

American Government and Politics
Final Exam Review Guide

Directions: Answer the following questions in the space provided below.

UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

1. What are the three major powers of any government?
 - **Legislative, Executive, and Judicial**
2. Define: Dictatorship
 - **All government authority and power is controlled by one man**
3. Define: Democracy
 - **Government ran by the people**
4. What are the theories on the origins of government?
 - **Force, evolution, divine right, and social contract**
5. What are the purposes of the US government? Where can we find them?
 - **Establish order, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for common defense, secure the blessings of liberty; found in the preamble of the U.S. Constitution**
6. Define: Confederation
 - **An alliance of independent states working together towards a common goal**
7. List the key foundations of American government?
 - **Worth of the Individual, equality of all persons, necessity of freedom, majority rule with minority rights**
8. Define: Limited Government
 - **Government must act within the framework of the U.S. Constitution**
9. What important documents did the founding fathers use to help them create the American government?
 - **Magna Carta, English Bill of Rights, Petition of Right, Declaration of Independence**
10. What type of parliamentary government was reflected in the American colonies?
 - **Two chamber legislature, and upper house and a lower house**

11. Explain the concept of Popular Sovereignty:

- **Citizens of a territory or state having the right to decide their own laws**

12. List the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation:

- **Inability to enforce and apply federal laws**
- **Inability to tax and regulate trade**
- **Unequal representation amongst the states**

13. Describe the Framers of the Constitution: (professions, school, race, religious background):

- **White, educated, wealthy merchants, lawyers, and plantation owners**

14. Describe the Virginia Plan and New Jersey Plan:

- **Virginia Plan was the large state plan that called for a 2-chamber legislature and representation based on population while the New Jersey Plan called for a 1-chamber legislature with representation being equal amongst the states.**

15. Describe the "Great" / Connecticut Compromise:

- **Created Congress with a 2-chamber legislature made up of the Senate (upper house) and the House of Representatives (lower chamber). Upper house would be based on equal representation while the lower chamber was based on population. They share the legislative power of government.**

16. List the basic principles of the Constitution:

- **Limited and ordered government, judicial review, separation of powers, checks and balances**

17. Explain the difference between Checks and Balances and Separation of Powers:

- **Checks and balances allows for each branch to play a role in the power of the other two while separation of powers splits the powers of government into separate working branches independent of each other.**

18. List the four methods to add an Amendment to the Constitution, and which is used most often:

- **Proposed by Congress (2/3 vote in both chambers) and ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of state's legislatures or conventions**

19. Define: Federalism

- **Government existing on multiple levels, national and state.**

20. Define: The following powers

Delegated	Powers specifically granted to federal government by the U.S. Constitution
Expressed	Powers specifically detailed by the U.S. Constitution
Implied	Powers deemed necessary and proper by Article I section 8 clause 18.
Inherent	Powers understood to belong to the federal government
Reserved	Powers given to the states according to the 10 th Amendment
concurrent	Powers that belong to both the federal and the state governments

21. Explain what the "Full Faith and Credit" Clause means:

- **Says that legal documents of any state shall be recognized and honored by other states within the United States**

22. Explain what the "Privileges and Immunities" Clause means:

- **Out-of-state Citizens shall enjoy the same privileges as those citizens that live in said state**

23. Describe the process of Extradition:

- **People who commit crimes and then flee that state to another state shall be apprehended by the authorities of that state and returned to the state in which they committed the crime.**

UNIT 2: CONGRESS

24. Describe the difference between a term and a session of Congress:

- **Term of Congress last two years because it pertains to the time in which all the members of Congress are the same and a session is the time in which they are in Washington doing their job.**

25. What is the election date for members of Congress?

- **First Tuesday following the first Monday in November every even-numbered year**

26. Describe the qualifications for Members of the House of Representatives and the Senate:

- **House of Reps: 25 yrs. Old, 7 yr. citizen; must live in the state and district they hope to represent and the Senate: 30 yrs. Old, 9 yr. citizen, and live in the state.**

