



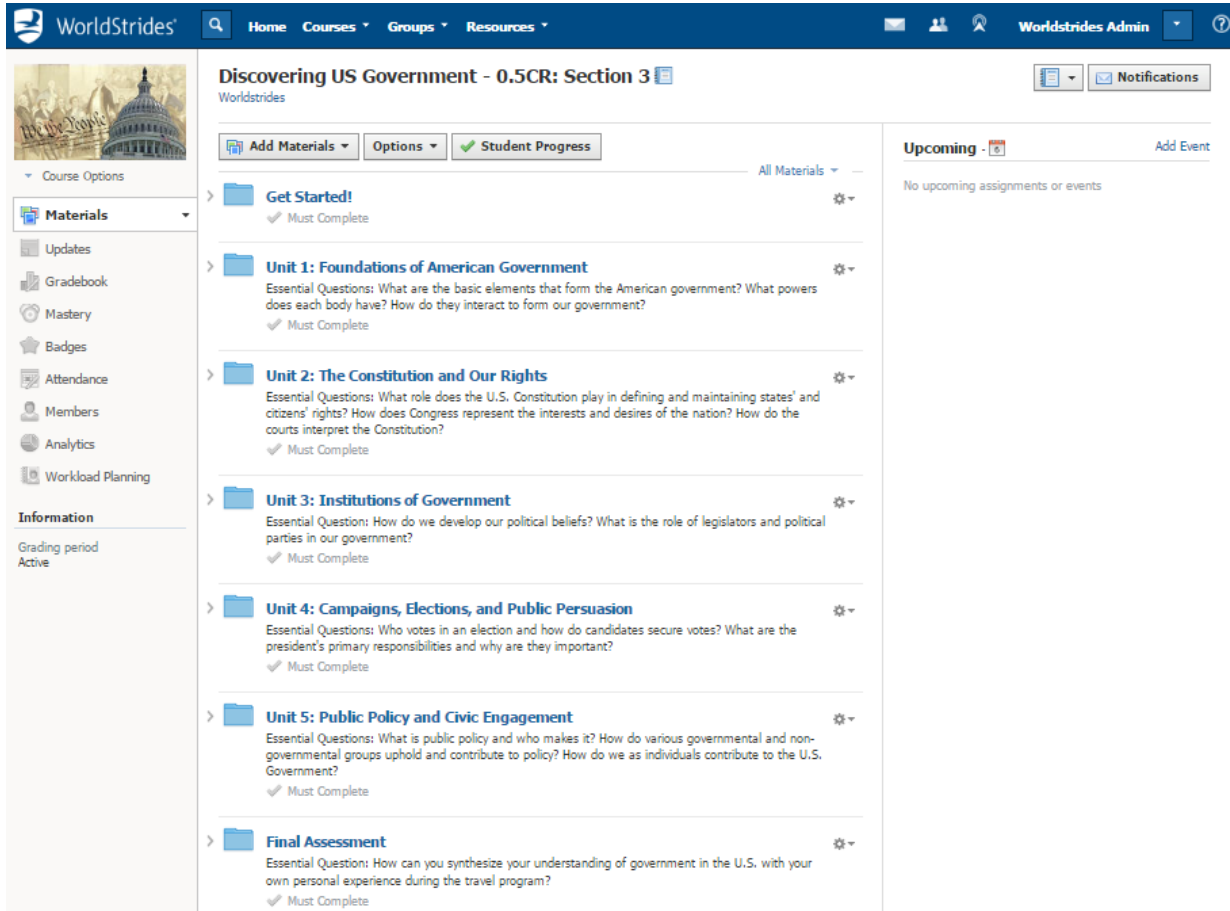
## WorldStrides Discovering U.S. Government 0.5 HS CR – Course Preview

*This resource has been prepared as a ‘sneak preview’ of the online course.  
Please contact the Curriculum and Academics Team at [discovery@worldstrides.org](mailto:discovery@worldstrides.org) with any questions!*

### Course Introduction/Overview

All courses open with student support about taking online courses, using internet resources responsibly, how to ask questions, and how assignments are graded. Students can message instructors directly within the learning management system, and they receive personalized feedback on their work. Students can monitor their progress and access their own gradebook at any time.

