

Unit 1 - American Core Values

You will be provided with a unit outline for each unit we study. Outlines are broken down into several sections. Each section contains the readings, terms and questions that must be read/defined/answered/understood for that section's quiz. I will tell you when each quiz will be. To prepare for the quiz, take good notes in class and complete all readings and activities associated with that section. Quizzes are always open note and open homework. You **may not** use your phone, textbook or any materials copied from someone else.

Key Question:

What are the ideals behind the American political system and how well has the United States lived up to them?

Major Assessments:

- Two quizzes - The quizzes are how I assess your homework. You may use your homework and notes on the quizzes. The quizzes are worth 20 points in the quiz category.
- Letter to the editor - This will be based on a current events article that we read as a class. It will introduce the basic structure of persuasive writing that we will use in this class. Your task will be examine a recent event in light of American core values. (50 points in project category)

Section 1 - American Core Values in the Declaration of Independence

Readings

Excerpts from the Declaration of Independence (handout)

Terms

Declaration of Independence
Thomas Jefferson
Natural Rights
Limited government
Diversity/equality

Questions/Key concepts

How does the Declaration of Independence reflect the three values of natural rights, limited government and diversity/equality? Find and explain a quotation from the document that supports each principle. You should be able to provide examples of each principle.

Section 2 - Federalist 10 and the idea of pluralism

Readings

Excerpts from Federalist 10

Terms

Federalist papers
Alexander Hamilton
James Madison
Factions

Questions/Key concepts

It is often said that democratic government is simply the will of the majority. To what extent would Madison agree with this statement based on what he wrote in Federalist 10?

Section 3 - The Constitution and the struggle to realize American values

Readings

The US Constitution in *The Americans*, pp. 84-103

Terms

Fugitive slave clause

3/5 clause

“slavery” in the Constitution

Know the major topic(s) of each of the following amendments: 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 13, 14, 15, 19, 24

Questions/Key concepts

Provide examples from the original Constitution (before amendments) of where the US lived up to its values as described in section 1. Then provide at least one example of how the nation failed to live up to these values. How was the Constitution changed after 1791 to make it more consistent with American values?

Content Outline

- I. What is a value?
- II. American values in the Declaration of Independence
 - A. Natural Rights
 - B. Equality
 - C. Limited government
- III. Trials of forming a new government
 - A. The Enlightenment background
 - B. Articles of Confederation
 - C. Crisis of the 1780s
 - D. The Constitutional Convention
 - E. The Federalist Papers and Federalist 10
- IV. American values and the US Constitution
 - A. The first seven articles
 - B. The Bill of Rights
 - C. The Civil War amendments
 - D. Amendments in the twentieth century
- V. Class organization - values and topics
- VI. Overview of American history, 1865-2017