

Virginia and United States Government, Semester A

Course Overview

This course provides a detailed study of the Virginia government and the US federal government. The course begins with a review of how to gather, interpret, and evaluate historical sources and data. Next, you'll explore the political and philosophical foundations of American democracy. You will explore the US Constitution in depth and develop a deep understanding of its significance in the functioning of government at the national, state, and, local levels. You'll also examine your roles and responsibilities as an American citizen, enabling you to participate effectively in civic life.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Use a variety of methods to analyze historical information and interpret historical data.
- Analyze opinion, bias, and persuasive techniques in informational texts.
- Discuss the philosophical and historical origins of the foundational values of American government.
- Investigate the development of democracy in the United States.
- Examine the process of creating the Constitution, its principles and structure, and the protections afforded by the Bill of Rights.
- Examine the structure and powers of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government.
- Analyze the powers given to national, state, and local governments.
- Explain the civil rights and liberties granted to US citizens by the Constitution.
- Discuss the duties associated with civic life and citizenship in the United States and the importance of civic participation.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.
- Understand the basics of presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides.

- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Virginia and United States Government, Semester A, is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you keep on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: Social Studies Skills

Summary

In this unit, you will use a variety of methods to gather, interpret, and analyze historical evidence and data. You'll also investigate opinion, bias, and persuasive techniques in informational texts.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation
3 days: 2–4	Gathering and Interpreting Historical Sources <i>Review and describe how historians gather and interpret historical evidence.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 5–6	Analyzing Historical Information <i>Use a variety of methods to analyze historical information.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
2 days: 7–8	Historical Data <i>Interpret historical data.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 9–10	Opinion in Informational Texts <i>Analyze opinion, bias, and persuasive techniques in informational texts.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 11–15	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 16	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: Foundations of US Democracy

Summary

In this unit, you'll analyze and compare historical and contemporary political systems and governments. You'll discuss the philosophical and historical origins of US government and investigate the development of democracy in the United States. You'll examine the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, US Constitution, and Bill of Rights. At the end of the unit, you'll compare the US system of government with other forms of governments, with a focus on the government of Mexico.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 17–19	Political Systems <i>Examine and compare historical and contemporary political systems and governments.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 20–22	Origins of American Government <i>Discuss the philosophical and historical origins of the foundational values of American government.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 23–25	The Development of US Democracy <i>Investigate the development of democracy in the United States.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 26–28	The Jamestown and Plymouth Colonies <i>Characterize the Jamestown and Plymouth colonies.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 29–31	The Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation <i>Examine the Declaration of Independence and the government created by the Articles of Confederation.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 32–34	Writing the Constitution <i>Examine the process of creating the Constitution.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 35–36	The Constitution and the Bill of Rights <i>Investigate the principles and structure of the Constitution and the protections afforded by the Bill of Rights.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 37–39	Comparing Government Systems <i>Compare the US system of government with other political systems.</i>	Lesson
6 days: 40–45	Mexican Government <i>Compare the government of Mexico to that of the United States.</i>	Course Activity
5 days: 46–50	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 51	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Branches and Levels of Government

Summary

This unit focuses on the structure and organization of federal and local governments in the United States. You'll analyze the structure and powers of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of the federal government and examine the powers of the national, state, and local governments.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 52–54	The Legislative Branch <i>Examine the structure and powers of the legislative branch.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 55–57	The Executive Branch <i>Examine the structure and powers of the executive branch.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 58–60	The Judicial Branch <i>Examine the structure and powers of the judicial branch.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 61–63	Local, State, and National Government <i>Analyze the powers given to the national, state, and local governments.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 64–68	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 69	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Rights, Liberties, and the Election Process

Summary

In this unit, you will learn about the liberties and rights conferred on US citizens by the Constitution. You'll examine the role of elections and the party system in the US political process, the effects of campaign funding on elections, and how reapportionment and redistricting affect elections.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 70–72	Civil Rights <i>Examine rights that are granted and protected by the Constitution.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 73–75	Civil Rights and Liberties <i>Examine the civil rights and liberties enjoyed by US citizens as stated in the Constitution.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 76–78	Political Parties, Elections, and Elected Officials <i>Examine how elections and the party system play a role in the US political process.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 79–83	Campaigns and Elections <i>Examine campaign funding as well as reapportionment and redistricting in elections.</i>	Course Activity
4 days: 84–87	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity/ Discussion

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 88	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day: 89	Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Exam	Assessment

Virginia and United States Government, Semester B

Course Overview

This course provides a detailed study of the Virginia government and the US federal government. You'll begin by examining the significance of civic participation. You'll also explore the process of policy making and its effects on foreign trade, economics, and social life in the past and today. You will explore the fundamentals of market economies, including market structures, supply and demand, and the role of government. Finally, you'll study the global market, the factors that boost international business, and Virginia's role in the global economy.