### Course Welcome Screen



The screenshot shows the WorldStrides interface for the course 'Discovering US Government - 0.5CR: Section 3'. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Courses', 'Groups', and 'Resources'. The main content area lists several units, each with an 'Essential Question' and a 'Must Complete' status:

- Get Started!** (Must Complete)
- Unit 1: Foundations of American Government** (Must Complete)  
Essential Questions: What are the basic elements that form the American government? What powers does each body have? How do they interact to form our government?
- Unit 2: The Constitution and Our Rights** (Must Complete)  
Essential Questions: What role does the U.S. Constitution play in defining and maintaining states' and citizens' rights? How does Congress represent the interests and desires of the nation? How do the courts interpret the Constitution?
- Unit 3: Institutions of Government** (Must Complete)  
Essential Question: How do we develop our political beliefs? What is the role of legislators and political parties in our government?
- Unit 4: Campaigns, Elections, and Public Persuasion** (Must Complete)  
Essential Questions: Who votes in an election and how do candidates secure votes? What are the president's primary responsibilities and why are they important?
- Unit 5: Public Policy and Civic Engagement** (Must Complete)  
Essential Questions: What is public policy and who makes it? How do various governmental and non-governmental groups uphold and contribute to policy? How do we as individuals contribute to the U.S. Government?
- Final Assessment** (Must Complete)  
Essential Question: How can you synthesize your understanding of government in the U.S. with your own personal experience during the travel program?

The right sidebar shows 'Upcoming' assignments with the message 'No upcoming assignments or events'.

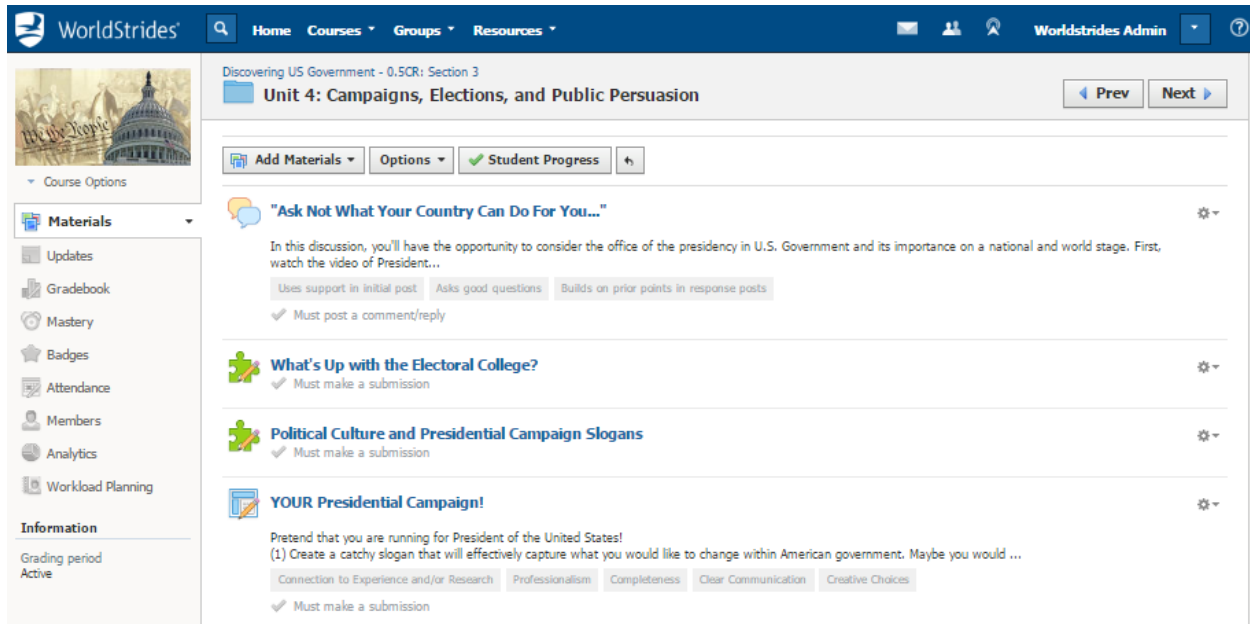
### Course Description

Democracy has become a word used around the world, thanks in part to the political theories that founded the United States government. Students explore how the U.S. defines “democracy” today, and compare and contrast the modern definition with the philosophies held by the nation’s founders. With these guiding elements in mind, the course searches for the definition of democracy by studying the structures of the U.S. government, analyzing the evolution of the U.S. Constitution, as well as critically thinking about modern trends in U.S. politics. During this course, students will develop skills necessary to understand their civic responsibility and how they can participate in the U.S. government.



## Course Sequence

Each unit is made up of a series of assignments that are thematically related.



