

American Government

Final Exam Study Guide

Government Structures, Ideology; Foundations of Government

1. What is an autocracy?
2. What is an oligarchy?
3. What is a democracy?
4. What is the difference between a direct and representative democracy?
5. Explain and give an example of a federal system.
6. Which political philosopher and author of the *Second Treatise on Government* is credited with the social contract theory used as a model in forming the US government?
7. What key ideas were introduced in the Magna Carta?
8. Identify the three parts of the Declaration of Independence.
9. What ideas did Locke's Social Contract Theory and the Declaration of Independence share?
10. What type of government did the Articles of Confederation create?

The United States Constitution

11. According to the Constitution what are the purposes of the Constitution?
12. Explain each of the following Constitutional principles:
 - a) popular sovereignty
 - b) federalism
 - c) checks and balances
 - d) separation of powers
13. What is the primary function of the legislative branch?
14. What is the primary function of the executive branch?
15. What is the primary function of the judicial branch?
16. What does the supremacy clause do?
17. What are enumerated powers? Give two examples.
18. What are implied powers? What clause of the Constitution gives us the implied powers?

19. What is the Bill of Rights?

The Legislative Branch

20. What are the two chambers in Congress called?

21. What are the qualifications for someone to be in the House of Representatives?

22. What are the qualifications for someone to be in the Senate?

23. What is the length of term for a Representative?

24. What is the length of term for a Senator?

25. How many members are there in the House of Representatives? The Senate?

26. How many Representatives are there from each state?

27. How many Senators are there from each state?

28. Members of the House of Representatives represent the _____, while members of the Senate are said to represent the _____.

29. Who is the president of the Senate? Who presides in the absence of the President of the Senate?

30. Who is the presiding officer of the House?

31. What is the function of a filibuster?

32. Which chamber of Congress would impeach a federal official? Which chamber would hold the trial to determine guilt?

33. What happens when the House and Senate pass different versions of a bill?

34. What is a presidential veto? How can a presidential veto be overridden?

The Executive Branch

35. What are the constitutional requirements to be president of the United States?

36. What is the bureaucracy?

37. How can the president use executive privilege?

38. What is the effect of an executive order?

39. List the four offices that are first in line for presidential succession.

40. Explain each of these roles of the President:
- a) Chief of State
 - b) Chief Executive
 - c) Chief Agenda Setter
 - d) Commander in Chief
41. What determines how many electors each state gets? According to the Constitution, the number of electors should be equal to what?
42. How are electoral votes allocated under the winner takes all system? How many electors does a candidate need to become President?

The Judicial Branch; Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

43. Explain each of the types of crimes:
- a) Misdemeanor
 - b) Felony
44. What is the difference between civil law and criminal law?
45. Most cases are settled before trial using what type of agreement?
46. What was the significance of Marbury v. Madison?
47. How long do Justices serve on the Supreme Court? How many justices are on the court?
48. What is judicial activism? Judicial restraint?
49. What is the difference between original and appellate jurisdiction?
50. How does the Supreme Court decide which cases to hear?
51. How does the Supreme Court reach and announce a decision on a case?
52. What is the difference between a concurring opinion and a dissenting opinion?
53. Explain the significance of the Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board of Education decisions.

Campaigns and Elections

54. What is the purpose of a primary election?
55. What is the purpose of a national convention?
56. What is a political platform?

Amendments to the Constitution

Briefly explain each of the following amendments:

1st

2nd

4th

5th

6th

7th

8th

12th

14th

15th

16th

17th

19th

20th

22nd

23rd

25th

26th