27. Describe the terms for the House of Representatives and the Senate:

- **House of Reps: 2 years**
- **Senate: 6 years**

28. What is the main role of Congress?

- **Make federal laws**

29. Describe what Congress has the power to Tax:

- **Imports, goods sold within the United States**

30. What does Congress's Bankruptcy power allow them to do?

- **Clear debts of those found incapable of paying them back**

31. Explain the process of Eminent Domain:

- **Allows government to seize private property to serve a government purpose; must provide just compensation**

32. Explain the difference between a Copyright and a Patent:

- **Copyrights are publications protected by its' author and cannot be copied without their consent while patents are inventions and technology also protected by its creator and cannot be copied without their consent.**

33. What happens on the first day of a new term in the House of Representatives?

- **Bylaws are created as well as committee chairmen are nominated**

34. Define: State of the Union Address

- **President addresses both chambers of Congress on his plan for the upcoming year**

35. Who is the presiding officer of the House of Representatives and the Senate?

- **Presiding officer of the House: Speaker of the House**
- **Presiding officer of the Senate: Vice President**

36. Define: President Pro Temp

- **Presiding officer of the Senate when the Vice President is absent**

37. Describe the purpose of a Conference Committee:

- **Consists of members of the House and the Senate and is put together to create a finalized bill when different bills are created by the House of Reps and the Senate.**

38. Describe the purpose of a Select Committee:

- **Special committee organized for a specific purpose**

39. What is the most powerful committee in the House of Representatives?

- **Rules and Means Committee**

40. List the steps for how a bill becomes a law:

- **Introduced by a sponsor, brought to a committee, comes out of committee and is brought to the floor of its original chamber for debate and vote, final bill read in its' original chamber, goes to the opposing chamber (same routine followed), brought to the President's desk for signature, if President vetoes Congress may override with a 2/3 vote in both chambers.**

41. Where does most of the research on a bill occur?

- **In its' standing committee**

42. Define: Quorum

- **When enough members of either chamber are present to have a vote**

43. Define: Filibuster

- **Used in the Senate to defeat a proposed bill from being passed. Used heavily during the Civil Rights era by racist southern representatives**

UNIT 3: THE EXECUTIVE AND JUDICIAL BRANCH

44. What is officially needed for someone to take the oath of office for the Vice President if the office becomes vacant?

- **Approval of the Senate**

45. How are the President and Vice President elected? What determines the states # of votes?

- **Elected by the Electoral College. Number of votes per state in the Electoral College are equal to its representation in Congress**

46. Define: Ordinance Power

- **The power of the President to issue executive orders**

47. Describe the process of appointment by the President:

- **President has the power to appoint federal judges and executive officials with the consent of 2/3 vote of the Senate**

48. Describe the Military powers of the President:

- **President is the commander-in-chief of the United States military**

49. Explain the legislative powers the President can take over Congress:

- **President has the power to veto bills passed by Congress**

50. What jurisdiction does the Supreme Court exercise?

- **Both original and appellate jurisdiction; has the power to hear any case that it chooses to hear.**

51. Which federal court has Original jurisdiction over most cases in Federal Court?

- **Lowest level; district court**

52. Under what circumstances can a case be brought in federal court?

- **If it is a federal law; deals with federal officials; or with citizens of different states**

53. Which court(s) exercise the power of Judicial Review?

- **All courts**

UNIT 4: POLITICAL PARTIES

54. What are major differences between political parties and political groups?

- **Political parties have the power to nominate candidates for office.**

55. The political party that controls the Executive Branch is the what?

- **Party in Power**

56. Define: Political Party

- **Citizens having the same political ideology working towards getting their candidate elected into office**

57. Who are a group of people eligible to vote?

- **The electorate; Constituents**

58. Define: Ideological Party and what is significant about this type of party?

- **Ideological party is the longest lived third party who has an entire different political belief structure**

59. Define: Split Ticket Voting and what are its effects?

- **Shows that people are moving away from political party affiliation and voting for both Democrats and Republicans on the same ticket.**

