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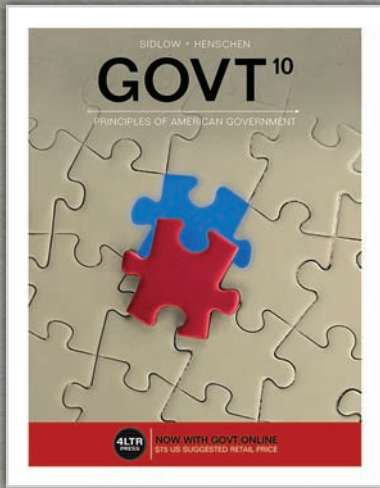
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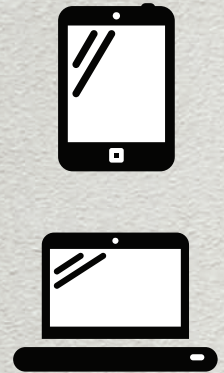
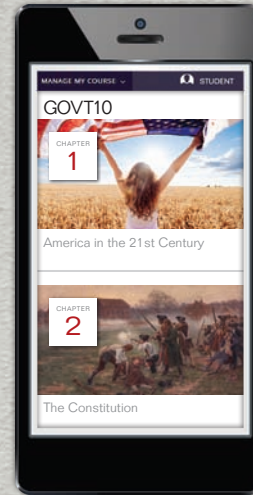
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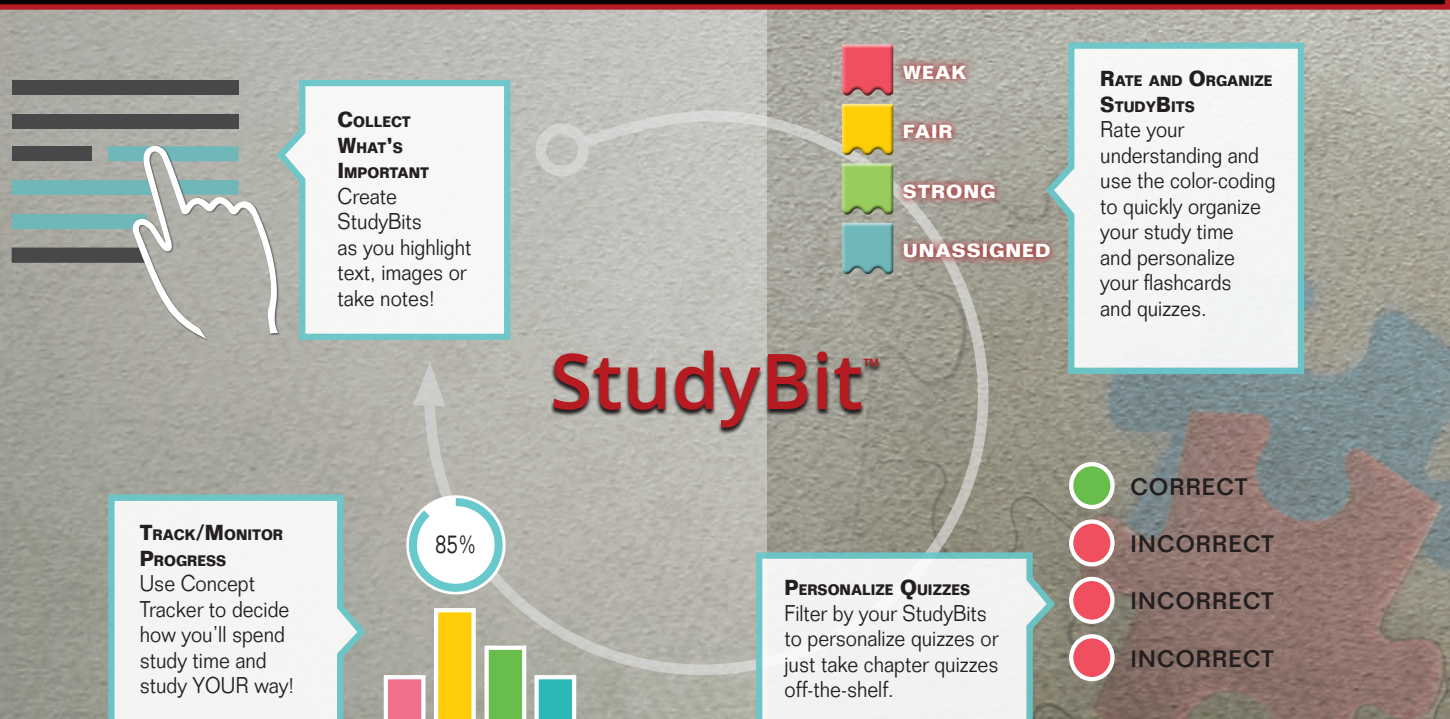
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PART I THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR AMERICAN SYSTEM 1

