

AP U.S. Government and Politics Notes

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

- 1.1. Ideals of Democracy
- 1.2. Types of Democracy
- 1.3. Government Power and Individual Rights
- 1.4. Challenges of the Articles of Confederation
- 1.5. Ratification of the U.S. Constitution
- 1.6. Principles of American Government
- 1.7. Relationship Between the States and Federal Government
- 1.8. Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism
- 1.9. Federalism in Action

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government

- 2.1. Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives
- 2.2. Structures, Powers, and Function of Congress
- 2.3. Congressional Behavior
- 2.4. Roles and Powers of the President
- 2.5. Checks on the Presidency
- 2.6. Expansion of Presidential Power
- 2.7. Presidential Communication
- 2.8. The Judicial Branch
- 2.9. Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch
- 2.10. The Court in Action
- 2.11. Checks on the Judicial Branch
- 2.12. The Bureaucracy
- 2.13. Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority
- 2.14. Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable
- 2.15. Policy and the Branches of Government

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

- 3.1. The Bill of Rights
- 3.2. First Amendment: Freedom of Religion
- 3.3. First Amendment: Freedom of Speech
- 3.4. First Amendment: Freedom of the Press
- 3.5. Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms
- 3.6. Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety
- 3.7. Selective Incorporation
- 3.8. Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused
- 3.9. Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy
- 3.10. Social Movements and Equal Protection
- 3.11. Government Responses to Social Movements
- 3.12. Balancing Minority and Majority Rights

3.13. Affirmative Action

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

4.1. American Attitudes About Government and Politics

4.2. Political Socialization

4.3. Changes in Ideology

4.4. Influence of Political Events on Ideology

4.5. Measuring Public Opinion

4.6. Evaluating Public Opinion Data

4.7. Ideologies of Political Parties

4.8. Ideology and Policy Making

4.9. Ideology and Economic Policy

4.10. Ideology and Social Policy

Unit 5: Political Participation

5.1. Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior

5.2. Voter Turnout

5.3 Political Parties

5.4. How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt

5.5. Third-Party Parties

5.6. Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making

5.7. Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes

5.8. Electing a President

5.9. Congressional Elections

5.10. Modern Campaigns

5.11. Campaign Finance

5.12. The Media

5.13. Changing Media

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

1.1. Ideals of Democracy

Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

- The U.S. government is based on ideas of limited government, including natural rights, popular sovereignty, republicanism, and social contract.
 - Checks and balances within the federal government ensures limited government.
 - Lobbying is part of republicanism because interest groups are attempting to influence policy-making by appealing to representatives.
- The Declaration of Independence, drafted by Jefferson with help from Adams and Franklin, provides a foundation for popular sovereignty, while the U.S. Constitution drafted at the Philadelphia Convention and led by George Washington, with important contributions from Madison, Hamilton, and members of the "Grand Committee," provides the blueprint for a unique form of political democracy in the U.S.

Optional readings and illustrative examples:

- Thomas Hobbes's definition of an anarchic "state of nature" in the absence of government, as in the failed state of Somalia
- The Mayflower Compact (1620)
- John Locke's Second Treatise of Civil Government (1690)
- Baron de Montesquieu's ideas about separating powers in government found in The Spirit of the Laws (1748)

1.2. Types of Democracy

Explain how models of representative democracy are visible in major institutions, policies, events, or debates in the U.S.

- Representative democracies can take several forms along this scale:
 - Participatory democracy, which emphasizes broad participation in politics and civil society
 - Citizens have multiple access points to influence policymakers, such as town hall meetings.
 - On the local and state level, citizens have the power to decide directly on policy through popular referenda and initiatives. Initiatives allow citizens to bypass their state legislature, while referendums only allow voters to approve or repeal a legislative act.
 - Unlike a direct democracy, politicians are still responsible for implementing policy decisions.
 - Pluralist democracy, which recognizes group-based activism by nongovernmental interests striving for impact on political decision making
 - Pluralism involves interest groups like the National Rifle Association (NRA), the National Organization for Women (NOW), and Global Green USA.
 - They try to influence politicians through donations, lobbying, and testifying in Congressional hearings.
 - Elite democracy, which emphasizes limited participation in politics and civil society
 - Some Framers like Hamilton wanted to avoid the tyranny of the majority.
 - The Electoral College places a small group in charge of making major political decisions, even if those decisions contradict the popular will.
- Different aspects of the U.S. Constitution as well as the debate between Federalist No. 10 and Brutus No. 1 reflect the tension between the broad participatory model and the more filtered participation of the pluralist and elite models.
- The three models of representative democracy continue to be reflected in contemporary institutions and political behavior.

1.3. Government Power and Individual Rights

Explain how Federalist and Anti-Federalist views on central government and democracy are reflected in U.S. foundational documents.

- Madison's arguments in **Federalist No. 10** focused on the superiority of a large republic in controlling the "mischiefs of faction," delegating authority to elected representatives and dispersing power between the states and national government.
- Anti-Federalist writings, including **Brutus No. 1**, adhered to popular democratic theory that emphasized the benefits of a small, decentralized republic while warning of the dangers to personal liberty from a large, centralized government.

Optional reading:

- "Letters from the Federal Farmer #1" (Anti-Federalist publication)

1.4. Challenges of the Articles of Confederation

Explain the relationship between key provisions of the Articles of Confederation and the debate over granting the federal government greater power formerly reserved to the states.

