

LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THE AMERICAN CITIZEN COURSE

Chapter 1: The Role of Government

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- define government and explain its importance
- identify how some philosophers have described the nature and purpose of the state
- list the functions that government performs
- describe how government promotes the public good
- describe the differences between monarchies, republics, and dictatorships
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of features of unitary, federal, and confederal systems of government
- list the major advantages and disadvantages of presidential and parliamentary forms of government
- list the major principles of democracy
- identify the difference between direct democracy and representative democracy
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the role of American government in our society

Chapter 2: Origins of U.S. Government

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- identify the political ideals that the English colonists brought with them to North America
- explain the importance of a written constitution
- describe the major documents that limited the power of the English monarchs
- explain how the ideals of limited and representative government were evident in colonial governments
- name two early attempts at unity in the colonies.
- identify the British policies that pushed the colonies to cooperate with one another
- list some of the ideals that influenced the writing of the Declaration of Independence
- explain the similarities among the newly independent states

- describe the powers of the national government under the Articles of Confederation
- explain how limits on its power weakened the national government under the Articles
- describe the struggle for unity after independence
- explain how Shays' Rebellion highlighted the need for a stronger national government
- create a list of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention.
- identify the major competing plans of government that the delegates debated
- explain why the delegates compromised on a federal system of government
- identify the main arguments in the debate over ratification of the Constitution
- discuss the role of a bill of rights in the debate
- understand how the *Federalist Papers* explain the principles of the American constitutional form of government
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the origins of U.S. government

Chapter 3: The U.S. Constitution

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- list and define the five basic principles on which the U.S. Constitution is based
- discuss and give examples of how the Constitution ensures the people's authority over government
- provide examples of how the U.S. Constitution provides a system of limited government
- describe how the Constitution protects the rights of states
- discuss the reasons framers established ways to amend the Constitution
- describe the methods for amending the Constitution
- explain the purpose of the Bill of Rights
- explain how the Constitution gives each of the three branches of government flexibility in using their powers
- discuss how political parties changed the way government operates
- describe the ways in which the Constitution allows custom and tradition to help shape government
- discuss James Madison's contribution to the development of the U.S. government
- list ways the Constitution ensures that government makes laws that promote the public good
- discuss critics' claims that the Constitution sometimes makes government less effective

- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the U.S. Constitution

Chapter 4: Federalism

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- list the powers given to the federal government and to the state governments by the Constitution.
- list the powers denied to the federal government and to the state governments by the Constitution.
- identify the responsibilities that the federal and state governments have to each other.
- describe the courts' role in the federal system.
- explain how the federal government's involvement in states' affairs has grown.
- describe how grants-in-aid have affected the growth of federalism.
- identify the role of federal mandates in federalism.
- describe how states are admitted to the United States.
- list ways in which states work together in the federal system.
- describe how the national government in a federal system promotes the public good.
- explain how the division of power in a federal system helps government promote the public good.
- list ways in which balancing federal and state interests has helped promote the public good.
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to our federal system of government

Chapter 5: The Role and Powers of Congress

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- list influences that cause members of Congress to vote in certain ways
- discuss the purpose of congressional investigations
- discuss the importance of members of Congress serving their constituents
- explain how the houses of Congress differ in their structure and membership
- provide a description of how congressional districts are drawn

- discuss the typical congressperson's profile
- list the main areas of governing contained in Congress's expressed powers
- describe special powers granted to Congress by the Constitution
- describe Congress's implied powers
- explain constitutional limits on congressional powers
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the role and powers of Congress

Chapter 6: Congress at Work

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- list the terms and sessions of Congress
- describe the organization of congressional leadership
- identify the rules of conduct in Congress
- discuss the types of committees in Congress
- explain how committee assignments are made
- describe the kinds of staff that help members of Congress and committees perform their work
- describe how bills get referred to a committee
- explain the purpose of committee hearings and markup sessions
- discuss what happens to a bill when it reaches the full House or Senate floor
- list the courses of action that can be taken by the president on a bill passed by Congress
- identify whether special interest groups obstruct Congress in promoting the public good
- explain the main criticism of the committee system and how it affects the public good
- describe the role Congress plays in promoting the public good
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the work that Congress does

Chapter 7: The Presidency

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- describe the roles of the president

- list the qualifications and terms of the president
- identify the order of presidential succession
- list the president's executive and foreign-policy powers
- describe the judicial and legislative powers of the president
- discuss how presidential power has grown over the years
- describe the electoral college
- explain how presidential candidates are nominated
- discuss how convention delegates are chosen
- describe the format for national conventions
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the presidency

Chapter 8: Executive Branch at Work

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- explain how the Executive Office of the President is organized
- describe the role of the vice president
- discuss how the cabinet helps carry out the work of the executive branch
- explain why Congress sets up independent agencies
- describe how independent agencies help carry out the work of the executive branch
- discuss how government positions are filled
- describe the power of the presidency
- discuss some common criticisms of government agencies
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the workings of the executive branch

