

# Unit #1: Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

AP Comparative Government & Politics

Mr. Coia

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mon 1/27 (Tues 1/28)

- Slide Deck introduction to Course
- Read/mark/discuss: ["How Stable are Democracies?"](#) What questions does this raise as students?
  - Students create lists of questions regarding what they need to know to understand this article
- TOPIC 1.1: The Practice of Political Scientists (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge)
- Read/mark Developing Understanding and Big Ideas for this unit
- Read Sample FRQ #1: Economic Liberalization
- The 6 Countries
- *Let's Run the Numbers* activity (first 4 columns)

HW: Read/mark ["Mountain Man and the Surgeon"](#)

## Wed 1/29 (Thurs 1/30)

- Discuss ["Mountain Man and the Surgeon"](#)
- *Let's Run the Numbers* activity (finish)
- Answers
- Watch: [Big Mac Economics](#) (5 min)
- TOPIC 1.2: Defining Political Organizations
- TOPIC 1.3: Democracy vs. Authoritarianism
- (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge for each)
- Choosing a country of focus

HW: Country Specialization sheet

## Fri 1/31 (Mon 2/3)

- Watch: [Purchasing Power Parity—Haircuts in India](#) (5 min)
- Practice quiz questions
- TOPIC 1.4: Democratization
- TOPIC 1.5: Sources of Power and Authority
- (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge for each)
- Define vocabulary
- Practice FRQ #2: Election Turnout graph

HW: Complete vocabulary; Country Specialization sheet

## Tues 2/4 (Wed 2/5)

- TOPIC 1.6: Change in Power and Authority
- TOPIC 1.7: Federal and Unitary Systems
- (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge for each)
- Watch: [Federalism/Unitary Systems](#) (3 min)
- Meet in country groups to discuss/share findings. Combine in Google Doc; Connect Essential Knowledge points to each
- Discussion Groups: Consider peaceful versus violent change; how do different regimes maintain sovereignty?

HW: Read/Mark ["What Democracy Is...and Is Not article"](#)

## Thurs 2/6 (Mon 2/10)

- Discuss article
- TOPIC 1.8: Political Legitimacy
- TOPIC 1.9: Sustaining Legitimacy
- (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge for each)
- Country Specialization Presentations: UK, China, Iran
- Think in Threes: Consider one factor that three countries share. Find three groupings. [Page 42 of this doc](#)

HW: Complete 3 Think in Threes sheets using all 7 countries (use US only once)

## Tues 2/11 (Wed 2/12)

- TOPIC 1.10: Political Stability
- (Read/highlight Essential Knowledge)
- Country Specialization Presentations: Russia, Mexico, Nigeria
- Learning Objective Review: Students draw one of the 10 LO to discuss, using their country and one other

HW: AP Classroom--Progress Check Unit 1

## Thurs 2/13 (Fri 2/14)

- Unit 1 Test
- Practice FRQ #4: Argument essay

## Mon 2/18 (Tues 2/19)

- AP GOV Review Day: Unit 1-Foundations of American Democracy
- Creating US Gov Valentines

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

Let's Run the Numbers Activity

Directions: For each category, rank the following countries from highest to lowest using your best guess.

	China	Great Britain	Iran	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria	Russia	United States	
Rank 1-8 1-highest		GDP <i>Gross domestic product</i>	GDP per capita <i>Gross domestic product in terms of population</i>	Population	<u>GINI Index</u> Distribution of family income - <b>Gini index</b> measures the degree of inequality in the distribution of family income in a country.	Life Expectancy	Internet Usage	<u>Starbucks Index</u> The cost of a tall latte using the nation's currency	Literacy Rates
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									
6									
7									
8									

Use the Federal Reserve Economic Research site for AP Comparative Gov (and bookmark): <https://research.stlouisfed.org/dashboard/7003>, as well as Kesselman's text p. 30-37.