- Specific incidents and legal challenges that highlighted key weaknesses of the **Articles of Confederation** are represented by the:
 - Lack of centralized military power to address **Shays' Rebellion**
 - Although the national government could declare war and agree to peace, it had to depend upon the states to provide soldiers.
 - In the summer of 1786, farmers in western Massachusetts were heavily in debt, facing imprisonment and the loss of their lands. Many of them were veterans, who owed taxes that had gone unpaid while they were away fighting the British during the Revolution. The Continental Congress had promised to pay them for their service, but the national government did not have sufficient money. Moreover, the farmers were unable to meet the onerous new tax burden Massachusetts imposed in order to pay its own debts from the Revolution.
 - Led by **Daniel Shays**, the heavily indebted farmers marched to a local courthouse demanding relief. Faced with the refusal of many Massachusetts militiamen to arrest the rebels, with whom they sympathized, the governor of Massachusetts called upon the national government for aid, but none was forthcoming. The uprising was finally brought to an end the following year by a privately funded militia.
 - The US government had both failed to pay its veterans and failed to raise a militia in order to put down a rebellion.
 - Lack of tax law enforcement power
 - To avoid the perception of "taxation without representation," only state governments may levy taxes. The national government was underfunded because it could only request money from the states.
 - The national government was unable to pay off revolution debts or easily secure new funds. Foreign governments were reluctant to loan money to a nation that may never repay it. The continental currency was largely worthless.
 - Because the national government also could not impose tariffs on foreign imports, it couldn't protect American producers from foreign competitors, and it also couldn't stop states from undermining it by making their own trade agreements with foreign nations.
 - Interstate commerce could not be regulated so states often interfered with other states' trade through tariffs.

Illustrative examples:

- State constitutions during the postcolonial period

1.5. Ratification of the U.S. Constitution

Explain the ongoing impact of political negotiation and compromise at the Constitutional Convention on the development of the constitutional system.

- Compromises deemed necessary for adoption and ratification of the **Constitution** are represented by the:
 - Great (Connecticut) Compromise

- Electoral College
- Three-Fifths Compromise
- **Compromise on the importation of slaves**
- Debates about **self-government** during the drafting of the Constitution necessitated the drafting of an amendment process in Article V that entailed either a **two-thirds** vote in both houses or a proposal from **two-thirds** of the state legislatures, with final ratification determined by **three-fourths** of the state legislatures or **three-fourths** of state conventions.
 - Through the congressional proposal method, 26 amendments were ratified by state legislatures and 1 amendment was ratified by state conventions. Congress may decide the mode for ratification.
 - The convention proposal method has never been used.
 - This “living” system of government could change when necessary, thus protecting self-government.
- The compromises necessary to secure ratification of the Constitution left some matters unresolved that continue to generate discussion and debate today.
- The debate over the role of the central government, the powers of state governments, and the rights of individuals remains at the heart of present-day constitutional issues about democracy and governmental power, as represented by:
 - Debates about government surveillance resulting from the federal government’s response to the 9/11 attacks
 - FBI agents were able to obtain phone records without a judge’s approval
 - The debate about the role of the federal government in public school education
 - Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds (ESSA) Act that decreased the number of standardized tests

1.6. Principles of American Government

Explain the constitutional principles of separation of powers and “checks and balances.”

- The powers allocated to Congress, the president, and the courts demonstrate the separation of powers and checks and balances features of the **Constitution**.
- **Federalist No. 51** explains how constitutional provisions of separation of powers and checks and balances control abuses by majorities.

Explain the implications of separation of powers and “checks and balances” for the U.S. political system.

- Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the separation of powers and checks and balances.
- Impeachment, removal, and other legal actions taken against public officials deemed to have abused their power reflect the purpose of checks and balances.

Illustrative examples:

- Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993
- Impeachment proceedings against Presidents Andrew Johnson, Richard Nixon, and Bill Clinton
- Congressional response to the Obama administration’s executive actions on immigration

1.7. Relationship Between the States and Federal Government

Explain how societal needs affect the constitutional allocation of power between the national and state governments.

- The exclusive and concurrent powers of the national and state governments help explain the negotiations over the balance of power between the two levels.
- The distribution of power between federal and state governments to meet the needs of society changes, as reflected by grants, incentives, and aid programs, including **federal revenue sharing**, **mandates**, **categorical grants**, and **block grants**.
 - Federal revenue sharing is the practice of sharing federal income tax revenue with state and local governments.
 - Categorical grants from the federal government can only be used for specific purposes, and frequently include nondiscrimination provisions.

- A mandate is a requirement that states or local governments meet a specific condition in order to receive federal aid.
- Block grants are federal grants given to states or localities for broad purposes.

Illustrative examples:

- National Recovery Act of 1933
- Devolution revolution of the 1980s
- Federal response to natural disasters such as Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy
- National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984
- State-level legalization of marijuana for personal use as in Colorado and Washington (2012)

1.8. Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism

Explain how the appropriate balance of power between national and state governments has been interpreted differently over time.

- The interpretation of the Tenth and Fourteenth Amendments, the commerce clause, the necessary and proper clause, and other enumerated and implied powers in the Constitution is at the heart of the debate over the balance of power between the national and state governments.
 - The Tenth Amendment stipulates that all powers not given to the federal government are reserved to the states or the people.
 - The Fourteenth Amendment grants citizenship, equal protection, and due process under the law to all people born in the United States
 - The commerce clause states that Congress has the power to regulate trade between states and with foreign nations.
 - Congress has the power to regulate drugs through the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). As decided in *Gonzalez v. Raich* (2005), the commerce clause gives Congress the power to prohibit cultivation and use of marijuana at the local level.
 - If a company chooses to trade goods across state lines, the federal government has the right to set a minimum wage for the production of those goods.
 - The necessary and proper clause gives Congress constitutional authority to exercise “necessary and proper” powers to carry out its enumerated, or designated, powers.
- The balance of power between the national and state governments has changed over time based on U.S. Supreme Court interpretation of such cases as:
 - *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), which declared that Congress has implied powers necessary to implement its enumerated powers and established supremacy of the Constitution and federal laws over state laws
 - *United States v. Lopez* (1995), which ruled that Congress may not use the commerce clause to make possession of a gun in a school zone a federal crime, introducing a new phase of federalism that recognized the importance of state sovereignty and local control

Optional readings and illustrative examples:

- Daniel Elazar, “Opening the Third Century of American Federalism: Issues and Prospects,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (1990)
- New Deal legislation
- Defense of Marriage Act of 1996 and state marriage laws
- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
- Violence Against Women Act of 1994 and *United States v. Morrison* (2000)

1.9. Federalism in Action

Explain how the distribution of powers among three federal branches and between national and state governments impacts policy making.