- 1** America in the Twenty-First Century 2
- 2** The Constitution 24
- 3** Federalism 48

PART II OUR LIBERTIES AND RIGHTS 72

- 4** Civil Liberties 72
- 5** Civil Rights 98

PART III THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRACY 122

- 6** Interest Groups 122
- 7** Political Parties 144
- 8** Public Opinion and Voting 168
- 9** Campaigns and Elections 192
- 10** Politics and the Media 216

PART IV INSTITUTIONS 236

- 11** The Congress 236
- 12** The Presidency 262
- 13** The Bureaucracy 288
- 14** The Judiciary 310

PART V PUBLIC POLICY 334

- 15** Domestic Policy 334
- 16** Foreign Policy 354

Appendix A The Declaration of Independence A-1**Appendix B** The Constitution of the United States A-3**Appendix C** *Federalist Papers* No. 10 and No. 51 A-13**Appendix D** Answers to Chapter Quiz Questions A-18**Appendix E** Information on U.S. Presidents (Online)**Appendix F** Party Control of Congress since 1900 (Online)**Notes** N-1**Glossary** G-1**Index** I-1**Chapter in Review Cards** 1-32

CONTENTS

Skill Prep: A Study Skills Module SP-1
Take Action: A Guide to Political Participation TA-1

Part I THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR AMERICAN SYSTEM 1



1 AMERICA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY 2

- 1-1** What Are Politics and Government? 4
 - 1-1a** Defining Politics and Government 4
 - 1-1b** Resolving Conflicts 5
 - 1-1c** Providing Public Services 5
 - 1-1d** Defending the Nation and Its Culture 6
- 1-2** Different Systems of Government 7
 - 1-2a** Undemocratic Systems 7
 - 1-2b** Democratic Systems 8
- 1-3** American Democracy 9
 - 1-3a** The British Legacy 10
 - 1-3b** Principles of American Democracy 11
 - 1-3c** American Political Values 11
 - 1-3d** Political Values and a Divided Electorate 14
 - 1-3e** Political Values in a Changing Society 15

- 1-4** American Political Ideology 17
 - 1-4a** Conservatism 18
 - 1-4b** Liberalism 18
 - 1-4c** The Traditional Political Spectrum 19
 - 1-4d** Beyond Conservatism and Liberalism 20
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Do We Still Need the “Mainstream Media”? 3
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Is Our Government Too Large? 12
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** Do Immigrants Take American Jobs? 17
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** America in the Twenty-First Century 21

2 THE CONSTITUTION 24

- 2-1** The Beginnings of American Government 26
 - 2-1a** The First English Settlements 26
 - 2-1b** Colonial Legislatures 28
- 2-2** The Rebellion of the Colonists 28
 - 2-2a** “Taxation without Representation” 29
 - 2-2b** The Continental Congresses 30
 - 2-2c** Breaking the Ties: Independence 30
- 2-3** The Confederation of States 33
 - 2-3a** The Articles of Confederation 33
 - 2-3b** A Time of Crisis—The 1780s 34
- 2-4** Drafting and Ratifying the Constitution 36
 - 2-4a** Who Were the Delegates? 36
 - 2-4b** The Virginia Plan 37
 - 2-4c** The New Jersey Plan 37
 - 2-4d** The Compromises 37
 - 2-4e** Defining the Executive and the Judiciary 39
 - 2-4f** The Final Draft Is Approved 39
 - 2-4g** The Debate over Ratification 39
 - 2-4h** Ratification 41
 - 2-4i** Did a Majority of Americans Support the Constitution? 41
- 2-5** The Constitution’s Major Principles of Government 41
 - 2-5a** Limited Government, Popular Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law 42
 - 2-5b** The Principle of Federalism 42
 - 2-5c** Separation of Powers 43
 - 2-5d** Checks and Balances 43
 - 2-5e** Limited versus Effective Government 44

