

United States Government

Examination for Acceleration/Credit by Exam Study Guide

This EA/CBE Study Guide can help you prepare for the exam by giving you an idea of what you need to study, review, and learn. To succeed, you should be thoroughly familiar with the subject matter before you attempt to take the exam.

Every question that appears on the EA/CBE is grounded in the knowledge and skills statements and student expectations within the state-mandated standards, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). It should be noted that the exam will not test every student expectation. However, it is important that students study and know the entire scope of the TEKS so that they can develop a complete understanding of the content. The EA/CBEs are global exams grounded in the TEKS and are not designed to be a final exam for the University of Texas High School courses. You can view the TEKS for this exam online at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/teks/>. Since questions are not taken from any one source, you can prepare by reviewing any of the state-adopted textbooks.

About the Exam

The EA/CBE consists of 100 multiple-choice questions that are worth 1 point each. You will be allowed **3 hours** to take the exam.

Concepts and Objectives

The bulleted lists and sample questions below may not refer to all the material that will be on the exam. This list only provides additional information for some of the student expectations tested in the United States Government EA/CBE. Ultimately, you should use the TEKS to guide your exam preparation.

In United States Government, the focus is on the principles and beliefs upon which the United States was founded and on the structure, functions, and powers of government at the national, state, and local levels. This course is the culmination of the civic and governmental content and concepts studied from kindergarten through required secondary courses. Students should know major political ideas and forms of government in history. A significant focus of the course is on the U.S. Constitution, its underlying principles and ideas, and the form of government it created. Students should be able to analyze the major concepts of republicanism, federalism, checks and balances, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights, and compare the U.S. system of government with other political systems. Students should be able to identify the role of government in the U.S. free enterprise system and examine the strategic importance of certain places to the United States. Students should be able to analyze the impact of individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media on the American political system, evaluate the importance of voluntary individual participation in a democratic society, and analyze the rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Students should be able to examine the relationship between governmental policies and the culture of the United States. Students should be able to identify

examples of government policies that encourage scientific research and use critical-thinking skills to create a product based on a contemporary government issue.

To support the learning of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source material such as the complete text of the U.S. Constitution; selected Federalist Papers; landmark cases of the U.S. Supreme Court; biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs; speeches and letters; and periodicals that feature analyses of political issues and events is encouraged. Selections may include excerpts from John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, *Federalist 51*, and *Miranda v. Arizona*.

Objective 1 - History

- The student understands how constitutional government, as developed in America and expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution, has been influenced by ideas, people, and historical documents.
- The student understands the roles played by individuals, political parties, interest groups, and the media in the U.S. political system, past and present.

Objective 2 - Geography

- The student understands how geography can influence U.S. political divisions and policies.
- The student understands why certain places or regions are important to the United States.

Objective 3 - Economics

- The student understands the roles played by local, state, and national governments in both the public and private sectors of the U.S. free enterprise system.
- The student understands the relationship between U.S. government policies and the economy.

Objective 4 - Government

- The student understands the American beliefs and principles reflected in the U.S. Constitution and why these are significant.
- The student understands the structure and functions of the government created by the U.S. Constitution.
- The student understands the concept of federalism.
- The student understands the processes for filling public offices in the U.S. system of government.
- The student understands the role of political parties in the U.S. system of government.
- The student understands the similarities and differences that exist among the U.S. system of government and other political systems.

Objective 5 - Citizenship

- The student understands rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.
- The student understands the difference between personal and civic responsibilities.
- The student understands the importance of voluntary individual participation in the U.S. constitutional republic.

- The student understands the importance of the expression of different points of view in a constitutional republic.

Objective 6 - Culture

- The student understands the relationship between government policies and the culture of the United States.

Objective 7 - Science, Technology, and Society

- The student understands the role the government plays in developing policies and establishing conditions that influence scientific discoveries and technological innovations.
- The student understands the impact of advances in science and technology on government and society.