- Multiple access points for stakeholders and institutions to influence public policy flows from the allocation of powers between national and state governments.
 - Groups who want to influence Supreme Court decisions can petition to file an *amicus curiae* brief, which literally means “friend of the court.” This can bring forward relevant information that may not be taken into account by the parties in the case.

- National policy making is constrained by the sharing of power between and among the three branches and state governments.
- State and local governments can become proving grounds for new ideas.
 - Massachusetts health care law was a model for the Affordable Care Act.

Unit 2: Interactions Among Branches of Government

2.1. Congress: The Senate and the House of Representatives

Describe the different structures, powers, and functions of each house of Congress.

- The Senate is designed to represent states equally, while the House is designed to represent the population.
- Different chamber sizes and constituencies influence formality of debate.
- Coalitions in Congress are affected by term-length differences.
- The enumerated and implied powers in the Constitution allow the creation of public policy by Congress, which includes:
 - Passing a federal budget, raising revenue, and coining money
 - Declaring war and maintaining the armed forces
 - Enacting legislation that addresses a wide range of economic, environmental, and social issues based on the necessary and proper clause

Illustrative example:

- Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985

2.2. Structures, Powers, and Function of Congress

Explain how the structure, powers, and functions of both houses of Congress affect the policy-making process.

- By design, the different structures, powers, and functions of the Senate and the House of Representatives affect the policy-making process.
- Though both chambers rely on committees to conduct hearings and debate bills under consideration, different constitutional responsibilities of the House and Senate affect the policy-making process.
- Chamber-specific procedures, rules, and roles that impact the policy-making process include:
 - Number of chamber and debate rules that set the bar high for building majority support
 - Roles of Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, party leadership, and committee leadership in both chambers
 - Holds and unanimous consent in the Senate
 - Senators must unanimously agree to end the debate and vote on the bill. The bill gets passed with a simple majority.
 - Senators who do not want the bill passed may decide not to consent to having a vote, known as a hold.
 - Filibuster and cloture
 - A filibuster is a tactic used by senators to block a bill by continuing to hold the floor and speak, adhering to the Senate rule of unlimited debate. The purpose of this tactic is to continue to speak for so long that the bill's supporters eventually back down.
 - A cloture is a Senate procedure through which a supermajority of 60 senators can vote to limit the amount of time spent debating a bill and cut off a filibuster.
 - In 2013, it was decided that a cloture for a non-Supreme Court appointment would only require a majority vote. That was extended to Supreme Court appointments in 2017.
 - Role of Rules Committee, Committee of the Whole, and discharge petitions in the House
 - The Rules Committee is responsible for scheduling and managing the flow of legislation on the floor of the House of Representatives in order to make the process more efficient and manageable. The committee can also make it easier or more difficult for a bill to pass depending on the rules they create.
 - A Committee of the Whole is a committee of the House on which all representatives serve in order to consider the details of a proposal.

- A discharge petition is signed by an absolute majority in the House of Representatives to bring a bill out of committee and onto the floor for a vote.
- Treaty ratification and confirmation role of the U.S. Senate
 - Treaties must receive a supermajority vote
 - Confirmations must receive a majority vote
- Congress must generate a budget that addresses both discretionary and mandatory spending, and as entitlement costs grow, discretionary spending opportunities will decrease unless tax revenues increase or the budget deficit increases.
- Pork-barrel legislation and logrolling affect lawmaking in both chambers.
 - Earmarks are funds provided by the Congress for specific projects or programs. Pork-barrel legislation are earmarks.
 - Pork-barrel legislation is the use of federal funding to finance localized projects, typically bringing money into a representative's district in order to please constituents and boost the representative's chances of winning reelection.
 - Logrolling occurs when two legislators agree to trade votes for each other's benefit.

Illustrative examples:

- Whips
- Calendar assignment
- Rider amendments

2.3. Congressional Behavior

Explain how congressional behavior is influenced by election processes, partisanship, and divided government.

- Congressional behavior and governing effectiveness are influenced by:
 - Ideological divisions within Congress that can lead to gridlock or create the need for negotiation and compromise
 - Gerrymandering, redistricting, and unequal representation of constituencies have been partially addressed by the Supreme Court decision in *Baker v. Carr* (1962), which opened the door to equal protection challenges to redistricting and started the "one person, one vote" doctrine, and the no-racial-gerrymandering decision in *Shaw v. Reno* (1993)
 - Elections that have led to a divided government, including partisan votes against presidential initiatives and congressional refusal to confirm appointments of "lame-duck" presidents of the opposite party
 - Different role conceptions of "trustee," "delegate," and "politico" as related to constituent accountability in each chamber
 - A trustee is a member of Congress who takes into account the views of their constituents and uses their own judgment to decide how to vote.
 - A delegate is a member of Congress who always follows their constituents' voting preferences.
 - A politico is a member of Congress who acts as a delegate on issues that their constituents care about, and as a trustee on issues that their constituents don't care about.

Optional readings:

- David Mayhew's "Is Congress 'the Broken Branch'?" *Boston University Law Review* (2009)
- Barbara Sinclair's "From Sam Rayburn to Newt Gingrich: The Development of the Partisan Congress," Chapter 1 of *Party Wars: Polarization and the Politics of National Policy Making* (2011)

2.4. Roles and Powers of the President

Explain how the president can implement a policy agenda.

- Presidents use powers and perform functions of the office to accomplish a policy agenda.
- Formal and informal powers of the president include:
 - Vetoes and pocket vetoes—formal powers that enable the president to check Congress

- A president uses a pocket veto by neither signing or vetoing a bill passed by Congress fewer than 10 days before it adjourns
- Foreign policy—both formal (commander-in-chief and treaties) and informal (**executive agreements**) powers that influence relations with foreign nations
 - An executive agreement is an international agreement between the president and another country, which does not require the consent of the Senate.
- Bargaining and persuasion—informal power that enables the president to secure congressional action
- **Executive orders**—implied from the president’s vested “executive power,” or from power delegated by Congress, executive orders allow the president to manage the federal government
 - The Supreme Court can rule executive orders unconstitutional.
- Signing statements—informal power that informs Congress and the public of the president’s interpretation of laws passed by Congress and signed by the president
 - Signing statements have no legal power and thus cannot check the bureaucracy, nor limit the bureaucracy agency’s rule-making authority. However, it can guide the rules and regulations issued by the agency, especially when the law is ambiguous.