- 2–5f The Bill of Rights 44
- 2–5g Amending the Constitution 44
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Should We Elect the President by Popular Vote? 25
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Was the United States Meant to Be a Christian Nation? 27
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** The Slavery Issue 40
- THE REST OF THE WORLD:** The Parliamentary Alternative 45
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** The Constitution 46

3 FEDERALISM 48

- 3–1 Federalism and Its Alternatives 50
 - 3–1a What Is Federalism? 50
 - 3–1b Alternatives to Federalism 51
 - 3–1c Federalism—An Optimal Choice for the United States? 51
- 3–2 The Constitutional Division of Powers 54
 - 3–2a The Powers of the National Government 54
 - 3–2b The Powers of the States 55
 - 3–2c Interstate Relations 56
 - 3–2d Concurrent Powers 57
 - 3–2e The Supremacy Clause 57
- 3–3 The Struggle For Supremacy 58
 - 3–3a Early United States Supreme Court Decisions 58
 - 3–3b The Civil War—The Ultimate Supremacy Battle 60
 - 3–3c Dual Federalism—From the Civil War to the 1930s 61
 - 3–3d Cooperative Federalism and the Growth of the National Government 61
- 3–4 Federalism Today 62
 - 3–4a The New Federalism—More Power to the States 62
 - 3–4b The Supreme Court and the New Federalism 63
 - 3–4c The Shifting Boundary between Federal and State Authority 63
- 3–5 The Fiscal Side of Federalism 66
 - 3–5a Federal Grants 66
 - 3–5b Federal Grants and State Budgets 67
 - 3–5c Federalism and Economic Cycles 67
 - 3–5d Using Federal Grants to Control the States 68
 - 3–5e The Cost of Federal Mandates 68
 - 3–5f Competitive Federalism 68
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Should Recreational Marijuana Be Legal? 49
- THE REST OF THE WORLD:** Canadian versus American Federalism 53
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** The Best Government Is Local Government 56
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Should “Sanctuary Cities” Be Allowed? 65
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Federalism 69

Part II OUR LIBERTIES AND RIGHTS 72



4 CIVIL LIBERTIES 72

- 4–1 The Constitutional Basis for Our Civil Liberties 74
 - 4–1a Safeguards in the Original Constitution 74
 - 4–1b The Bill of Rights 74
 - 4–1c The Incorporation Principle 76
- 4–2 Freedom of Religion 77
 - 4–2a Laws on Religion in the Colonies 77
 - 4–2b The Establishment Clause 79
 - 4–2c Prayer in the Schools 79
 - 4–2d Evolution versus Creationism 80
 - 4–2e Aid to Parochial Schools 81
 - 4–2f The Free Exercise Clause 82
- 4–3 Freedom of Expression 83
 - 4–3a The Right to Free Speech Is Not Absolute 84
 - 4–3b Subversive Speech 84
 - 4–3c Limited Protection for Commercial Speech 84
 - 4–3d Unprotected Speech 85
 - 4–3e Free Speech for Students? 86
 - 4–3f Freedom of the Press 87
- 4–4 The Right To Privacy 87
 - 4–4a The Abortion Controversy 88
 - 4–4b Do We Have the “Right to Die”? 89
 - 4–4c Privacy and Personal Information 89
 - 4–4d Personal Privacy and National Security 91
- 4–5 The Rights of The Accused 93
 - 4–5a The Rights of Criminal Defendants 93
 - 4–5b The Exclusionary Rule 93
 - 4–5c The *Miranda* Warnings 94
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Do U.S. Citizens Really Need Military-Style Rifles? 73

THE REST OF THE WORLD: Do Foreigners Have Constitutional Rights in the United States? 78

PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY: The Availability of Abortion 90

