

AP U.S. Government & Politics

Simulation Integration Guide & Curriculum Map

To the Instructor: Why Simulate?

Statecraft: The Situation Room

AP Government students often struggle to connect abstract concepts (Federalism, Checks and Balances) with reality. This curriculum map demonstrates how the Statecraft simulation replaces passive lecturing with active political conflict. By placing students in the roles of President, Senator, or Justice, we force them to 'live' the required documents rather than just memorize them.

AP® Disciplinary Practices & Big Ideas

- Concept Application: Apply political concepts (War Powers, Federalism) to real-world scenarios.
- Data Analysis: Analyze approval ratings, polling data, and budget deficits.
- Source Analysis: Interpret primary documents (Executive Orders, Legislative Bills).
- Argumentation: Develop defensible claims about policy choices (Security vs. Liberty).

Curriculum Map: Mapping Simulation to AP Units

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

FEDERALISM & CONSTITUTIONAL POWER

Simulation Mechanics: State Governors block Federal prisoner transfers (Guantanamo). President battles Congress over War Powers Resolution compliance.

Required Documents Applied: *Federalist No. 10*, *Brutus No. 1*, *Constitution*

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches

CHECKS & BALANCES / IRON TRIANGLES

Simulation Mechanics: Congress attempts to override Presidential Veto on budget. Bureaucratic agencies fight for funding (Turf Wars). Senate confirms/rejects appointments.

Required Documents Applied: *Federalist No. 51*, *Federalist No. 70*

Unit 3: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights

BALANCING LIBERTY & ORDER

Simulation Mechanics: President chooses between 4th Amendment rights and 'Enhanced Surveillance' directives to stop a terror plot. Courts rule on constitutionality.

Required Documents Applied: *Bill of Rights*, *Letter from Birmingham Jail*

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies

POLLING & PUBLIC OPINION

Simulation Mechanics: Candidates analyze 'Approval Rating' tracking polls. Impact of 'Scandal' events on voter sentiment in swing districts.

Required Documents Applied: *Reliability of Data*, *Keynesian vs. Supply-Side budgets*

Unit 5: Political Participation

MEDIA, PARTIES & ELECTIONS

Simulation Mechanics: The 'Symbiotic Relationship' between Press and Politicians. Leaking classified intel to shape the narrative. Interest Group lobbying (ACLU vs. Security Hawks).

Required Documents Applied: Citizens United (simulated via Campaign Finance mechanics)

Turn-Key Pacing Calendar

Proposed Fall Semester Timeline

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|-----------|---|
| SEPTEMBER | Unit 1: Foundations Orientation + Sim Period 0 <i>Focus: Login, Role Selection, Federalism Dispute</i> |
| OCTOBER | Unit 2: Branches Sim Period 1 & 2 <i>Focus: Legislative Gridlock, Vetoes, Appointments</i> |
| NOVEMBER | Unit 3: Civil Liberties Sim Period 3 (Crisis) <i>Focus: National Security Crisis vs. Bill of Rights</i> |
| DECEMBER | Review & Midterms Sim Period 4 (Budget) <i>Focus: Power of the Purse, Shutdown Threats</i> |
| JANUARY | Unit 4: Ideologies Sim Period 5 (Polling) <i>Focus: Public Opinion Data, Ad Buys, Approval Ratings</i> |
| FEBRUARY | Unit 5: Participation Sim Period 6 (Election) <i>Focus: Voter Turnout, Media Leaks, Final Vote</i> |

Classroom Implementation Guide

Length of Simulation & Class Time

The Statecraft Gov 2.0 U.S. Government Simulation is organized into five periods (0-4). Each period covers different topics such as national security, environmental policy, federal budget, and AI regulation. We recommend a 1-2 week timeframe per period for optimal engagement, allowing the sim to run for 5-10 weeks based on your preferred schedule.

Period Structure:

- Period 0: A tutorial week to familiarize students with their roles, profiles, and basic abilities. Low-stakes introduction.
- Periods 1-4: Each period begins with a briefing based on student roles, providing key information and grading incentives. These briefings facilitate collaboration and problem-solving.

Class Assignments & Grading

- Role Research (5%): Students research and submit their top 5 role choices.
- Simulation Performance (5%): Based on achieving in-game goals (e.g., reelection, policy success).
- Weekly Memos (10%): Reflection prompts connecting course materials to sim experiences.
- Debrief Presentation (15-25%): Team presentation highlighting key concepts after the simulation.
- Debrief Paper (10-25%): Deeper written analysis of the simulation experience.

Why Use Statecraft Gov 2.0?

Statecraft is a comprehensive engine covering over 50 topics, including how a bill becomes a law, the role of interest groups, media relations, checks and balances, and AI regulation. It promotes active learning and critical thinking.

Support & Customer Service

We provide you with your own virtual Statecraft teaching assistant. Instructors have a '3-minute rule' for contacting support—if you can't figure it out in 3 minutes, email us! Students should also use the 'Contact Us' button for any questions.

Contact Info: help@statecraftsims.com

Funding Proposal / Purchase Justification

Instructions: Submit this letter to your Department Head or Principal.

To: Administration / Social Studies Department Chair

From: AP Government Instructor

Subject: Proposal to Integrate 'Statecraft' Simulation into AP Curriculum

Dear Administrator,

I am writing to request approval to adopt the Statecraft US Government simulation for my AP Government & Politics course next semester. This interactive platform aligns directly with our goal of increasing student engagement and improving AP Exam performance.

Rationale for Adoption:

1. Alignment with College Board Standards:

Statecraft is not a game; it is a curriculum engine designed around the 5 Big Ideas of the AP Framework. It requires students to apply the War Powers Resolution, Federalism, and Civil Liberties in real-time scenarios, directly preparing them for the Argument Essay (FRQ #4).

2. Solution to Student Disengagement:

Traditional lectures struggle to convey the complexity of 'gridlock' or 'bureaucracy.' By placing students in the roles of President, Senator, or Justice, Statecraft forces them to experience these concepts. This 'active learning' model is proven to increase retention rates.

3. Cost-Effective:

At a fraction of the cost of physical textbooks or supplementary workbooks, Statecraft provides a full semester of engagement, including automated grading features that allow me to focus more time on individual student feedback.

I have reviewed the curriculum map (attached) and confirmed that it fits seamlessly into our existing pacing guide without requiring additional instructional days.

Thank you for considering this opportunity to modernize our civics instruction.

Sincerely,

[Instructor Signature]