2.5. Checks on the Presidency

Explain how the president’s agenda can create tension and frequent confrontations with Congress.

- The potential for conflict with the Senate depends upon the type of executive branch appointments, including:
 - Cabinet members
 - Ambassadors
 - White House staff
- Senate confirmation is an important check on appointment powers, but the president’s longest lasting influence lies in life-tenured judicial appointments.
- Policy initiatives and executive orders promoted by the president often lead to conflict with the congressional agenda.

Illustrative examples:

- Conflicts in Vietnam, Iraq, Kosovo, Libya, Syria
- No Child Left Behind Act (2001)
- Appointments of Sandra Day O’Connor and Thurgood Marshall
- Failed appointments: Robert Bork, John Tower, and Abe Fortas

2.6. Expansion of Presidential Power

Explain how presidents have interpreted and justified their use of formal and informal powers.

- Justifications for a single executive are set forth in **Federalist No. 70**.
- Term-of-office and constitutional-power restrictions, including the passage of the **Twenty-Second Amendment**, demonstrate changing presidential roles.
- Different perspectives on the presidential role, ranging from a limited to a more expansive interpretation and use of power, continue to be debated in the context of contemporary events.

Optional Readings and Illustrative Examples

- Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s State of the Union Address (1941)
- William Howard Taft’s Our Chief Magistrate and His Powers (1916)
- Theodore Roosevelt: An Autobiography (1913)

2.7. Presidential Communication

Explain how communication technology has changed the president’s relationship with the national constituency and the other branches.

- The communication impact of the presidency can be demonstrated through such factors as:
 - Modern technology, social media, and rapid response to political issues

- Nationally broadcast **State of the Union** messages and the president's **bully pulpit** used as tools for agenda setting
 - The State of the Union address is the president's annual message to a joint session of Congress, which includes recommended legislation and evaluations of the nation's top priorities and economic health.
 - The bully pulpit refers to Theodore Roosevelt's notion of the presidency as a platform from which the president could promote an agenda directly to the public.

Illustrative example:

- President Reagan's televised "Address to the Nation on Federal Tax Reduction" (1981)

2.8. The Judicial Branch

Explain the principle of judicial review and how it checks the power of other institutions and state governments.

- The foundation for powers of the judicial branch and how its independence checks the power of other institutions and state governments are set forth in:
 - Article III of the **Constitution**
 - Article III explicitly creates one Supreme Court, but gives Congress the power to create all other inferior courts. It also guarantees judicial independence by granting lifetime appointments for justices and preventing Congress from lowering the salaries of sitting justices.
 - The Supreme Court is the highest federal court of the United States with nine sitting justices today. Unlike inferior courts, the Supreme Court is shielded from the influence of Congress, which cannot change its jurisdiction or the salaries of sitting justices.
 - Inferior courts include all US federal courts below the Supreme Court, including courts of appeals, district courts, and federal tribunals. Congress retains the power to establish inferior courts and to determine how they operate.
 - **Federalist No. 78**
 - Hamilton argues that judges should serve for life pending good behavior to ensure judicial independence, and that the judicial branch will be the "least dangerous" branch of government since it can neither wage war nor collect taxes. Hamilton also provides an early argument for the power of judicial review, stating that the courts' duty is "to declare all acts contrary to . . . the Constitution void.
 - **Marbury v. Madison** (1803)
 - Marbury v. Madison was an early Supreme Court case that affirmed the Court's power of judicial review by striking down a law made by Congress as unconstitutional. In his written opinion, Chief Justice John Marshall declared that "an act of the legislature repugnant to the Constitution is void."

2.9. Legitimacy of the Judicial Branch

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

- Precedents and **stare decisis** play an important role in judicial decision making.
 - Stare decisis is the principle of making legal decisions based on past precedents. From the Latin for "let the decision stand.
- Ideological changes in the composition of the Supreme Court due to presidential appointments have led to the Court's establishing new or rejecting existing precedents.

Illustrative Examples:

- Martin v. Hunter's Lessee (1816)
- New Deal conflict (Congress)
- United States v. Nixon (1974)

2.10. The Court in Action

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

- Controversial or unpopular court decisions can lead to challenges to the court's legitimacy and power that Congress and the president can address only through future appointments, **legislation changing the Court's jurisdiction**, or refusing to implement decisions.
 - Presidents can change the ideological composition of the Supreme Court by appointing new justices who share their interpretations of the Constitution. Sometimes presidents have even suggested altering the number of justices sitting on the Court so they could shift the balance of votes in favor of their policies, like Franklin Delano Roosevelt did in 1937 with his "court-packing plan."
 - Article III of the Constitution gives Congress the power to establish and abolish inferior courts, and the ability to determine the Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction (its role as a court of appeals for lower courts). Congress may pass acts that prevent the Supreme Court from hearing appeals in certain types of cases. For example, Congress has sometimes revoked the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to hear appeals in cases that originated in military courts.
 - The Supreme Court relies on the President to enforce its will; if presidents disagree with a decision they may do as little as possible to enforce the decision, or in rare cases ignore a decision altogether. For example, the Supreme Court struck down Abraham Lincoln's decision to suspend habeas corpus during the Civil War, but he continued the policy with Congress's blessing.

2.11. Checks on the Judicial Branch

Explain how the exercise of judicial review in conjunction with life tenure can lead to debate about the legitimacy of the Supreme Court's power.

- Political discussion about the Supreme Court's power is illustrated by the ongoing debate over **judicial activism** versus **judicial restraint**.
 - Judicial activism is the belief that the role of a justice is to defend individual rights and liberties, even those not explicitly stated in the Constitution.
 - Judicial restraint is the belief that the role of a justice is to defer decisions (and thus policymaking) to the elected branches of government and stay focused on a narrower interpretation of the Bill of Rights.