Chapter 9: Economic Policy

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- List the major types of federal taxes
- Explain how the federal government collects taxes
- Describe the sources of revenue, other than taxes, of the federal government
- Discuss the factors that have affected the political debate over tax policy in recent decades
- Explain how the U.S. economy is organized

- List the goals of economic stabilization policy
- Describe the tools used by the U.S. government to stabilize the economy
- Discuss how the federal budget-making process has changed over the years
- Describe the role the president plays in planning the budget
- Explain why attempts at reducing the budget are politically controversial
- Discuss the factors that cause the federal government to operate at a deficit
- Explain how the national debt influences the U.S. economy
- Describe how the national debt and the federal deficit influence each other
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the making of U.S. economic policy

Chapter 10: Foreign Policy and National Security

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- identify the primary goals of U.S. foreign policy
- examine how factors such as location or geographic characteristics influence U.S. foreign policy
- explain the principles that have historically guided U.S. foreign policy
- explain why the executive branch has greater influence over foreign policy than does any other branch of government
- explain how the U.S. Department of State affects foreign policy decisions
- describe how the U.S. Department of Defense is organized according to the U.S. Constitution
- explain the roles of the Central Intelligence Agency and Congress in making U.S. foreign policy
- identify the principles that shaped U.S. leaders' foreign-policy decisions in the early years of the nation
- explain the policy of containment
- explain the significance of the expansion of communism on U.S. foreign policy
- explain how providing foreign aid to other nations helps the United States
- identify the defense alliances that the United States maintains today
- explain how alliances and foreign-aid programs promote the public good
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to foreign policy and national security

Chapter 11: The Federal Court System

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- identify the role of the lower courts and describe their authority
- explain how the lower courts are organized
- describe the process by which lower-court judges are selected
- describe how the role of the Supreme Court has changed over time
- discuss how Supreme Court justices are appointed, and explain what their terms of office are
- explain how the Supreme Court operates
- list and describe the issues raised by judicial activism and judicial restraint
- explain how the courts' power can be checked by the other branches of government
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the federal court system

Chapter 12: The U.S. Legal System

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- define common law and describe its origin
- define statutory law
- explain whom administrative law governs
- discuss the difference between civil law and criminal law
- identify who enforces criminal laws
- describe the process an accused person goes through after an arrest
- describe a plea bargain
- list the various sentencing options in the criminal justice system
- describe parole
- discuss the controversy over capital punishment
- describe what happens to juvenile offenders after their arrest
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the U.S. legal system

Chapter 13: Fundamental Freedoms

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- describe how the Constitution protects individuals' civil liberties
- identify whose civil liberties the First Amendment guarantees
- describe the role of laws and the courts in balancing the civil liberties of individuals with conflicting interests in the community
- discuss how the Supreme Court has interpreted the Establishment Clause to define the relationship between religion and public schools
- describe how the Supreme Court decides if government aid to religious groups is constitutional
- list why the Supreme Court has allowed tax exemptions for religious groups
- describe how the Free Exercise Clause has been interpreted
- describe the challenges that exist in balancing individuals' freedom of speech with the need to protect national security
- identify boundaries that exist regarding the media's freedom of expression
- evaluate how the First Amendment affects symbolic speech and hate speech
- describe how the First Amendment protects the rights of assembly and petition on public property
- discuss how the freedom to demonstrate is restricted on private property
- describe how freedom of assembly supports freedom of association
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens

Chapter 14: Assuring Individual Rights

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- define the term *due process*
- explain the difference between procedural due process and substantive due process
- describe how due process and the Fourth Amendment protect people's security against unreasonable state action
- explain how the Bill of Rights protects the people's right to privacy
- explain how the Constitution protects the right of *habeas corpus* and protects against bills of attainder and *ex post facto* laws

- describe how requirements for bringing charges before grand juries protect the rights of people accused of crimes
- describe how the Fifth Amendment protects against self-incrimination
- explain how the Bill of Rights helps to guarantee the right to a fair trial
- list and describe the ways that the Bill of Rights protects convicted criminals from excessive punishments
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to assuring the individual rights of U.S. citizens

Chapter 15: Protecting Civil Rights

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- describe the responsibilities of citizenship
- list the two ways a person may become a U.S. citizen by birth
- describe how an immigrant can become a U.S. citizen
- describe how U.S. immigration policy has changed over the years.
- discuss the ways in which the United States is an ethnically diverse nation
- list the benefits and challenges of diversity in the United States
- list the two tests used by the federal courts to determine whether laws uphold the Equal Protection Clause.
- discuss how the Equal Protection Clause helped the civil rights movement fight government discrimination
- discuss how civil rights laws have protected the equal rights of African Americans
- describe how civil rights protections have been extended to other minority groups.
- understand the meaning of specialized terminology related to protecting the civil rights of U.S. citizens

Chapter 16: Public Opinion

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Define public opinion and explain how it shapes political events and public policy.
- Identify and describe the factors that influence public opinion.
- Define and describe the media's role in influencing public opinion.
- Define polling, and describe how it is used to determine public opinion.