Objective 8 - Social Studies Skills

- The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources including electronic technology.
- The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.
- The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

Topics Covered

In general, you will be expected to know about the origins and principles of the United States political system; the Constitution, including all amendments; the electoral system, including political parties, interest groups, the media, and influences on the voter; the Congress; the presidency, including presidential elections; the bureaucracy, including government finances and policies; and the judiciary, including U.S. constitutional rights and protections. Because this is a Texas high school course, you will also be expected to know about Texas state and local governments.

You will be expected to compare the United States economic system with the primary types of economies in the modern world. You will be expected to compare the U.S. government with the governments of the United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, and China. .

Specifically, you should be able to answer about the following topics:

- theories of the nature and origin of the state as a political entity
- principles of democracy
- the Articles of Confederation and its weaknesses
- the background of the U.S. constitutional system
- the principles of the U.S. Constitution
- all of the constitutional amendments
- how a national or state Constitution may be amended
- The Blaine Amendment

- the main controversies and compromises of the Constitutional Convention
- the Bill of Rights
- freedom of speech
- the division of powers between the national and state governments
- the system of checks and balances
- the levels of government
- the different types of government
- the definition, role, and function of political parties
- types of political party systems
- types and roles of minor parties
- influences upon the voter
- types of primary elections
- political efficacy
- political socialization
- the mechanics of elections and voting procedures
- the definition and role of interest groups
- the methods used by interest groups
- types of interest groups
- the role of the mass media
- propaganda techniques
- the organization and structure of Congress (House and Senate)
- the powers of Congress
- the powers delegated to different levels of government in the U.S.
- the congressional committee system
- political party organizations
- the ways in which congressional members vote
- the roles and powers of the congressional leaders
- the steps a bill goes through in becoming a law
- the roles and powers of the president
- the steps in the presidential election process
- the bureaucracy: its organization and role
- how the government is financed: taxes and budgets
- the judiciary: structure and jurisdiction of the federal courts
- the Supreme Court: its powers and procedures
- types of court officials
- types of court orders
- types of court opinions
- due process of law
- equal protection under the law
- the rights of the accused
- grand and petit juries
- the steps in the criminal process
- the main features of the British political system

- the main features of the Saudi Arabian political system
- the main features of the Mexican political system
- the main features of the Chinese political system
- the types and basic features of modern economies
- the structure and organization of Texas state government: Texas governor, legislature, and courts, and other executive officials of Texas
- county and special district governments of Texas
- types of local governments of Texas
- financing Texas government: taxes and budgets
- types of law in Texas
- Texas courts: structure and jurisdiction
- how the Texas Constitution is amended

Supreme Court Cases

You should also be familiar with the following Supreme Court cases. You will need to be able to discuss the decision made in each case, and its significance.

Engel v. Vitale

Miranda v. Arizona

Schenck v. United States

Brown v. Board of Education

McCulloch v. Maryland

Roe v. Wade

Texas v. Johnson

Gideon v. Wainwright

Mapp v. Ohio

Sample Questions

These sample questions will give you a better idea of the types of questions you can expect on the EA/CBE. These are provided to illustrate the format of the exam. They are not the actual exam. In order to be successful on the exam, you must study the TEKS and all of the concepts previously listed.

Multiple-Choice

1. What was the dominant political system in medieval Europe?
 - A. Democracy
 - B. Feudalism
 - C. Republic
 - D. Theocracy
2. Which of the following was **NOT** a weakness of the Articles of Confederation?
 - A. Congress was not given the power to tax.
 - B. Congress could not make war, or peace, or treaties.
 - C. Congress could not regulate interstate commerce.
 - D. Congress could not make the states obey the Articles.

3. Economic assistance that is provided from one country to other countries is known as
- A. diplomacy.
 - B. foreign aid.
 - C. domestic aid.
 - D. farm aid.

Answer Key

Item Number	Correct Answer	TEKS expectation	TAKS objective
1	B	1B	1
2	B	2C	1
3	B	9G	2