Explain how other branches in the government can limit the Supreme Court's power.

- Restrictions on the Supreme Court are represented by:
 - Congressional legislation to modify the impact of prior Supreme Court decisions
 - Constitutional amendments
 - Judicial appointments and confirmations
 - The president and states evading or ignoring Supreme Court decisions
 - Legislation impacting court jurisdiction

Illustrative examples:

- Swann v. Charlotte- Mecklenburg Board of Education (1970)
- Milliken v. Bradley (1974)
- Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing plan
- Sixteenth Amendment and federal income tax

2.12. The Bureaucracy

Explain how the bureaucracy carries out the responsibilities of the federal government.

- Tasks performed by departments, agencies, commissions, and government corporations are represented by:
 - Writing and enforcing regulations
 - Issuing fines
 - Testifying before Congress
 - Issue networks and "**iron triangles**"

- An iron triangle is a longstanding, mutually-beneficial relationship between an interest group, congressional committee, and bureaucratic agency devoted to similar issues. For example, the American Association of Retired Persons, the Congressional Subcommittee on Aging, and the Social Security Administration all work closely on issues related to seniors.
- An issue network is a group of individuals, public officials, and interest groups that form around a particular issue, usually a proposed public policy that they wish to support or defeat.
- Political patronage, civil service, and merit system reforms all impact the effectiveness of the bureaucracy by promoting professionalism, specialization, and neutrality.

Illustrative examples:

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
- Pendleton Civil Service Act (1883)
- Transportation Safety Administration (TSA)

2.13. Discretionary and Rule-Making Authority

- Explain how the federal bureaucracy uses delegated discretionary authority for rule making and implementation.
 - Discretionary and rule-making authority to implement policy are given to bureaucratic agencies, including:
 - Department of Homeland Security
 - Department of Transportation
 - Department of Veterans Affairs
 - Department of Education
 - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Federal Elections Commission (FEC)
 - Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

2.14. Holding the Bureaucracy Accountable

Explain how Congress uses its oversight power in its relationship with the executive branch.

- Oversight and methods used by Congress to ensure that legislation is implemented as intended are represented by:
 - Committee hearings
 - Power of the purse
 - Note that Congress does not have the power to confiscate allocated funds. They may only limit funding in next fiscal year's budget.
- As a means to curtail the use of presidential power, congressional oversight serves as a check of executive authorization and appropriation.

Explain how the president ensures that executive branch agencies and departments carry out their responsibilities in concert with the goals of the administration.

- Presidential ideology, authority, and influence affect how executive branch agencies carry out the goals of the administration.
- Compliance monitoring can pose a challenge to policy implementation.
 - State and local agencies may shape policy in different directions than the federal bureaucracy intended, which forces the federal bureaucracy to spend resources enforcing compliance with the original policy.

Illustrative examples:

- Oversight of intelligence agencies following the 9/11 terrorist attacks
- Joint committees
- Budget and Impoundment Control Act (1974)
- Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 11246 (Affirmative Action and Government Contracts)
- EPA Superfund management under the Reagan administration

2.15. Policy and the Branches of Government

Explain the extent to which governmental branches can hold the bureaucracy accountable given the competing interests of Congress, the president, and the federal courts.

- Formal and informal powers of Congress, the president, and the courts over the bureaucracy are used to maintain its accountability

Illustrative example:

- Legislative veto

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

3.1. The Bill of Rights

Explain how the U.S. Constitution protects individual liberties and rights.

- The U.S. **Constitution** includes a Bill of Rights specifically designed to protect individual liberties and rights.
 - **Civil liberties** are constitutionally established guarantees and freedoms that protect citizens, opinions, and property against arbitrary government interference.
 - **Civil rights** are the rights of citizens to be free of unequal or discriminatory treatment on the basis of race, gender, or membership in a particular demographic group.
- The application of the Bill of Rights is continuously interpreted by the courts.

Describe the rights protected in the Bill of Rights.

- The **Bill of Rights** consists of the first ten Amendments to the Constitution, which enumerate the liberties and rights of individuals.
 - The First Amendment guarantees the freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and to petition
 - The Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear arms
 - The Third Amendment guarantees the right to not quarter soldiers during time of war
 - The Fourth Amendment guarantees the right to be protected from unreasonable search and seizure
 - The Fifth Amendment guarantees rights in criminal cases, including due process and protection from self-incrimination; no person can be tried for a serious crime without the indictment of a grand jury
 - The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury, to an attorney, and to confront witnesses
 - The Seventh amendment guarantees the right to a trial by jury in civil cases
 - The Eighth Amendment guarantees the right to not face excessive bail, fines, or cruel and unusual punishment
 - The Ninth Amendment states that there are other rights besides the ones listed in the Bill of Rights and the federal government cannot violate those rights
 - The Tenth Amendment states that all powers not given to the national government or prohibited to the states are reserved to states or to the people

3.2. First Amendment: Freedom of Religion

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

- The interpretation and application of the **First Amendment's** establishment and free exercise clauses reflect an ongoing debate over balancing majoritarian religious practice and free exercise, as represented by such cases as:
 - **Engel v. Vitale** (1962), which declared school sponsorship of religious activities violates the establishment clause
 - **Wisconsin v. Yoder** (1972), which held that compelling Amish students to attend school past the eighth grade violates the free exercise clause
- The establishment clause states that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." This prevents the federal government from supporting an official religion and sets the United States apart from many European nations, which provide official government support for a national, or "established," church.

- The free exercise clause prevents the federal government from interfering with its citizens' religious beliefs and practices. The Supreme Court has upheld some limits on religious practices that conflict with secular laws, such as religious drug use or polygamy.

