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UNIT SYNOPSIS

Students will connect the founding principles of our government to the debates over the appropriate balance of liberty and order, noting how citizens and other groups have pursued policy solutions to protect the civil liberties and civil rights of all Americans, laying the foundation for later discussions about other ways citizens can participate in the government. The U.S. Constitution, primarily through the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment, protects the civil liberties and civil rights of citizens, though the extent of those protections and the need to protect the safety and general welfare of individuals has long been debated. Through social movements, legal challenges, and acts of Congress, citizens have attempted to restrict the government from unduly infringing on individual rights and from denying equal protection under the law.

This unit focuses on the analysis and application of SCOTUS cases. In addition to knowing the facts and decision of the required SCOTUS cases, students should analyze the majority opinion, focusing on the constitutional issues (such as the various interpretations of the Bill of Rights, including the due process clause) considered by the justices. This level of knowledge allows students to think like political scientists and compare two cases that relate to the same constitutional issue and draw conclusions about why the Supreme Court may have ruled in a similar or different way in each case. Students continue to develop the practice of argumentation in this unit by using relevant evidence to support their claim. When using documents as evidence, students should not focus on summarizing the content of a document, but instead on explaining the significance of the evidence and explaining how and why it supports the claim and line of reasoning.

College Board, *AP® U.S. Government and Politics Course and Exam Description, 2024*

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS AND CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards **taught** and **assessed** in this unit.

Topic, Enduring Understanding, Learning Objectives (<i>Students will be able to...</i>)
2.8 The Judicial Branch <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 2.8.A: <i>Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other branches.</i>
2.9 The Role of the Judicial Branch <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 2.9.A: <i>Explain the role of legal precedent in judicial decision making.</i>
2.10 The Court in Action <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 2.10.A <i>Explain how life tenure can lead to debate about the Supreme Court's power.</i>
2.11 Checks on the Judicial Branch <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 2.11.A <i>Explain how the exercise of judicial review can lead to debate about the Supreme Court's power.</i>• LO 2.11.B <i>Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.</i>
3.1 The Bill of Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.1.A: <i>Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.</i>• LO 3.1.B: <i>Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.</i>
3.2 First Amendment: Freedom of Religion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.2.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment reflects a commitment to religious liberty.</i>
3.3 First Amendment: Freedom of Speech <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.3.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment reflects a commitment to free speech.</i>
3.4 First Amendment: Freedom of the Press <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.4.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First Amendment reflects a commitment to individual liberty.</i>
3.5 Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.5.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the Second Amendment reflects a commitment to individual liberty.</i>
3.6 Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.6.A: <i>Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.</i>
3.7 Selective Incorporation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.7.A A: <i>Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation.</i>
3.8 Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.8.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the government is limited by procedural due process from infringing upon individual rights.</i>
3.9 Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.9.A: <i>Explain the extent to which the government is limited by substantive due process from infringing upon individual rights.</i>
3.10 Social Movements and Equal Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LO 3.10.A: <i>Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.</i>
3.11 Government Responses to Social Movements

- **LO 3.11.A:** *Explain how the government has responded to social movements.*

3.12 Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy

- **LO 3.12.A:** *Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.*

3.13 Affirmative Action

- **LO 3.13.A:** *Describe Supreme Court debates about affirmative action policies.*