ANSWERS:

	China	Great Britain	Iran	Japan	Mexico	Nigeria	Russia	United States	
Rank 1-8 1-highest		GDP <i>Gross domestic product</i>	GDP per capita <i>Gross domestic product in terms of population</i>	Population	<u>GINI Index</u> Distribution of family income - <b>Gini index</b> measures the degree of inequality in the distribution of family income in a country.	Life Expectancy	Internet Usage	<u>Starbucks Index</u> The cost of a tall latte using the nation's currency	Literacy Rates
1									
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5									
6									
7									
8									

# The AP Comparative Government Curriculum

## Course Content

Unit	Title	Documents
1	Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments	18%-27%
2	Political Institutions	22%-33%
3	Political Culture and Participation	11%-18%
4	Party and Electoral Systems and Citizen Organizations	13%-18%
5	Political and Economic Changes and Development	16%-24%

## Disciplinary Practices

Skill	Description
1. Concept Application	Apply political concepts and processes in authentic contexts.
2. Country Comparison	Compare political concepts and processes among the course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom).
3. Data Analysis	Analyze and interpret quantitative data represented in tables, charts, graphs, maps, and infographics.
4. Source Analysis	Read, analyze, and interpret text-based sources.
5. Argumentation	Develop an argument in essay format.

## Unit 1: Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments

### Developing Understanding

Comparative political scientists seek to understand similarities and differences between states, evaluating political realities and understanding political change. This first unit sets the foundation for students to think like comparative political scientists by teaching them to read and analyze qualitative and quantitative data related to the six required course countries (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, and the United Kingdom) and helping them understand concepts and examples they can use to support an argument about the countries.

Understanding the similarities and differences in political systems, regimes, and governments—how they function and how they gain and maintain power and legitimacy— as well as the terminology used to describe them provides students with the foundational knowledge needed to be able to compare course countries throughout future units.

#### BIG IDEA 1 Power and Authority

- How does a political system affect the daily life of citizens?
- How do people both inside and outside the government impact the relationship between the government and its citizens?

#### BIG IDEA 2 Legitimacy and Stability

- How does the perceived legitimacy of a government by its citizenry impact how other countries see it?

#### BIG IDEA 3 Methods of Political Analysis

- How do comparative political scientists generate meaningful conclusions that can be applied to other countries?

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Learning Objectives</b> <i>What do I need to DO?</i>	<b>Essential Knowledge</b> <i>What do I need to KNOW to meet the learning objective?</i>
<b>TOPIC 1.1: The Practice of Political Scientists</b>	MPA-1.A Explain how political scientists construct knowledge and communicate inferences and explanations about political systems, institutional interactions, and behavior.	<p>MPA-1.A.1 Analysis of quantitative and qualitative information (including charts, tables, graphs, speeches, foundational documents, political cartoons, maps, and political commentaries) is a way to make comparisons between and inferences about course countries.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.2 Analyzing empirical data using quantitative methods facilitates making comparisons among and inferences about course countries.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.3 Causation is difficult to determine with certainty in comparative politics, as often there are numerous variables that potentially influence political policies and/ or regime stability, with no way to isolate and demonstrate which is producing the change.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.4 Correlation exists when there is an association between two or more variables.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.5 Comparative political research requires differentiation between empirical (factual/ objective) and normative (value) statements.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.6 Political scientists most often use empirical information to apply concepts, support generalizations, or make arguments.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.7 Comparative political scientists compare different political systems to derive conclusions about politics.</p> <p>MPA-1.A.8 A number of data collection resources are used to investigate relationships among course countries, including: a. The Human Development Index (HDI) b. Gross domestic product (GDP) and GDP per capita c. GDP growth rate d. Gini index (coefficient) e. Freedom House f. Transparency International g. Failed States Index</p>
<b>TOPIC 1.2: Defining Political Organizations</b>	PAU-1.A Describe differences between regimes, states, nations, and governments.	<p>PAU-1.A.1 Political systems comprise the laws, ideas, and procedures that address who should have authority to rule and what the government’s influence on its people and economy should be.</p> <p>PAU-1.A.2 States are political organizations that combine a permanent population with governing institutions to exercise control over a defined territory with international recognition.</p>