3.3. First Amendment: Freedom of Speech

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

- The Supreme Court has held that symbolic speech is protected by the First Amendment, demonstrated by *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), in which the court ruled that public school students could wear black armbands in school to protest the Vietnam War.
- Efforts to balance social order and individual freedom are reflected in interpretations of the First Amendment that limit speech, including:
 - Time, place, and manner regulations
 - These are limits to freedom of expression based on when, where, and how individuals or organizations express opinions. For example, a city may require an organization to obtain a permit in order to conduct a public protest.
 - Defamatory, offensive, and obscene statements and gestures
 - Defamation is the act of damaging someone's reputation by making false statements. Defamation through a printed medium is called *libel*, while spoken defamation is called *slander*.
 - Obscenities are lewd or sexual art or publications. Although the Court has struggled to define what constitutes obscenity, it has upheld restrictions on materials that "to the average person applying contemporary community standards" depict offensive or sexual conduct and lack literary or artistic merit.
 - That which creates a "clear and present danger" based on the ruling in *Schenck v. United States* (1919)

Illustrative examples:

- *West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943)
- *Morse v. Frederick* (2007)

3.4. First Amendment: Freedom of the Press

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty.

- In *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971), the Supreme Court bolstered the freedom of the press, establishing a "heavy presumption against prior restraint" even in cases involving national security.

3.5. Second Amendment: Right to Bear Arms

Explain the extent to which the Supreme Court's interpretation of the First and Second Amendments reflects a commitment to individual liberty

- The Supreme Court's decisions on the Second Amendment rest upon its constitutional interpretation of individual liberty.

Illustrative example:

- *District of Columbia v. Heller* (2008)

3.6. Amendments: Balancing Individual Freedom with Public Order and Safety

Explain how the Supreme Court has attempted to balance claims of individual freedom with laws and enforcement procedures that promote public order and safety.

- Court decisions defining cruel and unusual punishment involve interpretation of the Eighth Amendment and its application to state death penalty statutes.
- The debate about the Second and Fourth Amendments involves concerns about public safety and whether or not the government regulation of firearms or collection of digital metadata promotes or interferes with public safety and individual rights.

3.7 Selective Incorporation

Explain the implications of the doctrine of selective incorporation

- The doctrine of selective incorporation has imposed limitations on state regulation of civil rights and liberties as represented by *McDonald v. Chicago* (2010), which ruled the Second Amendment's right to keep and bear arms for self-defense in one's home is applicable to the states through the Fourteenth Amendment.

Illustrative example:

- Bans on polygamy and use of peyote in religious ceremonies

3.8. Amendments: Due Process and the Rights of the Accused

Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.

- The Court has on occasion ruled in favor of states' power to restrict individual liberty, as, for example, when speech can be shown to increase the danger to public safety.
- The *Miranda rule* involves the interpretation and application of accused persons' due process rights as protected by the Fifth and Sixth Amendments, yet the Court has sanctioned a "public safety" exception that allows unwarned interrogation to stand as direct evidence in court.
- Pretrial rights of the accused and the prohibition of unreasonable searches and seizures are intended to ensure that citizen liberties are not eclipsed by the need for social order and security, including:
 - The right to legal counsel, speedy and public trial, and an impartial jury
 - Protection against warrantless searches of cell phone data under the Fourth Amendment
 - Limitations placed on bulk collection of telecommunication metadata (*Patriot and USA Freedom Acts*)
- The due process clause has been applied to guarantee the right to an attorney and protection from unreasonable searches and seizures, as represented by:
 - *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963), which guaranteed the right to an attorney for the poor or indigent
 - The exclusionary rule, which stipulates evidence illegally seized by law enforcement officers in violation of the suspect's Fourth Amendment right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures, cannot be used against that suspect in criminal prosecution.

Illustrative example:

- *Riley v. California* (2014)

3.9. Amendments: Due Process and the Right to Privacy

Explain the extent to which states are limited by the due process clause from infringing upon individual rights.

- While a right to privacy is not explicitly named in the Constitution, the court has interpreted the due process clause to protect the right of privacy from state infringement. This interpretation of the due process clause has been the subject of controversy, such as has resulted from:
 - *Roe v. Wade* (1973), which extended the right of privacy to a woman's decision to have an abortion while recognizing compelling state interests in potential life and maternal health

Illustrative examples:

- *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925)
- Hyde Amendment of 1976 barred the use of certain federal funds to pay for abortions outside of incest, rape, or endangerment to the life of the pregnant woman
- *Board of Education of Independent School District No. 92 of Pottawatomie County v. Earls* (2008)

3.10. Social Movements and Equal Protection

Explain how constitutional provisions have supported and motivated social movements.

- Civil rights protect individuals from discrimination based on characteristics such as race, national origin, religion, and sex; these rights are guaranteed to all citizens under the **due process** and **equal protection clauses** of the U.S. Constitution, as well as acts of Congress.
- The leadership and events associated with civil, women's, and LGBT rights are evidence of how the equal protection clause can support and motivate social movements, as represented by:
 - Dr. Martin Luther King's "**Letter from a Birmingham Jail**" and the civil rights movement of the 1960s
 - The **National Organization for Women** and the women's rights movement
 - The pro-life (anti-abortion) movement

Illustrative examples:

- Equal treatment in public accommodations (Title II), equal employment opportunities (Title VII), and opportunities for women to participate in athletics (Title IX)
- Reed v. Reed (1971)
- Hatch Amendment (proposed 1981)

3.11. Government Responses to Social Movements

Explain how the government has responded to social movements.

- The government can respond to social movements through court rulings and/ or policies.
 - **Brown v. Board of Education** (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the Fourteenth Amendment's **equal protection clause**
 - The **Civil Rights Act of 1964**
 - **Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972**
 - The **Voting Rights Act of 1965**

3.12. Balancing Minority and Majority Rights

Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.

- Decisions demonstrating that minority rights have been restricted at times and protected at other times include:
 - State laws and Supreme Court holdings restricting African-American access to the same restaurants, hotels, schools, etc., as the majority white population based on the "separate but equal" doctrine.
 - **Brown v. Board of Education** (1954), which declared that race-based school segregation violates the Fourteenth Amendment's **equal protection clause**
 - The Supreme Court upholding the rights of the majority in cases that limit and prohibit majority-minority districting.

3.13. Affirmative Action

Explain how the Court has at times allowed the restriction of the civil rights of minority groups and at other times has protected those rights.

