

Syllabus

The Contemporary World, Semester B

Course Overview

The Contemporary World, Semester B, is a single-semester course designed to strengthen your understanding of government in the modern world. In the first unit, you will study the role of government and the responsibilities of citizens in contemporary societies. In the second unit, you will learn about democracy in the United States, and you will look at the structure of the Constitution. In the third unit, you will explore the functions of the US legal system as well as understand the rights and responsibilities of US citizens. Toward the end of this course, you will learn about the factors affecting the development of global trade and examine the structure and function of the US economy.

Course Goals

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

- Explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens in contemporary societies.
- Analyze the significance of the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation.
- Describe the principles and structure of the Constitution.
- Identify the rights and responsibilities of US citizens.
- Explain aspects of US domestic and foreign policy.
- Explain basic economic concepts.
- Describe various economic systems.
- Explain how specialization and scarcity affect the development of global trade.
- Describe the structure and function of the US 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 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.

Credit Value

Contemporary World B is a 0.5-credit course.

Course Materials

- Notebook
- Computer with Internet connection and speakers or headphones
- Microsoft Word or equivalent
- Microsoft Excel 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: Roles and Systems of Government

Summary

In this unit, you will compare limited and unlimited governments. You will also compare different forms of government. Lastly, you will explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens in contemporary societies.

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	Limited and Unlimited Governments <i>Compare limited and unlimited governments.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 5–8	Systems of Government <i>Compare different forms of government.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 9–12	Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens <i>Explain the rights and responsibilities of citizens in contemporary societies.</i>	Lesson

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
5 days: 13–17	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 1	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 18	Posttest—Unit 1	Assessment

Unit 2: The Development of US Democracy

Summary

In Unit 2, you will explain the origins of democracy in the United States. You will analyze the significance of the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation. Additionally, you will describe the principles and structure of the Constitution.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 19–22	Origins of US Government <i>Explain the origins of democracy in the United States.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 23–26	The Declaration of Independence and Articles of Confederation <i>Analyze the significance of the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 27–30	The Constitution <i>Describe the principles and structure of the Constitution.</i>	Course Activity
5 days: 31–35	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 2	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 36	Posttest—Unit 2	Assessment

Unit 3: The Role and Structure of the US Government

Summary

This unit begins with lessons in which you will describe how the US government is organized. You will also explain the structure and functions of the US legal system. You will then go on to identify the rights and responsibilities of US citizens, and you will explain how political parties, individuals, and the media affect the US government. Lastly, you will study the aspects of US domestic and foreign policy.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 37–40	The Structure of the US Government <i>Describe how the US government is organized.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 41–44	The US Legal System <i>Explain the structure and functions of the US legal system.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 45–48	American Citizenship <i>Identify the rights and responsibilities of US citizens.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 49–52	Linkage Institutions <i>Explain how political parties, individuals, and the media affect the US government.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 53–56	Domestic and Foreign Policy <i>Explain aspects of US domestic and foreign policy.</i>	Lesson
5 days: 57–61	Unit Activity and Discussion—Unit 3	Unit Activity/ Discussion
1 day: 62	Posttest—Unit 3	Assessment

Unit 4: Economics

Summary

In the last unit, you will explain basic economic concepts and various economic systems. You will then study how categories of economic activities and data are used to measure a society's economic status. You will describe how specialization and scarcity affect the development of global trade. Finally, you will examine the structure and function of the US economy.

Day	Activity/Objective	Type
4 days: 63–66	Economic Concepts <i>Explain basic economic concepts.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 67–70	Economic Systems <i>Describe various economic systems.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 71–74	Economic Activities and Indicators <i>Explain how categories of economic activities and data are used to measure a society's economic status.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 75–78	Specialization and Trade <i>Explain how specialization and scarcity affect the development of global trade.</i>	Lesson
4 days: 79–82	The US Economy <i>Describe the structure and function of the US 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