

AP U.S. Government & Politics Review

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy (15-22% Exam Weight)

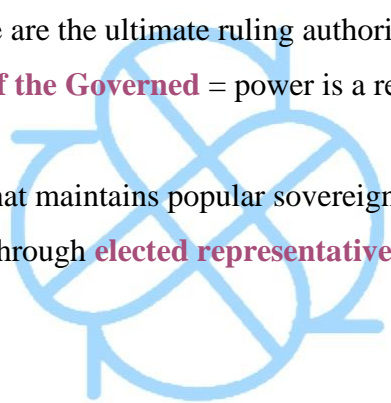
1.1 Ideals of Democracy

Important Documents

- The Declaration of Independence
 - An official statement to summarize the colonist views
 - Justified colonists break from Great Britain as well as their declaration of war
 - Defined reasons for independence
- The Constitution
 - Drafted at the Philadelphia Convention
 - Successor of the **Articles of Confederation**
 - Established federalism
 - Established and defines the **Legislative**, **Judicial**, and **Executive branch**, as well as articles for other political processes (ie. amendment process, national supremacy, etc.)

1.1 Ideals of Democracy (continued)

Major Topics

- Social Contract
 - Relationship/ mutual agreement between the people and it's government
 - A balance between individual rights and national safety
 - The people (citizens) are the powerhouse of states
 - They can elect representatives
 - John Locke & Natural Law
 - John Locke was a philosopher of the Enlightenment Era
 - **Natural Law** = a law that believes people are born free and equal
 - Constitution defines our natural rights as the rights to **life, liberty,** and **pursuit of happiness**
 - Protected by the **Bill of Rights**
 - Popular Sovereignty
 - The people are the ultimate ruling authority
 - **Consent of the Governed** = power is a result of the consent of the people
 - Republicanism
 - A nation that maintains popular sovereignty and the consent of the governed through **elected representatives**
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1.2 Types of Democracy

Important Documents

- Brutus No. 1
 - **Anti-federalist** argument against the ratification of the Constitution
 - Feared the national government had too much power and argued for states to hold power rather than the government

- Feared **Elastic Clause** and **Supremacy Clause** gave federal government absolute power
- Federalist No. 10
 - Written by James Madison (**federalist**)
 - Argued the dangers of **factions**
 - Citizens united by a common interest
 - Believed that in a large republic, many factions will overlook the minority factions/ opinions

Major Topics

| Participatory Democracy | Pluralist Democracy | Elite Democracy |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depends on direct participation from citizens ● Citizens vote for laws and matters that affect them rather than representatives of their interests | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Factions/ interests groups having an influence on political decisions ● Feared type of democracy by federalists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wealthy & educated “elite” are responsible for decisions of the people ● Discourages the concept of the “common man” |

1.3 Government Power and Individual Rights

Important Documents

- Brutus No. 1
 - Written by **Anti-federalists**
 - Opponents of a strong central government
 - Strong central government would be unable to accommodate the needs for all citizens
 - Proponents of small, decentralized government

- Federalist No. 10
 - Written by **federalists**
 - Believed a strong central government is capable of controlling the effects of factions
 - Large republic is able to control **“mischief of factions”**

Main Topics

- Limited Government
 - The Constitution is written in a way that limits the powers of our government
- Anti-Federalists v. Federalists

| Anti-Federalists | Federalists |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Argued for small, decentralized republic ● States has the power | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Argued for large, strong republic ● Federal Government has the power |

1.4 Challenges of the Articles of Confederation

Important Documents

- Articles of Confederation (1776-1789)
 - First documented government system of the US
 - States controlled the power
 - No executive or judicial branch

Main Topics

- Shay's Rebellion

- An uprising led by veteran Daniel Shays in Massachusetts
- Shay and farmers attacked a federal arsenal
 - Protesting against **foreclosure of their farms, debt crisis, and increased tax collection**
- Exposed the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation
 - Central government was unable to help Massachusetts stop the rebellion
- Weaknesses of the AoC

| Weakness | <i>Articles of Confederation</i> —Result of Identified Weakness |
|---------------------------------|---|
| taxation | money requests not always honored by states; no predictable national income |
| trade & commerce | US hurt by foreign competition; states competing with each other |
| no national military | states could ignore request for militia/troops; hard to coordinate national defense |
| one vote per state | populous states underrepresented; lack of equal access for citizens |
| unanimous vote to change | problems with <i>Articles</i> not easy to fix |
| no national courts | no way to enforce limited central power; no way to resolve disputes between states |
| no executive branch | enforcing and implementing acts passed by Congress was impossible |