JOIN THE DEBATE: Is the Death Penalty a Cruel and Unusual Punishment? 94

AMERICA AT ODDS: Civil Liberties 96

5 CIVIL RIGHTS 98

- 5-1 The Equal Protection Clause 100
 - 5-1a Strict Scrutiny 100
 - 5-1b Intermediate Scrutiny 101
 - 5-1c The Rational Basis Test (Ordinary Scrutiny) 101
 - 5-2 African Americans 101
 - 5-2a Separate But Equal 102
 - 5-2b Violence and Vote Suppression 102
 - 5-2c The *Brown* Decisions and School Integration 102
 - 5-2d The Civil Rights Movement 103
 - 5-2e African Americans in Politics Today 105
 - 5-2f Continuing Challenges 106
 - 5-3 Women 107
 - 5-3a The Struggle for Voting Rights 107
 - 5-3b The Feminist Movement 107
 - 5-3c Women in American Politics Today 108
 - 5-3d Women in the Workplace 108
 - 5-4 Securing Rights For Other Groups 110
 - 5-4a Latinos 110
 - 5-4b Asian Americans 113
 - 5-4c American Indians 114
 - 5-4d Persons with Disabilities 115
 - 5-4e Gay Men and Lesbians 116
 - 5-5 Beyond Equal Protection—Affirmative Action 118
 - 5-5a Affirmative Action Tested 118
 - 5-5b Strict Scrutiny Applied 118
 - 5-5c The Diversity Issue 118
 - 5-5d State Actions 119
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Do the Police Use Excessive Force against African Americans? 99
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Is “Political Correctness” a Real Problem? 111
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** We Are Too Lax in Vetting Refugees 112
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Civil Rights 120

Part III THE POLITICS OF DEMOCRACY 122



6 INTEREST GROUPS 122

- 6-1 Interest Groups and American Government 124
 - 6-1a The Constitutional Right to Petition the Government 124
 - 6-1b Why Interest Groups Form 124
 - 6-1c How Interest Groups Function in American Politics 127
 - 6-1d How Do Interest Groups Differ from Political Parties? 128
 - 6-2 Different Types of Interest Groups 128
 - 6-2a Business Interest Groups 128
 - 6-2b Labor and Professional Interest Groups 130
 - 6-2c Public-Interest and Other Types of Groups 132
 - 6-3 How Interest Groups Shape Policy 134
 - 6-3a Direct Techniques 134
 - 6-3b Indirect Techniques 136
 - 6-4 Today's Lobbying Establishment 138
 - 6-4a Why Do Interest Groups Get Bad Press? 139
 - 6-4b The Regulation of Lobbyists 139
 - 6-4c The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 140
 - 6-4d Later Reform Efforts 141
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Are Farmers Getting a Deal That's Too Good? 123
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** The United States Can Bring Back Factory Jobs 131
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Should We Let Uber and Lyft Pick Up Passengers? 140
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Interest Groups 142

7 POLITICAL PARTIES 144

- 7-1 A Short History of American Political Parties 146
 - 7-1a The First Political Parties 146
 - 7-1b From 1796 to 1860 147
 - 7-1c From the Civil War to the Great Depression 149
 - 7-1d After the Great Depression 149
- 7-2 America's Political Parties Today 150
 - 7-2a Red States versus Blue States 150
 - 7-2b Shifting Political Fortunes 151
 - 7-2c Realignment, Dealignment, and Tipping 153
- 7-3 What Do Political Parties Do? 155
 - 7-3a Selecting Candidates and Running Campaigns 155
 - 7-3b Informing the Public 155
 - 7-3c Coordinating Policymaking 155
 - 7-3d Checking the Power of the Governing Party 156
 - 7-3e Balancing Competing Interests 156
- 7-4 How American Political Parties Are Structured 156
 - 7-4a The Party in the Electorate 157
 - 7-4b The Party Organization 158
 - 7-4c The Party in Government 160
- 7-5 The Dominance of Our Two-Party System 161
 - 7-5a The Self-Perpetuation of the Two-Party System 161
 - 7-5b Third Parties in American Politics 162
 - 7-5c The Effects of Third Parties 164

AMERICA AT ODDS: Is Trump the Future of the Republican Party? 145

THE REST OF THE WORLD: Right-Wing Nationalist Parties in Europe 154

JOIN THE DEBATE: Are Nonpartisan Elections a Good Idea? 163

AMERICA AT ODDS: Political Parties 165

8 PUBLIC OPINION AND VOTING 168

- 8-1 How Do People Form Political Opinions? 170
 - 8-1a The Importance of Family 170
 - 8-1b Schools and Churches 170
 - 8-1c The Media 171
 - 8-1d Opinion Leaders 171
 - 8-1e Major Life Events 172
 - 8-1f Peer Groups 172
 - 8-1g Economic Status and Occupation 172
- 8-2 Why People Vote As They Do 172
 - 8-2a Party Identification and Ideology 172
 - 8-2b Perception of the Candidates 173
 - 8-2c Policy Choices 173
 - 8-2d Socioeconomic Factors 173