- The debate on affirmative action includes justices who insist that the Constitution is colorblind and those who maintain that it forbids only racial classifications designed to harm minorities, not help them.

Illustrative examples:

- Milliken v. Bradley (1974)
- Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1 (2007)
- Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)
- Gratz v. Bollinger and Grutter v. Bollinger (2003)

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

4.1. American Attitudes About Government and Politics

Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of government.

- Different interpretations of core values, including individualism, equality of opportunity, free enterprise, rule of law, and limited government, affect the relationship between citizens and the federal government and that citizens have with each other.

Optional readings:

- Alexis de Tocqueville's "The Origin of the Anglo-Americans" and "Social Condition of the Anglo-Americans," Chapters 2 and 3 of Democracy in America (1835)
- Suzanne Mettler's Confronting the Submerged State (2011)
- George Will's Statecraft as Soulcraft: What Government Does (1983)

4.2. Political Socialization

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

- Family, schools, peers, media, and social environments (including civic and religious organizations) contribute to the development of an individual's political attitudes and values through the process of political socialization.
- As a result of globalization, U.S. political culture has both influenced and been influenced by the values of other countries.

Optional readings:

- Robert Putnam's "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," Journal of Democracy (1995)
- Participating in Scouts or serving on a school board
- Thomas Friedman's The World Is Flat 3.0 (2007) or Joseph Stiglitz's Making Globalization Work (2006)
- Matt Barreto and Gary Segura's Latino America: How America's Most Dynamic Population Is Poised to Transform the Politics of the Nation (2014)

4.3. Changes in Ideology

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

- Generational and life cycle effects also contribute to the political socialization that influences an individual's political attitudes.

Optional reading:

- Cathy J. Cohen's Democracy Remixed: Black Youth and the Future of American Politics (2010)

4.4. Influence of Political Events on Ideology

Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

- The relative importance of major political events to the development of individual political attitudes is an example of political socialization.

4.5. Measuring Public Opinion

Describe the elements of a scientific poll.

- Public opinion data that can impact elections and policy debates is affected by such scientific polling types and methods as:
 - Type of poll (opinion polls, benchmark or tracking polls, entrance and exit polls)
 - Sampling techniques, identification of respondents, mass survey or focus group, sampling error
 - Type and format of questions

4.6. Evaluating Public Opinion Data

Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.

- The relationship between scientific polling and elections and policy debates is affected by the:
 - Importance of public opinion as a source of political influence in a given election or policy debate
 - Reliability and veracity of public opinion data

Illustrative examples:

- Carter–Reagan election of 1980
- Obama–Romney election of 2012
- Clinton–Trump election of 2016

4.7. Ideologies of Political Parties

Explain how ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.

- The Democratic Party (D or DEM) platforms generally align more closely to liberal ideological positions, and the Republican Party (R or GOP) platforms generally align more closely to conservative ideological positions.

4.8. Ideology and Policy Making

Explain how U.S. political culture (e.g., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.

- Because the U.S. is a democracy with a diverse society, public policies generated at any given time reflect the attitudes and beliefs of citizens who choose to participate in politics at that time.
- The balancing dynamic of individual liberty and government efforts to promote stability and order has been reflected in policy debates and their outcomes over time.

Optional reading and illustrative examples:

- Seymour Martin Lipset's "Ideology, Politics, and Deviance," Chapter 1 of *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (1996)
- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996
- DREAM Act and debate over making English the official national language
- Multiculturalism versus assimilation

4.9. Ideology and Economic Policy

Describe different political ideologies on the role of government in regulating the marketplace.

- Liberal ideologies favor more governmental regulation of the marketplace, conservative ideologies favor fewer regulations, and libertarian ideologies favor little or no regulation of the marketplace beyond the protection of property rights and voluntary trade.

Explain how political ideologies vary on the government's role in regulating the marketplace.

- Ideological differences on marketplace regulation are based on different theoretical support, including Keynesian and supply-side positions on monetary and fiscal policies promoted by the president, Congress, and the Federal Reserve.

Illustrative examples:

- Ideological positions on the inheritance tax
- Ideological positions on the minimum wage

4.10. Ideology and Social Policy

Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of the government in addressing social issues.

- Liberal ideologies tend to think that personal privacy—areas of behavior where government should not intrude—extends further than conservative ideologies do (except in arenas involving religious and educational freedom); conservative ideologies favor less government involvement to ensure social and economic equality; and libertarian ideologies disfavor any governmental intervention beyond the protection of private property and individual liberty.

Explain how different ideologies impact policy on social issues.

- Policy trends concerning the level of government involvement in social issues reflect the success of conservative or liberal perspectives in political parties.

Illustrative examples:

- *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992)
- Ideological positions on school vouchers litigated in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002)

- Differing state requirements for marriage and Obergefell v. Hodges (2015) ruling on same-sex marriage

Unit 5: Political Participation

5.1. Voting Rights and Models of Voting Behavior

Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation.

- Legal protections found in federal legislation and the Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments relate to the expansion of opportunities for political participation.

Describe different models of voting behavior.

- Examples of political models explaining voting behavior include:
 - **Rational choice**—Voting based on what is perceived to be in the citizen’s individual interest
 - **Retrospective voting**—Voting to decide whether the party or candidate in power should be reelected based on the recent past
 - **Prospective voting**—Voting based on predictions of how a party or candidate will perform in the future
 - **Party-line voting**—Supporting a party by voting for candidates from one political party for all public offices at the same level of government

5.2. Voter Turnout

Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.

- Structural barriers, political efficacy, and demographics can predict differences in voter turnout in the U.S., and the following can influence voter turnout among democracies worldwide:
 - National versus state-controlled elections
 - Voter registration laws and procedures
 - Voting incentives or penalties or fines
 - Election type (midterm or presidential)
- Demographic characteristics and political efficacy or engagement are used to predict the likelihood of whether an individual will vote.
- Factors influencing voter choice include:
 - Party identification and ideological orientation
 - Candidate characteristics
 - Contemporary political issues
 - Religious beliefs or affiliation, gender, race and ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics

Optional readings:

- Rob Paral’s “Stepping Up: The Impact of the Newest Immigrant, Asian, and Latino Voters,” Immigration Policy Center (2013)
- “The Diversifying Electorate—Voting Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin in 2012 (and Other Recent Elections),” U.S. Census Bureau (May 2013)
- David RePass’s “Issue Salience and Party Choice,” American Political Science Review (1971)

5.3 Political Parties

Describe linkage institutions.