		<p>Regimes refer to the fundamental rules that control access to and the exercise of political power. Regimes typically endure from government to government.</p> <p>PAU-1.A.3 A regime can be characterized as democratic or authoritarian based on how it sets rules or makes decisions about how to exercise power.</p> <p>PAU-1.A.4 Government is the set of institutions or individuals legally empowered to make binding decisions for a state. A government’s authority is derived from the state’s legitimate right to use power to enforce policies and decisions; the right and power to govern itself without outside interference is a crucial aspect of a state’s sovereignty. A sovereign state has independent legal authority over a population in a particular territory.</p> <p>PAU-1.A.5 A nation is a group of people with commonalities including race, language, religion, ethnicity, political identity, and aspirations.</p>
<b>TOPIC 1.3: Democracy vs. Authoritarianism</b>	PAU-1.B Describe democracy and authoritarianism.	<p>PAU-1.B.1 Factors that indicate the degree of democracy or authoritarianism of states include the extent of state adherence to rule of law, such as: a. The principle that a state should be governed by law and not arbitrary decisions made by individual government officials b. The degree of state influence on or control of the media c. The degree and practice of free and fair elections d. The degree of transparency of governmental decision making e. The nature of citizen participation in government</p> <p>PAU-1.B.2 The branches of national government in democratic regimes are more likely to be independent of one another than in authoritarian regimes. Independence can serve to prevent any one branch from controlling all governmental power.</p> <p>PAU-1.B.3 Authoritarian regimes include illiberal democracies or hybrid regimes, one-party states, theocracies, totalitarian governments, and military regimes.</p>
<b>TOPIC 1.4: Democratization</b>	PAU-1.C Explain the process and goals of democratization.	<p>PAU-1.C.1 Democratization is a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime; while this process can start or temporarily change direction, the process aims to result in the following over time: a. More competition, fairness, and transparency in elections b. Increased citizen participation in policy-making processes c. Universal suffrage for adult citizens d. Greater governmental transparency e. Protected civil rights and liberties f. Equal treatment of citizens g. Establishment of the rule of law</p> <p>PAU-1.C.2 Democratic electoral systems can accommodate ethnic diversity and increase multiparty competition with rule adjustments, including gender or cultural quotas, proportional representation, and changes in vote thresholds and district boundaries.</p> <p>PAU-1.C.3 Political corruption inhibits democratization— independent judiciaries can reduce such corruption while protecting individual liberties and civil rights.</p> <p>PAU-1.C.4 Democratization can stall or be reversed; policy changes regarding election rules and civil liberties can support or impede democratization.</p> <p>PAU-1.C.5 Democratic consolidation refers to the process by which a democratic regime matures in terms of election rules, separation of powers, and protection of civil liberties, making it unlikely to revert to authoritarianism without an external shock.</p> <p>PAU-1.C.6 Consensus among competing cultural and political groups about governmental policies associated with democratization and economic development can advance the process and make it sustainable.</p>
<b>TOPIC 1.5: Sources of Power and Authority</b>	PAU-1.D Explain sources of power and authority in political systems.	<p>PAU-1.D.1 Sources of power and authority include constitutions, religions, military forces, political parties, legislatures, and popular support; over time, course country (China, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Russia, or the United Kingdom) regimes have been affected by such sources, represented by: a. The Communist Party’s control over China’s military, which provided power and authority to maintain regime stability b. The transition of power from dictatorial rule in Iran to a theocracy based on Islamic Sharia law after the 1979 Revolution c. The transition of power in Nigeria and Mexico to multiparty republics following military rule and single-party dominance, respectively d. The political elite’s backing of a strong president in Russia, creating a managed democracy with election rules favoring one party e. Constitutional reforms in the United Kingdom that devolved power to multiple parliaments, allowing the regime to maintain stability</p>
<b>TOPIC 1.6: Change in Power and Authority</b>	PAU-1.D Explain sources of power and authority in political systems.	<p>PAU-1.D.2 How a regime chooses to use power in support of sovereignty is determined in large part by its democratic or authoritarian characteristics— democratic regimes can maintain sovereignty using less power than authoritarian regimes.</p> <p>PAU-1.D.3 Changes in regimes occur when rules and institutions are replaced either incrementally or suddenly, as a result of elections, coups, or revolutions in which a large portion of the population supports a change in the political system.</p> <p>PAU-1.D.4 Governments, including political officeholders, can be changed more frequently and easily than regimes through the relatively peaceful process of elections, appointments, and lines of succession. However, governments also change by more violent means, such as revolutions or coups d’état, represented by such violent transitions in Iran and Nigeria.</p>

