

PLATO Course CASAS Competencies 5

Course Overview

The PLATO Course CASAS Competencies 5 aims at identifying and measuring more than 360 skills essential for life, which will help youth and adults become socially responsible and competent at home and at the workplace. PLATO Course CASAS Competencies 5 will enhance your knowledge on government issues, law and civics, economics, and historical information. This course contains three units, and each unit includes a wide range of topics to cover these subjects comprehensively and to make you career-ready. There are sections in each lesson that explain concepts in an easy manner and will help you practice what you have learned, through activities and tests.

Course Goals

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

- Study political parties and the history of political parties in America.
- Study the American two-party system, the different types of governments, and the different economic systems with emphasis on the American mixed-capitalist economic system.
- Explore political campaigns, elections, and voting.
- Understand the powers, functions, and organizational structure of a federal legislative branch.
- Study and understand the president's constitutional qualifications and the constitutional powers of the President.
- Categorize the functions and workings of a federal government's bureaucracy.
- Learn about the establishment, functions, structure, and powers of various courts in the United States.
- Understand the purpose and the structure of state and local governments.
- Discuss the major global ecological issues faced by humanity today.
- Understand the science of scarcity, different resources of production, and the production of goods and services.
- Explore economic systems and the link between politics and economics.
- Explore the characteristics of a market economy.
- Study competitive features of a market, market structures, and international trade.
- Learn about money and the history of American banking, other financial institutions, financial markets, and primary versus secondary markets.
- Differentiate between concepts such as risk, liquidity, and returns.
- Understand the link between entrepreneurship and economic growth.

- Memorize concepts of economic growth, such as GNP and GDP, and understand ways to measure GNP and GDP, per capita GDP, and standard of living.
- Understand the role of the government in a market economy.
- Build your history vocabulary, and recognize historical allusions in what you read.
- Use expository texts and narrative resources to enrich your understanding of history.
- Create a timeline to help you study history.

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 spreadsheet software, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Spreadsheets, but having prior computing experience is not necessary.
- 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.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Graphing calculator, recommend TI-83 or equivalent
- Computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Excel or equivalent

Unit 1: Government, Law, and Civics

Summary

Unit 1 begins with the study of political parties and the history of political parties in America. You will learn about the American two-party system, the different types of governments, and the different economic systems, with emphasis on the American mixed-capitalist economic system. You will understand concepts such as Democrat and Republican, single-member district/plurality voting electoral system, proportional representation electoral systems, party structure, and interest groups. Then, you will learn about election campaign functions, nominations, the purposes served by elections, costs and benefits of voting, and the participation and voter turnout in the U.S. You will also learn about legislative and non-legislative functions, the bi-cameral legislature of the Congress, qualifications for office and membership, and decision-

making. Further, you will learn about the president's constitutional qualifications, the different processes involved in electing and removing the president, and the constitutional powers of the president. You will also learn to categorize the functions and workings of a federal government's bureaucracy. Later, you will learn about the establishment and functions of federal courts, district courts, the court of appeal, supreme courts, and the powers of these courts. Here, you will also understand the selection procedure of judges, civil liberties, and civil rights. Later, you will explore the history and purpose of the state constitution, federalism, the structure of the state government and local government, types of local governments, tribal government, federal-tribal relations, and territorial government. Finally, you will discuss the major global ecological issues that exist.

Unit 2: Economics

Summary

In Unit 2, you will develop your knowledge of economics. You will learn about scarcity as well as resources of production such as land, human, and capital. You will differentiate between goods and services such as consumer goods and capital goods and between micro and macroeconomics. This differentiation will help you understand the circular flow model of economic participants and opportunity cost. You will then differentiate between traditional and market economies to identify the strengths and weaknesses of market economies. You will scrutinize the link between politics and economics with reference to socialism and communism, and learn about mixed economies. You will identify the demand and supply curve and market equilibrium of demand and supply. Further, you will learn about competition and market structures, where you will study about international trade, tariffs, subsidies, other trade restrictions, and the World Trade Organization. Additionally, you will learn about money and the history of American banking, financial institutions and markets, and primary versus secondary markets. You will also differentiate between concepts such as risk, liquidity, and returns.

This unit also includes lessons that will help you study about entrepreneurship and economic growth, where you will explore different government policies, creation of business opportunities, legal protection, and encouragement of capital investment. You will also memorize concepts of economic growth such as GNP and GDP, and understand ways to measure GNP and GDP, per capita GDP, and standard of living. You will then understand the role of the government in a market economy and the government actions that influence the economy, such as laws to regulate competition and market power. Finally, you will learn about government taxes and types of taxes at federal, state, and local levels, and compare the economic policies of the United States to other nations.

Unit 3: Historical Information

Summary

In Unit 3, you will improve your history vocabulary and recognize historical allusions in what you read. You can enrich your knowledge by using both expository texts and narrative resources. Finally, you will create a timeline to study history.