The screenshot displays the WorldStrides online learning environment. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Courses', 'Groups', and 'Resources'. The main content area is titled 'Unit 4: Campaigns, Elections, and Public Persuasion'. Below this, there are several discussion topics listed with icons and brief descriptions:

- "Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You..."**: In this discussion, you'll have the opportunity to consider the office of the presidency in U.S. Government and its importance on a national and world stage. First, watch the video of President...
  - Uses support in initial post
  - Asks good questions
  - Builds on prior points in response posts
  - Must post a comment/reply
- What's Up with the Electoral College?**: Must make a submission
- Political Culture and Presidential Campaign Slogans**: Must make a submission
- YOUR Presidential Campaign!**: Pretend that you are running for President of the United States! (1) Create a catchy slogan that will effectively capture what you would like to change within American government. Maybe you would ...
  - Connection to Experience and/or Research
  - Professionalism
  - Completeness
  - Clear Communication
  - Creative Choices
  - Must make a submission

## Sample Online Discussion Board: Unit 4 – Campaigns, Elections, and Public Persuasion “Ask Not What Your Country Can Do For You...”

First, watch the video of President Kennedy’s famous passage from his inaugural address.

Afterwards, **post two comments** to the discussion board.

(1) In your initial post, discuss each of the following:

- Your reaction to John F. Kennedy's speech. How did it make you feel? Was it inspiring? Why or why not?
- An instance where you learned about an important speech in the history of our government while you were traveling. If you didn't discuss a speech in particular, feel free to talk about a government document, law, or other written record that inspired you during your travel program. What was special about that speech?
- To finish your post, ask your classmates an open-ended question about the video and surprising facts. *Your question needs to make your classmates think and share their opinion. Ask a question that requires more than a yes/no answer.*

(2) In your second post, respond to another student's post and supply a **response to their question**. Be sure your comment/answer is meaningful and substantive.



Q Home Courses ▾ Groups ▾ Resources ▾

Course Options

**Materials**

- Updates
- Gradebook
- Mastery
- Badges
- Attendance
- Members
- Analytics
- Workload Planning

**Information**

Grading period  
Active

Discovering US Government - 0.5CR: Section 3

Unit 2: The Constitution and Our Rights

## What Exactly Do You Mean?: Interpreting the Constitution

In this activity, you'll take a look at two different ways to approach the U.S. Constitution. To get started, **read the attached article, "Justices Get Candid About the Constitution."**

Many people disagree about exactly what all the words in any part of the Constitution mean, and that the Constitution doesn't come with a guide to figuring it out.

The job of figuring out what the Constitution means and applying it belongs to judges. Judges must carefully study the law and the cases before them to figure out how the law applies. Supreme Court Justices preside over court cases at the highest level, making decisions that can affect state laws and all U.S. citizens for years to come. To do this, they must carefully interpret how the Constitution applies to each case. It's not always easy, and they sometimes disagree about what a law or the Constitution means.

Based on the article and your knowledge, are you an **'originalist'** like Justice Scalia, or are you in favor of a **'living constitution,'** like Justice Breyer?

### Sample Assignment: Unit 2 – The Constitution and Our Rights “What Exactly Do You Mean? Interpreting the Constitution”

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Based on the article and your knowledge, are you an '**originalist**' like Justice Scalia, or are you in favor of a '**living constitution**,' like Justice Breyer?

Create a Powerpoint or Prezi presentation to address the following:

- Do you think the U.S. Constitution is a 'living' document that adapts to the times OR does it mean today exactly what it meant when it was written?
- Why do you think so?
- Present your case as though you're communicating to your friends. Use persuasive tools and language to convince them that they should approach the constitution in the way you present.

