communism today | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did Marxism evolve in the Soviet Union? • What is Marxism-Leninism? • What will happen to the remaining Communist regimes? • How are countries handling the transition from a centrally planned economy to capitalism? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News articles on Communist countries today |

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| October – November | <p><u>UNIT 6: The Former Soviet Union and its Successor States</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Russia • Chechnya – a “terrorist” state? • Institutions of national government • The economy • Sources of legitimacy • The role of political parties | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current structure of the Russian government? • Can a state with a constitution be a non-constitutional regime? • How does a non-democratic state go about achieving legitimacy? • What change did the election of December 1993 bring to Russia? • How and why have dissenting parties risen? • How has ethnic diversity affected the division of the USSR? What effect is it having today? • How has political socialization affected the values of Russians? • What is the nature of the interaction between the Russian president and the Russian parliament? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay on Russia (Soviet Union) • Test on Russia (Soviet Union) • News articles on present day Russia |
| November | <p><u>UNIT 7: People’s Republic of China</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History • The Revolution • Mass movements • Human rights issues • Political participation • Tiananmen Square • Falun Gong • Beijing Olympics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current structure of the Chinese government? • How have China’s history and political culture affected the character of the Chinese political system? • How did Marxism work in a peasant society? • How will the central authorities deal with the growing pressures for more independence from Tibet, Xinjiang, and other peripheral areas with substantial minority populations? • China has reformed its economy, but not its political system – perestroika without glasnost. Has it worked better than in the former Soviet Union? Why/why not? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test on China • Essay on China and Russia • News articles on China today |

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| November | <p><u>UNIT 8: The Third World</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of politics • Political culture • Political participation and civil society • Weak states • Corruption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the political common denominators for under developed nations today? • What types of states are found in under developed countries? • How does an under developed regime establish legitimacy? • Why study development? • Why are most under developed states weak? • What role do supernational organizations play? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News articles |
| November – December | <p><u>UNIT 9: United Mexican States</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The PRI – the rise and fall • Relationship with the United States, NAFTA • Zapatistas • Corruption | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did Spanish imperialism and American influence shape Mexican political life before, during, and after the revolution? • Why did the PRI emerge as the dominant political force in Mexico? How did it stay in power for so long? • What is the evidence for and against claims that Mexico is democratic? • What impact does the United States have on Mexico? • What forces are limiting democratization in Mexico? • Why is there so much corruption in Mexico? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay on Mexico |

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| December | <p><u>UNIT 10: Federal Republic of Nigeria</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Military leadership • Evolution: Transition to democracy • Oil rich regions – North versus South • Corrupt institutions • Religion and politics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Nigeria a democracy? • How do rentier states impact their citizens? • Why is there so much corruption in Nigeria? • What role do international organizations play in Nigeria? • What are the lasting effects of imperialism? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice practice questions • Comparative chart of the US and Nigeria |
| January | <p><u>UNIT 11: Islamic Republic of Iran</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iran Resurgence Party • White Revolution • Elected versus non-elected institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the lasting effects of the Shah’s removal from power? • What forces are limiting democratization in Iran? • How did the struggle between the US/UN and Iran originate? • What role do citizens have in participatory elections? • How does Iran affect the politics of the Middle East? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice practice questions • Free response questions • Comparative chart on indicators of democracy in each country |
| January | <p><u>UNIT 12: The Twenty-First Century</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts of a shrinking world • A global economy • A global environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are we facing a global crisis? • How do global forces affect what national states do? | |