(Lumen Learning)



1.5 Ratification of the United States Constitution

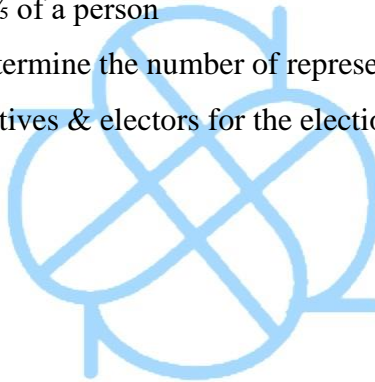
Important Documents

- Article V of the US Constitution
 - Section of the Constitution that **defines the process for drafting an amendment**
 - Requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote from a congressional proposal or convention of the states & a final ratification from $\frac{3}{4}$ of the states

Main Topics

- Great Compromise (Connecticut Compromise)

- Compromise at the **Constitutional Convention** between large and small states
- Created a **bicameral (two house) legislation**
 - **Senate** is composed of **equal representation** from all states
 - **House of Representatives** is composed of representation based on the **size of the state's population**
- Electoral College
 - Representatives from the states that formally elect the president and vice president
 - Electors are chosen by the states rather than Congress or the people
- Three-Fifths Compromise
 - Controversial agreement of the Constitution that defined each enslaved person as $\frac{3}{5}$ of a person
 - Used to determine the number of representatives in the House of Representatives & electors for the election



1.6 Principles of American Government

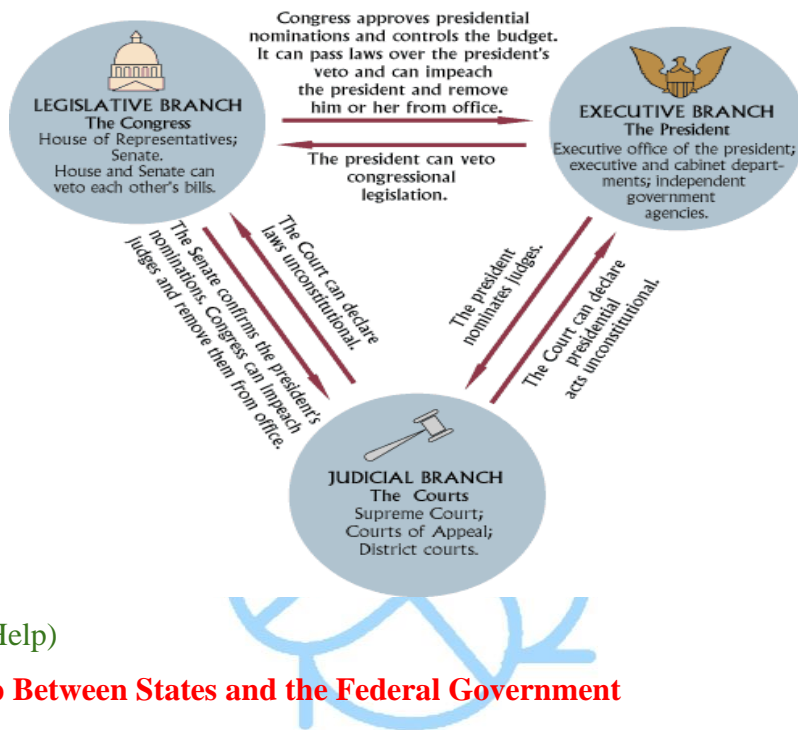
Important Documents

- Federalist No. 51
 - Written by James Madison (**federalist**)
 - Explained that the separation of powers and checks and balances of the new Constitution will protect the people from a tyrannical government

Main Topics

- Separation of Powers
 - **Legislative, Judicial, and Executive branches** were delegated different powers
 - Legislative = Congress; makes the laws

