STUDYWALKS · COURSE SYLLABUS

American Government — High School Course with CLEP Preparation

American Government explains the institutions and rules that shape public life.

CREDIT LABEL	HOURS GOAL	STUDYWALKS LEARNING HOURS	SUGGESTED OFFLINE HOURS
0.5 credit	**60 h**	**12.5 h**	**47.5 h**
high school, with the study plan	the 0.5-credit convention	measured runtime plus assessment time	reading, review and writing

12.5 h StudyWalks (2.5 h of lessons, 5 h of lectures, 5.1 h of quizzes and exams) + **47.5 h** suggested offline study = **60 h**. 295 lessons in 11 units; prepares for the CLEP American Government exam.

High school credit is granted by the homeschool parent under the state's rules. StudyWalks supplies the record: hours, scores and this syllabus. The credit label is a suggestion; the parent makes the final call.

Course contents

Unit	Title and lecture topics	Lessons	Lecture
1	**Foundations and the Constitution** What government is, and what it provides · Forms of government · Two more forms, and two theories · Participation · The founding ideas · The Declaration · The first framework, and its failures · The Convention, and the plans · Two mechanisms · The ratification fight · Citing and amending · The method · The capstone	41	34 min
2	**Federalism** The system, and its two rivals · Who has which powers · When they collide · Two clauses that expanded the centre · State to state · Two styles, and the present · Money as the lever · One mechanism, two verdicts · The other layer · The method · The capstone	29	28 min
3	**Civil Liberties and Civil Rights** Two concepts · What the Bill of Rights originally bound · How it reached the states · Religion · Speech, press, assembly · Arms · The criminal procedure amendments · A right not written down · Equal protection, and three standards · Separate but equal, and its end · The statutes and the amendments · The method, and the capstone · Where the privacy line went · Tracing it · Establishment: a case and a test · The test is gone · Free exercise: a strong standard · And a narrower one · Congress answers, and is answered · The method · The capstone	55	55 min (2 parts)
4	**Public Opinion and Political Beliefs** Where opinion comes from · Belief structures, and parties · How it gets measured · What to check in a poll · What a representative does with it · The method · The capstone	18	20 min
5	**Voting, Elections, and Campaigns** Getting on the rolls · Counting turnout · Who votes, and how it compares · The nomination stage · The general election, and the winning rule · The presidency · Direct mechanisms · The method · The capstone	23	22 min

Unit	Title and lecture topics	Lessons	Lecture
6	**Media, Parties, and Interest Groups** The media, and three powers · Two more mechanisms, and openness · Parties · Why two · Two consequences · Interest groups · The organising problem · How they act · The method · The capstone	26	24 min
7	**Congress** The first branch, and two chambers · What passing takes · Districts, and who draws them · Why they keep winning · Leadership · Committees · The Senate's brake · The last gate · The method · The capstone	23	23 min
8	**The Presidency and the Bureaucracy** The office · Powers shared with the Senate · Two powers, and one check · The veto's shape · The president's own machinery · Acting without Congress · The other half · Four types · What agencies do, and who controls them · The method · The capstone	32	28 min
9	**The Courts** The third branch · The power the text never granted · Two systems, two kinds of case · Three tiers · Getting heard at the top · What a ruling is · Two labels, and one office · The weakest branch · The method · The capstone	22	22 min
10	**Domestic and Foreign Policy** What policy is · Three kinds, and their politics · Where the money goes · Two numbers · Two levers · Beyond the borders · Two kinds of power, three stances · The method · The capstone	19	21 min
11	**Capstones (synthesis only, no new doctrine)** One amendment, two centuries · The numbers · The question the course opened with · Every error, sorted · The circuit, complete · The procedures, as one method · The whole course, as one sentence	7	24 min

Assessment and grading

- **Unit quizzes.** 11 quizzes, 10 questions each, checked as the student goes, each answer with the lesson to review. Untimed; retakes are unlimited.
- **Mid exam.** 50 questions on units 1–6, drawn fresh each time and scored at the end with a breakdown by content area. Untimed; retakes are unlimited.
- **Final exam.** 100 questions, 90 minutes, on the whole course. Scored 20–80; 50 passes (66 of 100 correct, about 66%). Retakes are unlimited with a 24-hour wait, each a fresh draw.

Suggested composite grade

Part	Weight
Unit quizzes (average of best scores)	20%
Mid exam (best score)	20%
Final exam (percent correct)	60%

Suggested letter scale

Letter	Composite
A	90–100
B	80–89
C	70–79
D	60–69
F	below 60

Suggested; the parent sets the grade. A passing final is the completion standard for the course record.

Study plan

The 47.5 offline hours are spread over the units in proportion to each unit's StudyWalks time. For each unit: read the matching sections of *American Government 4e (OpenStax); American Government*, review the unit quiz misses, and write a one-page unit summary. Log the time as you go.

Unit	Title	StudyWalks	Offline, suggested	Unit total
1	Foundations and the Constitution	55 min	5 h 50 min	6 h 45 min
2	Federalism	42 min	4 h 30 min	5 h 12 min
3	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	1 h 22 min	8 h 45 min	10 h 7 min
4	Public Opinion and Political Beliefs	29 min	3 h 5 min	3 h 34 min
5	Voting, Elections, and Campaigns	34 min	3 h 35 min	4 h 9 min
6	Media, Parties, and Interest Groups	37 min	3 h 55 min	4 h 32 min
7	Congress	34 min	3 h 35 min	4 h 9 min
8	The Presidency and the Bureaucracy	44 min	4 h 40 min	5 h 24 min
9	The Courts	33 min	3 h 30 min	4 h 3 min
10	Domestic and Foreign Policy	30 min	3 h 10 min	3 h 40 min
Lessons and lectures		**7 h 27 min**	**47 h 30 min**	**54 h 57 min**
Quizzes, mid exam and final (stated time)		**5 h 6 min**	**—**	**5 h 6 min**

Unit	Title	StudyWalks	Offline, suggested	Unit total
11	Capstones (synthesis only, no new doctrine)	27 min	2 h 55 min	3 h 22 min
Lessons and lectures		**7 h 27 min**	**47 h 30 min**	**54 h 57 min**
Quizzes, mid exam and final (stated time)		**5 h 6 min**	**—**	**5 h 6 min**

Unit times are the unit's lecture runtime plus its lessons at the course's measured average lesson length; totals can differ from the learning hours by rounding.

Sources

- **Anchor:** OpenStax, *American Government 4e* (Krutz & Waskiewicz). Pinned to the live web edition dated April 23, 2026. CC BY-NC-SA 4.0
- **Secondary witness:** Lenz & Holman, *American Government* (Florida Atlantic University / Orange Grove). Independently authored, of non-Krutz lineage. Open access

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