Course Goals

By the end of this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Describe the duties of US citizens and the importance of civic participation in US democracy.
- Explain the role of government, individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media in policy making.
- Analyze how foreign and domestic policies affect the United States.
- Explain the role of government in regulating the economy.
- Describe different economic systems and market structures, and analyze how market economies differ from other major economic systems.
- Explain the impact of the Federal Reserve System and the federal government on the US economy.
- Explain the uses and goals of fiscal policy, government regulations, and taxation in the US economy.
- Describe the elements of the US labor market.
- Describe how world economies have become interdependent in the modern age.
- Outline the organization and powers of the state and local governments of Virginia and explain the state's role in the global economy.

General Skills

To participate in this course, you should be able to do the following:

- Complete basic operations with word processing software, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.

- Understand the basics of presentation software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint or Google Slides.
- Perform online research using various search engines and library databases.
- Communicate through email and participate in discussion boards.

For a complete list of general skills that are required for participation in online courses, refer to the Prerequisites section of the Plato Student Orientation document, found at the beginning of this course.

Credit Value

Virginia and United States Government, Semester B, is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- notebook
- computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft PowerPoint or equivalent

Course Pacing Guide

This course description and pacing guide is intended to help you keep on schedule with your work. Note that your course instructor may modify the schedule to meet the specific needs of your class.

Unit 1: Civic Engagement and Citizenship

Summary

This unit focuses on civic life in the United States. You'll begin by exploring the duties of US citizens and the importance of civic participation in your local community. You'll examine how different groups play a vital role in policy making and will gain an understanding of the role of government and its officials in implementing these policies. At the end of the unit, you'll learn how budgeting techniques are used to forecast revenues and profit.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
1 day: 1	Syllabus and Plato Student Orientation <i>Review the Plato Student Orientation and Course Syllabus at the beginning of this course.</i>	Course Orientation

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 2–4	Citizenship and Civic Participation <i>Examine the duties associated with civic life and citizenship in the United States.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 5–7	Civic Engagement/Participation <i>Discuss the importance of civic participation in the US democratic society.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 8–9	Introduction to Public Policy <i>Explain how public policy is created and the contribution of government officials and agencies in administering policies.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 10–11	Role of Different Groups in Policy Making <i>Discuss the role of individuals, political parties, interest groups, and media in policy making.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 12–14	Managing Money <i>Learn the use of sales forecasting and budgeting techniques to project revenues and profit.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 15–19	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 20	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: Foreign and Domestic Policy

Summary

This unit focuses on government policies. In this unit, you'll analyze the effects of foreign and domestic policies on US society. You'll study basic economic principles and how the government plays an important role in regulating the country's economy.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 21–23	Foreign Policy <i>Analyze how foreign policy impacts the United States.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 24–26	Domestic Policy <i>Analyze how domestic policy impacts the United States.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 27–29	Economic Principles and Policies <i>Examine basic economic principles and systems.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 30–32	Government and the Economy <i>Examine the role of government in regulating the economy.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 33–37	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 38	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: Economic Principles

Summary

This unit focuses on the fundamental properties of a market economy. In this unit, you'll analyze different economic systems and market structures. You'll examine how supply and demand influence the economy and study the structure of the Federal Reserve System and how it affects the US economy. At the end of the unit, you'll explore how the federal government's policies and regulations affect the US economy.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 39–41	Economic Systems <i>Describe how different economic systems answer basic economic questions.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 42–44	Market Structures <i>Compare the four market structures.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 45–46	Market Economies <i>Analyze how market economies differ from other major economic systems.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 47–48	Supply and Demand <i>Interpret the impact of changes in supply, demand, or both.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 49–50	Money and the Federal Reserve <i>Explain the structure of the Federal Reserve System and analyze its impact on US monetary policy.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
2 days: 51–52	The Role of Government <i>Analyze the influence of the federal government on the US economy.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 53–55	Taxation <i>Explain the use and goals of fiscal policy, government regulations, and taxation in the US economy.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 56–58	Costs and Benefits of Government <i>Analyze the costs and benefits of US economic policies on the United States and the world.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 59–63	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 64	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Business Structures and the Global Economy

Summary

In this unit, you'll learn about different business structures, elements of the US labor market, and factors that are responsible for business growth. Next, you'll examine the importance of law in business decisions. You'll explore world economies and factors that influence global trade and consider Virginia's role in the global economy.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
3 days: 65–67	Business Structures <i>Explain how the market system encourages entrepreneurship and analyze the different types of business organizations that result.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 68–69	Labor <i>Describe the elements of the US labor market.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 70–71	Growth <i>Analyze how productivity, technology, and trade relate to growth.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
2 days: 72–73	Business Law <i>Explain how the legal environment influences business decisions.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 74–75	Marketing and Environmental Law <i>Discuss the scope of law in marketing activities and environment protection.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 76–77	International Business <i>Describe the working of, and influencing factors in, global trade.</i>	Lesson
2 days: 78–79	Economic Globalization <i>Describe how world economies have become interdependent in the contemporary age.</i>	Lesson
3 days: 80–82	Virginia Government and Economy <i>Explore the organization and powers of the state and local governments of Virginia as well as the state’s role in the global economy.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 83–87	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 4	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 88	Posttest—Unit 4	Assessment
1 day: 89	Semester Review	
1 day: 90	End-of-Semester Exam	Assessment