<p><b>TOPIC 1.7: Federal and Unitary Systems</b></p>	<p>PAU-2.A a. Describe federal and unitary systems among course countries. b. Explain the purposes of adopting a federal or unitary system.</p>	<p>PAU-2.A.1 Federal states like Mexico, Nigeria, and Russia divide power among different levels of government to confer a degree of local autonomy in supplying social and educational services, while also reserving powers for the national government. Unitary states like China, Iran, and the United Kingdom concentrate power at the national level with more uniform policies and potentially more efficient policy making.</p> <p>PAU-2.A.2 The degree to which power is centralized or decentralized can change over time in both federal and unitary states, and in many cases reflects a state response to internal and external actors that include ethnic cleavages and operations of supranational organizations and other countries.</p>
<p><b>TOPIC 1.8: Political Legitimacy</b></p>	<p>LEG-1.A Describe the sources of political legitimacy for different types of regimes among course countries.</p>	<p>LEG-1.A.1 Legitimacy refers to whether a government’s constituents believe their government has the right to use power in the way they do. Legitimacy confers authority on and can increase the power of a regime and government.</p> <p>LEG-1.A.2 Sources of legitimacy for both democratic and authoritarian regimes can include popular elections as well as constitutional provisions. Other sources of legitimacy include nationalism, tradition, governmental effectiveness, economic growth, ideology, religious heritage and organizations, and the dominant political party’s endorsement.</p>
<p><b>TOPIC 1.9: Sustaining Legitimacy</b></p>	<p>LEG-1.B Explain how governments maintain legitimacy.</p>	<p>LEG-1.B.1 Governments maintain legitimacy through a variety of processes or factors, including policy effectiveness, political efficacy, tradition, charismatic leadership, and institutionalized laws.</p> <p>LEG-1.B.2 Peaceful resolution of conflicts, peaceful transfer of power, reduced governmental corruption, and economic development can reinforce legitimacy.</p> <p>LEG-1.B.3 An increase in corruption, reduced electoral competition, and serious problems (such as a poor economy or social conflicts) can all undermine legitimacy.</p> <p>LEG-1.B Explain how governments maintain legitimacy.</p> <p>LEG-1.B.4 Devolution and delegation of power to regional governments can enhance or weaken legitimacy, creating both opportunities for and obstacles to resolving social, political, and economic issues by: a. Promoting policy innovation, matching policies to local needs, improving policies through competition, increasing political participation, checking central power, and allowing better representation of religious/ ethnic/minority groups b. Creating contradictory policies, potentially making policy implementation more complicated and inefficient, allowing inequality between regions, increasing competition for resources, and exacerbating ethnic and local tensions</p> <p>LEG-1.B.5 Questions about the integrity of election results across the course countries can lead to protests that may weaken legitimacy and any ongoing democratization processes.</p>
<p><b>TOPIC 1.10: Political Stability</b></p>	<p>LEG-1.C Explain how internal actors influence and interact with state authority and either enhance or threaten stability.</p>	<p>LEG-1.C.1 Internal actors can interact with governments to bolster or undermine regime stability and rule of law, represented by: a. Contrasting methods to combat political corruption among the six course countries b. State responses to separatist group violence, drug trafficking, and discrimination based on gender or religious differences in Iran, Mexico, and Nigeria c. Varied state responses to mass protest movements that oppose governmental policies or their equal enforcement</p> <p>LEG-1.C.2 State authorities of different regime types attempt to limit the influence of divisive and violent actors in their countries to attract more private capital and foreign direct investment and to improve economic growth.</p> <p>LEG-1.C.3 Across the course countries, internal reform pressure from citizen protest groups and civil society can lead to the creation of new political institutions or policies to protect civil liberties, improve transparency, address election fairness and media bias, limit corruption, and ensure equality under law.</p>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

## Country Specialization

<b>Country:</b>			
<b>Others with this same country:</b>			
<b>Leader(s)</b>		<b>Federal or Unitary System?</b>	
<b>Capital</b>		<b>Current Population</b>	
<b>Describe form of Government</b>		<b>Major Changes in Government</b>	
<b>Use the Essential Knowledge terms, describe further this governmental system</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>			
<b>Find a short (10 min), interesting video about some aspect of the country. Include brief summary and address.</b>			
<b>Draw a picture representing the country's form of government</b>			

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Per: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Terms**  
**Unit 1: Political Systems, Regimes, and Governments**  
*When multiple meanings exist, use the one focused on government*