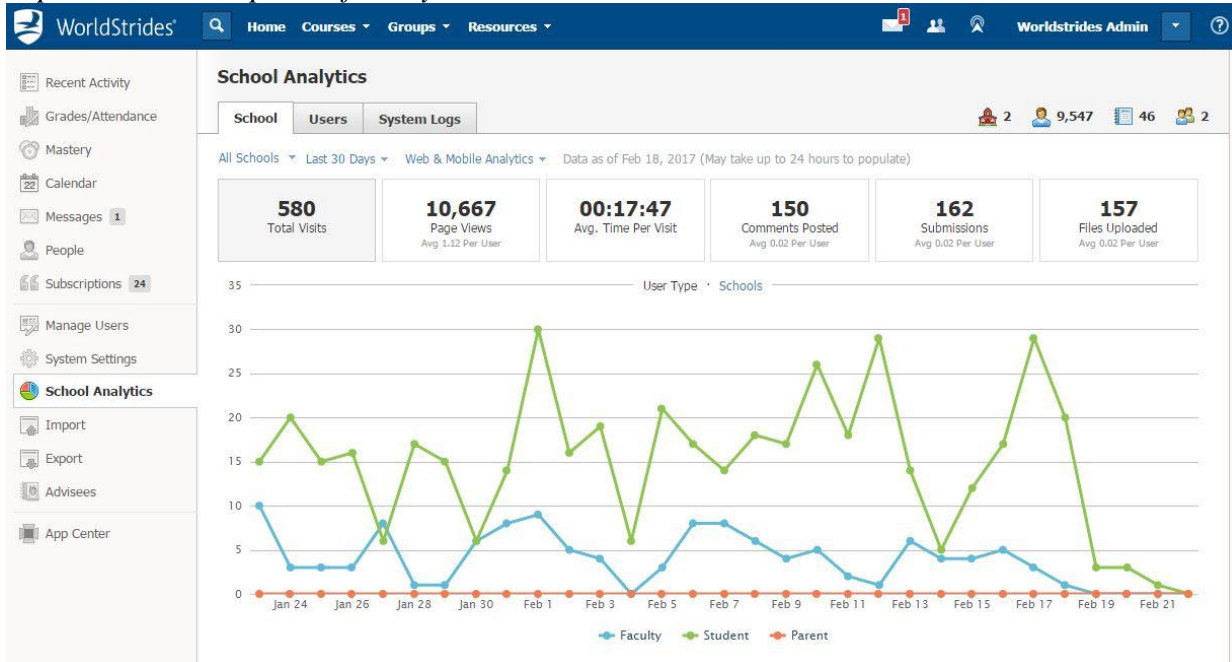
Be sure to support your thinking with **at least two clear examples**. Your presentation should be supported with at least **5 images** taken during your travel program or sourced from the internet. Don't forget to cite your sources appropriately. Use the rubric to check your work before you turn it in.

### Further Information

#### Course Analytics

Our program's curriculum development is anchored in data-driven continuous improvement. Our learning management system features data analytics to inform our course development process.

#### Representative Snapshot of Analytics





## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Is this course pass/fail or graded?

All WorldStrides courses follow a traditional 10-point grading scale. WorldStrides Curriculum and Academics does not send transcripts to students who earn a grade below a C.

A = 90-100%

B = 80-89%

C = 70-79%

D = 60-69%

Grades 59 or below will result in failure.

### 2. How long does it take to complete the work?

Students are free to work at a pace that is most comfortable to them. Courses expire six months from the return date of travel.

### 3. Is there a penalty if I don't finish the course?

No worries! If a student is unable to complete the work, no grade will be assigned and no transcript will be generated.

### 4. How do I ask the instructors questions?

Students can click on the envelope at the top right corner of the learning management system to send a message to WorldStrides\_Admin. We'll respond as quickly as possible!



## Instructor Bios

	<p>Wendy W. Amato is the VP of Curriculum and Academics at WorldStrides. She holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and has research interests in culturally congruent pedagogy. Dr. Amato is an International Baccalaureate certified instructor and also serves as adjunct faculty at the University of Virginia where she teaches Education Across Cultures. Her work experience includes school administration and teaching in the United States and France.</p>
	<p>Kiersten Teitelbaum serves as an Associate Director of Curriculum and Academics for WorldStrides. She holds an M. Ed. in the Social Foundations of Education and has research interests in increasing healthy eating and physical activity for at-risk students in the United States. Her background includes coaching and serving as a course facilitator in an environmental education challenge course. Ms. Teitelbaum has provided professional development to teachers in Canada, Spain, and across the United States.</p>
	<p>Carrie Weber serves as a Curriculum and Academics Specialist for WorldStrides. She holds an M. Ed. in Secondary Science Education and has taught middle school and high school students. Her research interests are focused on field experiences to facilitate better understanding of science. Ms. Weber is certified and licensed in multiple states and holds College Board AP Environmental Science certification.</p>
	<p>Randi Kessler Chapman serves as a Curriculum and Academics Specialist for WorldStrides. She holds an M.T. in Secondary English Education and BS in journalism, with an emphasis on public relations. In addition to her entrepreneurial experience launching an independent business, Ms. Chapman brings eight years of classroom teaching expertise and works tirelessly to increase the accessibility of meaningful professional development to educators around the world.</p>