- Judicial= Courts; interprets the law
- Executive= President; enforces the laws
- Checks and Balances
 - Specific powers that “check” and “balance” one branches power over another
 - Prevents one branch from becoming too strong



(Social Studies Help)

1.7 Relationship Between States and the Federal Government

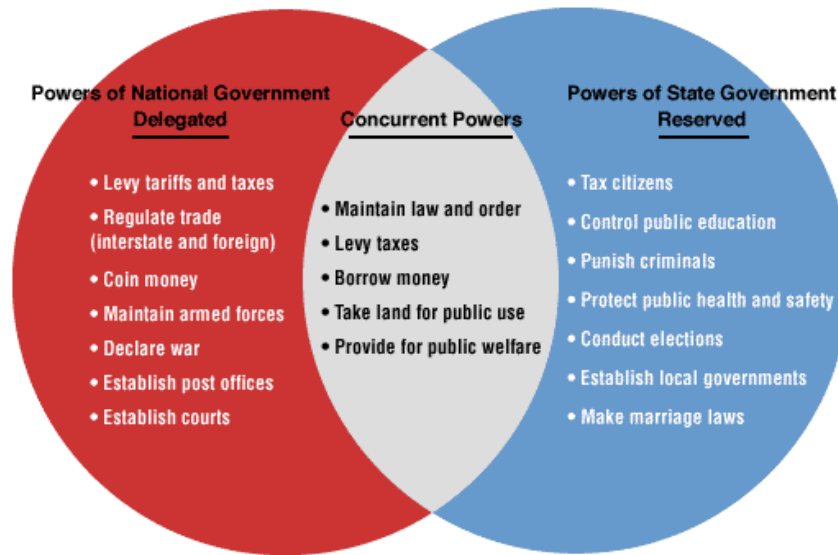
Important Documents

- Article IV
 - States must give “**full faith and credit**” to the laws of other states
 - Ensures that the states are under the protection of the federal government
 - Ex: Federal government will protect the states from invasion

Main Topics

- Federalism
 - National government and state government share powers
- Types of Powers
 - **Delegated or Enumerated Powers** = powers exclusively belonging to the national government

- **Concurrent Powers** = powers shared between the federal and state governments
- **Reserved Powers** = powers reserved for the state governments



(Vickerye)

1.7 Relationship Between States and the Federal Government (continued)

Main Topics (continued)

- Federal Funding
 - **Categorical Grants** = federal aid given with restrictions in place
 - States have to agree to federal rules
 - **Block Grants** = federal aid to support state programs
 - Less regulated than categorical grants
 - **Mandates** = Requirement state must meet
 - If federal aid is received after meeting requirements then it is a **funded mandate**
 - **Federal Revenue Sharing** = sharing federal income tax revenue with state and local government

1.8 Constitutional Interpretations of Federalism

Important Cases

- McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
 - Established **supremacy clause**
 - Established that Congress has **implied powers** (powers not explicitly stated in the Constitution) to maintain their **enumerated powers**
 - Increased the powers of the national government
- United States v. Lopez (1995)
 - Supreme Court Case that ruled that Congress exceeded its power under the **commerce clause**
 - Congress attempted to use the commerce to ban guns in school

Main Topics

- Tenth Amendment
 - Powers not given to the federal government are reserved for state governments/ the people
- Fourteenth Amendment

- Gives citizenship, equal protection, and due process to all people born in the US
- Necessary and Proper Clause
 - Part of **Article I** of the Constitution
 - Gives Congress the power to create laws they deem “**necessary and proper**” to carry out their responsibilities
 - Also known as the **Elastic Clause**
- Commerce Clause
 - Part of **Article I** of the Constitution
 - Gives Congress the power to regulate the buying and selling of products across states (**interstate commerce**)

1.9 Federalism in Action

Main Topics

- Federalism
 - Power is divided between national and state government
 - **Policy-making** is “federalism in action”
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SOURCES:

- “AP US Government Exam Prep 2020 .” *Fiveable*, Fiveable, 2020, app.fiveable.me/ap-gov.
- “AP® US Government & Politics (College-Level).” *Khan Academy*, Khan Academy, 2020, www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-us-government-and-politics.