60. List the roles members play within the major parties:

- **Nominate candidates, inform public, etc**

61. To which group does the Constitution give the power to set the date to hold Congressional elections to?

- **Congress**

62. Define: Precinct

- **Smallest geographical unit for voting**

63. Why is money such an important factor in the campaign process and where does most of the money come from?

- **Most of it comes from private donations and is important because it allows them to advertise and rely less on their political party**

64. What is the job of the Federal Election Commission?

- **Regulate campaign finance of political candidates and lobbyists**

65. What is the main purpose of a Political Action Committee (PAC)?

- **Hire lobbyists to contact and persuade politicians to support their stance on their particular political issue.**

66. Describe what groups have an influence in Political Socialization in our country:

- **Mostly family and school, but religion, socio-economic status also plays a role**

67. Define: Public Opinion

- **Recognized opinions of a certain percentage of the American public that has filled out certain surveys pertaining to a certain political issue.**

68. What is a quick and easy way to determine people's attitudes and viewpoints?

- **Fill out a survey**

69. List the steps in the polling process:

- **Define the universe, Construct a sample, prepare valid questions, interview, analyze the results**

70. Define: Interest Group

- **Political group who seeks to persuade the opinions of others to share their political viewpoint on any number of political issues.**

71. How does the media impact voters?

- **It limits the issues we are exposed to and tries to define our political stance**

72. Most interest groups are formed on the basis of what interests?

- **Economic interests**

73. List a few types of propaganda techniques:

- **Fear, lust, obsession, excitement**

74. Explain the work of a lobbyist today.

- **Insects in Washington that use their money and political influence to get politicians to vote their way on bills related to their interest.**

UNIT 5: CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

75. Explain the difference between Civil Liberties and Civil Rights:

- **Civil liberties are protections from the government like the 1st, 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th Amendment and Civil Rights are protections given by the government against individuals like the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments**

76. Define: Due Process

- **Guarantee of certain protections when you are accused of a crime from the actions of law enforcement such as right to fair trial and attorney.**

77. Explain each part of the 1st Amendment as it pertains to Religion:

a. Free Exercise Clause:

Allows Americans to freely exercise their own religion, free from government intrusion.

b. Establishment Clause:

Forbids the government from establishing or endorsing any religious institution

78. What is the Lemon Test?

- **Used by the courts to decide whether or not the form of financial aid to parochial schools is a violation of the Establishment Clause**

79. Explain the difference between slander and libel:

- **Slander is the malicious use of the spoken word where libel is the malicious use of the written word.**

80. How has the Supreme Court reasoned on the issue of flag burning as a protected form of Free Speech?

- **That flag burning is protected free speech**

81. Which group of people are protected by shield laws?

- **journalists**

82. What clause in the Constitution protects an individual's rights of assembly and petition?

- **Freedom of expression**

83. What does it mean when a government rule is "content neutral"?

- **Not to base their decisions on whether their violation to the right to assemble on what the political issue is connected to their assembly/petition**

84. Explain the difference between **Procedural** Due Process and **Substantive** Due Process:

- **Procedural due process deals with the constitutionality of how the government (law enforcement) carries out or enforces the law and Substantive whether the law itself is constitutional.**

85. Who issues a warrant? What legal standard must be present to issue a warrant?

- **The courts issue warrants and probable cause must be established prior to gaining a warrant**

86. What does the Exclusionary Rule state about evidence?

- **If the evidence was gained illegally by law enforcement then it cannot be used in court**

87. List circumstances when a search warrant would not need to be issued for a private residence?

- **Plain sight, good faith, honest mistake, inevitable discovery**

88. Define: Double Jeopardy

- **Being tried twice for the same crime in the same court. It is unconstitutional**

89. What rights for a person accused of a crime are protected under the 6th Amendment?

- **Fair, speedy, and public trial, as well as a right to an attorney**

90. What are the two tests the Supreme Court uses in deciding Equal Protection cases?

- **Rational Basis Test and Strict Scrutiny Test**

91. Define: Jim Crow Laws

- **Laws that segregate people based on their race.**

92. What historic Supreme Court case overturned the precedent "Separate but Equal"?

- **Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas**

93. List what actions were prohibited according to the Civil Rights Act of 1964:

- **Discrimination of employment**