1. Nation \_\_\_\_\_
2. State \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sovereignty \_\_\_\_\_
4. Legitimacy \_\_\_\_\_
5. Authority \_\_\_\_\_
6. Power \_\_\_\_\_
7. Coercion \_\_\_\_\_
8. Federalism \_\_\_\_\_
9. Unitary \_\_\_\_\_
10. Social contract \_\_\_\_\_
11. Natural rights \_\_\_\_\_
12. Civil liberties \_\_\_\_\_
13. Direct democracy \_\_\_\_\_
14. Representative democracy \_\_\_\_\_
15. Republic \_\_\_\_\_
16. Illiberal democracy \_\_\_\_\_
17. Monarchy \_\_\_\_\_
18. Oligarchy \_\_\_\_\_
19. Authoritarian regime \_\_\_\_\_
20. Autocracy \_\_\_\_\_
21. Theocracy \_\_\_\_\_
22. Totalitarianism \_\_\_\_\_
23. Socialism \_\_\_\_\_
24. Capitalism \_\_\_\_\_
25. Communism \_\_\_\_\_

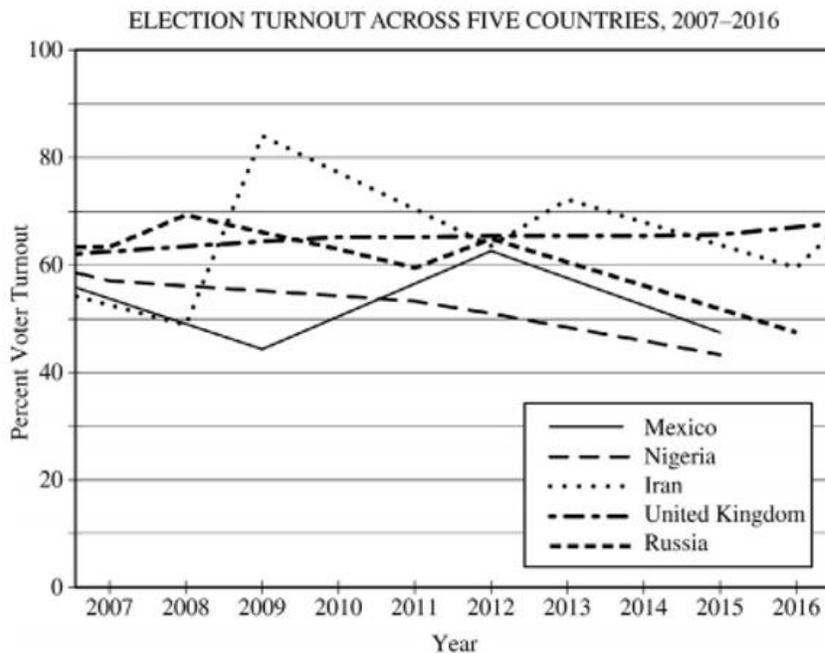
## Question 1: Conceptual Analysis

Answer a, b, c, and d.

- (A) Define economic liberalization.
- (B) Describe a measure that a democratic or authoritarian government could use to liberalize its economy.
- (C) Explain one reason a government would choose to liberalize its economy.
- (D) Explain why a decision to introduce economic liberalization policies might affect social cleavages.

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## Question 2: Quantitative Analysis



- (A) Using the data in the graph, identify the country with the highest turnout in a single year.
- (B) Using the data in the graph, describe voter turnout between 2007 and 2015 in Nigeria.
- (C) Describe political efficacy.
- (D) Using your knowledge of political efficacy and the data in the graph, explain the pattern of Iran's political turnout in 2009 and 2013.
- (E) Explain what the data illustrate about political participation in authoritarian regimes.

### Question 3: Comparative Analysis

Compare how legislative powers can be independent or constrained by other governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries. In your response, you should do the following.

- (A) Define legislative independence.
  - (B) Explain how legislative independence is used by governmental institutions in two different AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries.
  - (C) Explain why each of the two AP Comparative Government and Politics course countries described in (B) would choose to constrain legislative powers.
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### Question 4: Argument Essay

Develop an argument as to whether democratic or authoritarian regimes are better at maintaining sovereignty in a country. Use one or more of the following course concepts in your response:

- Power
- Authority
- Legitimacy

In your response, you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a defensible claim or thesis that establishes a line of reasoning using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of specific and relevant evidence from one or more course countries. The evidence should be relevant to one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim or thesis, using one or more of the provided course concepts.
- Respond to an opposing or alternate perspective, using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.