- Linkage institutions are channels that allow individuals to communicate their preferences to policy-makers:
 - Parties
 - Interest groups
 - Elections
 - Media

Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.

- The functions and impact of political parties on the electorate and government are represented by:
 - Mobilization and education of voters
 - Party platforms
 - Candidate recruitment
 - Campaign management, including fundraising and media strategy
 - The committee and party leadership systems in legislatures

Illustrative example:

- 2012 Democratic and Republican party platforms

5.4. How and Why Political Parties Change and Adapt

Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.

- Parties have adapted to candidate-centered campaigns, and their role in nominating candidates has been weakened.
- Parties modify their policies and messaging to appeal to various demographic coalitions.
- The structure of parties has been influenced by:
 - Critical elections and regional realignments
 - Campaign finance law
 - Changes in communication and data-management technology
- Parties use communication technology and voter data management to disseminate, control, and clarify political messages and enhance outreach and mobilization efforts.

Illustrative example:

- Mitt Romney's ORCA and Barack Obama's Project Narwhal in the 2012 campaign

5.5. Third-Party Parties

Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent candidate success.

- In comparison to proportional systems, winner-take-all voting districts serve as a structural barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.
- The incorporation of third-party agendas into platforms of major political parties serves as a barrier to third-party and independent candidate success.

5.6. Interest Groups Influencing Policy Making

Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest-group influence on elections and policy making.

- Interest groups may represent very specific or more general interests, and can educate voters and office holders, conduct lobbying, draft legislation, and mobilize membership to apply pressure on and work with legislators and government agencies.
- In addition to working within party coalitions, interest groups exert influence through long-standing relationships with bureaucratic agencies, congressional committees, and other interest groups; such relationships are described as "iron triangles" and "issue networks," and they help interest groups exert influence across political party coalitions.

Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.

- Interest group influence may be impacted by:
 - Inequality of political and economic resources
 - Unequal access to decision makers
 - "Free rider" problem

Optional readings and illustrative examples:

- Tobacco subsidies
- Tax cuts under George W. Bush
- Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (1965)
- E. E. Schattschneider's *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America* (1960)

5.7. Groups Influencing Policy Outcomes

Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.

- Single-issue groups, ideological/social movements, and protest movements form with the goal of impacting society and policy making.
- Competing actors such as interest groups, professional organizations, social movements, the military, and bureaucratic agencies influence policy making, such as the federal budget process, at key stages and to varying degrees.
- Elections and political parties are related to major policy shifts or initiatives, occasionally leading to political realignments of voting constituencies.

Illustrative example:

- Club for Growth supporting limits on taxation

5.8. Electing a President

Explain how the different processes work in a U.S. presidential system.

- The process and outcomes in U.S. presidential elections are impacted by:
 - Incumbency advantage phenomenon
 - Open and closed primaries
 - Caucuses
 - Party conventions
 - General (presidential) elections
 - The Electoral College

Explain how the Electoral College facilitates and/or impedes democracy.

- The winner-take-all allocation of votes per state (except Maine and Nebraska) under the setup of the Electoral College compared with the national popular vote for president raises questions about whether the Electoral College facilitates or impedes democracy.

Illustrative example:

- 2000 presidential election

5.9. Congressional Elections

Explain how the different processes work in U.S. congressional elections.

- The process and outcomes in U.S. congressional elections are impacted by:
 - Incumbency advantage phenomenon
 - Open and closed primaries
 - Caucuses
 - General (presidential and midterm) elections

5.10. Modern Campaigns

Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.

- The benefits and drawbacks of modern campaigns are represented by:
 - Dependence on professional consultants
 - Rising campaign costs and intensive fundraising efforts
 - Duration of election cycles
 - Impact of and reliance on social media for campaign communication and fundraising

Optional readings and illustrative examples:

- Canvassing and phone banking
- Sasha Issenberg's Victory Lab: The Secret Science of Winning Campaigns (2012)

5.11. Campaign Finance

Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.

- Federal legislation and case law pertaining to campaign finance demonstrate the ongoing debate over the role of money in political and free speech, as set forth in:
 - Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, which was an effort to ban soft money and reduce attack ads with “Stand by Your Ad” provision: “I’m [candidate’s name] and I approve this message”
 - Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010), which ruled that political spending by corporations, associations, and labor unions is a form of protected speech under the First Amendment
- Debates have increased over free speech and competitive and fair elections related to money and campaign funding (including contributions from individuals, political action committees [PACs], and political parties).
- Different types of PACs influence elections and policy making through fundraising and spending.

5.12. The Media

Explain the media’s role as a linkage institution.

- Traditional news media, new communication technologies, and advances in social media have profoundly influenced how citizens routinely acquire political information, including news events, investigative journalism, election coverage, and political commentary
- The media’s use of polling results to convey popular levels of trust and confidence in government can impact elections by turning such events into “horse races” based more on popularity and factors other than qualifications and platforms of candidates.

Optional readings:

- FiveThirtyEight.com blog by Nate Silver
- “Understanding the Participatory News Consumer,” A Pew Trust Report (March 1, 2010)

5.13. Changing Media

Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.

- Political participation is influenced by a variety of media coverage, analysis, and commentary on political events.
- The rapidly increasing demand for media and political communications outlets from an ideologically diverse audience have led to debates over media bias and the impact of media ownership and partisan news sites.
- The nature of democratic debate and the level of political knowledge among citizens is impacted by:
 - Increased media choices
 - Ideologically oriented programming
 - Consumer-driven media outlets and emerging technologies that reinforce existing beliefs
 - Uncertainty over the credibility of news sources and information

Optional reading:

- Malcolm Gladwell’s “Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted,” The New Yorker (Oct. 4, 2010)