- Describe the types of polls that currently exist.
- Describe some of the main concerns in conducting a poll.
- Define and discuss the role of the media.
- Identify and describe some of the criticisms of the media.
- List and describe the checks on the media's influence.

Chapter 17: Interest Groups

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Explain what an interest group is.
- List and describe the functions of interest groups.
- Discuss the different types of interest groups.
- Discuss the ways in which interest groups are involved in the electoral process.
- Define lobbying.
- Explain how interest groups attempt to influence the political process through the legal system.
- List and describe how interest groups attempt to shape public opinion.
- List and describe the benefits of interest groups.
- List and describe the criticisms of interest groups.
- Explain the limitations to interest groups' influence.

Chapter 18: Political Parties

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Define and describe political parties.
- Discuss the functions of political parties.
- Identify and describe the different kinds of party systems.
- Explain why political parties developed in the United States.
- Describe the differences in the main political parties in the United States today.
- Describe the role of third parties in the U.S. two-party system.
- Describe the structure of early political parties and changes that occurred in their structure in the late 1800s.
- Explain how state parties changed after the decline of local parties.
- Describe how national party organization changed in the 1900s.
- List and explain the common criticisms of the U.S. two-party system.
- Describe the benefits of the U.S. two-party system.

Chapter 19: The Electoral Process

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Describe the first step in the electoral process.
- Discuss how candidates are chosen to run for elections.
- Identify the types of primary elections that are held in the states.
- Describe how early political campaigning was different from political campaigning today.
- Identify the role of the media in today's political campaigns.
- Discuss how campaigns are financed.
- Identify how campaign financing is regulated.
- Identify the different types of elections.
- Discuss the factors that determine where, how, and when people vote.
- Identify the factors that determine if a person may vote.
- Describe the influences on the way in which people vote.
- Explain why some people criticize the media's role in political campaigns.
- Identify the possible effects of negative campaigning.
- Describe the benefits of political campaigns.

Chapter 20: The States

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Discuss the basis of state government's authority.
- List and describe the ways that state governments answer to the people.
- Explain how state governments promote the public good.
- Explain how state legislatures are structured.
- Identify the responsibilities of a state's executive branch.
- Describe the way in which state courts are organized.
- Explain the process of how state budgets are created.
- List and describe the main sources of state revenue.

Chapter 21: Local Government

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Define rural areas.
- Discuss the historical factors that led to the growth of cities.
- Explain why suburbs developed outside of cities.
- Define metropolitan areas.
- List and describe the four main types of local government.
- Discuss the different types of municipal government.
- Describe the functions of a county government.
- Explain what services special districts provide.
- Identify local governments' sources of revenue.
- Describe the types of taxes that local governments may issue.
- Discuss how federal and state grants provide local governments with needed revenue.
- Describe the ways that local governments serve the public good.

Chapter 22: Comparing Political and Economic Systems

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- List and define the four factors of production.
- Describe why a free-market economy is an essential aspect of capitalism.
- Explain how supply and demand, competition, and the profit motive affect capitalist economies.
- Describe how the U.S. economy differs from Adam Smith's ideas of capitalism.
- Describe some of the basic principles of socialism.
- List some nations that have strong socialist traditions.
- Define a welfare state.
- List some of the basic principles of communism described by Karl Marx.
- Describe how Lenin's concept of communism differed from that of Marx.
- Identify and explain the changes that occurred in the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin.
- Explain why the Soviet Union eventually dissolved.

Chapter 23: International Relations

Learning Objectives

When students have completed the reading in their text and hand-outs from class, completed their assigned written work, actively participated in individual, small group and large group activities in class, studied for and successfully completed written quizzes and tests, they will be able to:

- Identify the reasons why worldwide collective security is so important.
- List and describe the causes of the conflicts that challenge the collective security of the world's nations.
- Explain how the growth in the production and ownership of weapons challenges collective security.
- Discuss the ways in which the United Nations contributes to worldwide collective security.
- Identify and discuss how some developing countries are closing the economic gap.
- List and describe the ways in which countries around the world have worked to promote international trade.
- Explain why trade deficits continue to be a problem for the U.S. economy.
- List and describe the ways in which air and water pollution challenge the world's countries.
- Identify how population growth and economic development can strain the world's resources.
- Explain how the end of the Cold War has changed the debate over U.S.–Japanese relations.
- List and describe the issues that have dominated U.S.–European relations since the end of the Cold War.
- Discuss how U.S. leaders have addressed the issues of trade and human rights in relations with China.
- Describe how a history of intervention and efforts to expand have marked U.S. relations with Latin American countries.
- Identify the issues U.S. policy with Africa has focused on since the early 1990s.