In Civics Washington, students examine the history, principles, and function of the political system established by the U.S. Constitution. Starting with a basic introduction to the role of government in society and the philosophies at the heart of American democracy, this course provides students with the knowledge needed to be informed and empowered participants in the U.S. political system.

Through critical reading activities, feedback-rich instruction, and application-oriented assignments, students develop their capacity to conduct research, analyze sources, make arguments, and take informed action. In written assignments and projects, students address critical questions about U.S. politics and the role of individual Americans in the politics and political organizations. In discussion activities, students respond to political opinions, take a position, and defend their own claims. Formative and summative assessments provide students — and teachers — with ample opportunities to check in, review, and evaluate students' progress in the course.

This course aligns to state standards and informed by the College, Career, and Civil Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards and Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for Social Studies.

Length: One Semester

Unit 1: Introduction to U.S. Government

- Essential Skills
- Ideas about Government
- Origins of U.S. Government
- Wrap-Up: Introduction to U.S. Government

Unit 2: The U.S. Constitution

- Establishing the Constitution
- Examining the Constitution
- Federalism in the United States
- Wrap-Up: The U.S. Constitution

Unit 3: Institutions of the Federal Government

- The Executive Branch
- The Judicial Branch
- The Legislative Branch
- Wrap-Up: Institutions of the Federal Government

Unit 4: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

- Foundational Freedoms
- Interpreting Civil Liberties

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- Fighting for Civil Rights
- Wrap-Up: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Unit 5: Citizen Connections

- Institutions with Influence
- Elections and Campaigns
- State and Local Government
- Wrap-Up: Citizen Connections

Unit 6: Public Policy

- Understanding Public Policy
- Domestic Policy
- Foreign Policy
- Wrap-Up: Public Policy

Unit 7: Civic and Political Participation

- The Role of Citizens
- Voting
- Further Political Participation
- Wrap-Up: Civic and Political Participation

Unit 8: Semester Review and Exam

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