- 8-3 Public Opinion Polls 178
 - 8-3a Early Polling Efforts 178
 - 8-3b How Polling Has Developed 178
 - 8-3c Problems with Opinion Polls 180
- 8-4 Voting and Voter Turnout 183
 - 8-4a Factors Affecting Voter Turnout 183
 - 8-4b The Legal Right to Vote 184
 - 8-4c Attempts to Improve Voter Turnout 186
 - 8-4d Laws That May Discourage Voting 188
 - 8-4e Attempts to Improve Voting Procedures 188
 - 8-4f Who Actually Votes 188

AMERICA AT ODDS: How Important Is It to Target Independents? 169

PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY: Do Politicians Always Follow the Polls? 182

JOIN THE DEBATE: Do We Need Strict Voting ID Laws? 187

AMERICA AT ODDS: Public Opinion and Voting 189

9 CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS 192

- 9-1 How We Elect Candidates 194
 - 9-1a Conducting Elections and Counting the Votes 194
 - 9-1b Presidential Elections and the Electoral College 194
- 9-2 How We Nominate Candidates 195
 - 9-2a Party Control over Nominations 196
 - 9-2b A New Method: The Nominating Convention 196
 - 9-2c Primary Elections and the Loss of Party Control 196
 - 9-2d Nominating Presidential Candidates 199
- 9-3 The Modern Political Campaign 203
 - 9-3a Responsibilities of the Campaign Staff 203
 - 9-3b The Professional Campaign Organization 203
 - 9-3c Opposition Research 204
- 9-4 The Internet Campaign 206
 - 9-4a Fund-Raising on the Internet 206
 - 9-4b Targeting Supporters 207
 - 9-4c Support for Organizing 207
- 9-5 What It Costs To Win 208
 - 9-5a Presidential Spending 208
 - 9-5b The Federal Election Campaign Act 208
 - 9-5c Skirting the Campaign-Financing Rules 209
 - 9-5d The Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 210
 - 9-5e The Current Campaign-Finance Environment 211

- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Does Money Really Buy Elections? 193
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** Is the Word *Socialism* Still Poison in U.S. Political Campaigns? 202
- THE REST OF THE WORLD:** Banning Candidates and Political Parties around the World 205
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Should We Let Political Contributors Conceal Their Identities? 213
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Campaigns and Elections 214

10 POLITICS AND THE MEDIA 216

- 10-1** The Role of The Media In A Democracy 218
- 10-1a** Media Characteristics 218
 - 10-1b** The New Media and the Old 218
 - 10-1c** The Media and the First Amendment 219
 - 10-1d** The Agenda-Setting Function of the Media 219
 - 10-1e** The Medium Does Affect the Message 221
 - 10-1f** Ownership of the Media 222
- 10-2** The Candidates and Television 223
- 10-2a** Political Advertising 223
 - 10-2b** Television Debates 224
 - 10-2c** News Coverage 225
 - 10-2d** “Popular” Television 225
- 10-3** Talk Radio—The Wild West of The Media 226
- 10-3a** Audiences and Hosts 226
 - 10-3b** The Impact of Talk Radio 227
- 10-4** The Question of Media Bias 227
- 10-4a** Partisan Bias 227
 - 10-4b** The Bias against Losers 228
 - 10-4c** A Changing News Culture 228
- 10-5** Political News and Campaigns On The Web 229
- 10-5a** News Organizations Online 229
 - 10-5b** Blogs and the Emergence of Citizen Journalism 230
 - 10-5c** Podcasting the News 231
 - 10-5d** Cyberspace and Political Campaigns 231
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Should It Be Easier to Sue for Libel? 217
- THE REST OF THE WORLD:** Who Controls the Internet? 220
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Could We Lose Our High-Speed Internet? 232
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Politics and the Media 234

Part IV INSTITUTIONS 236



11 THE CONGRESS 236

- 11-1** The Structure and Makeup of Congress 238
- 11-1a** Apportionment of House Seats 238
 - 11-1b** Congressional Districts 238
 - 11-1c** The Representation Function of Congress 241
- 11-2** Congressional Elections 243
- 11-2a** Who Can Be a Member of Congress? 243
 - 11-2b** The Power of Incumbency 244
 - 11-2c** Congressional Terms 245
- 11-3** Congressional Leadership, The Committee System, and Bicameralism 245
- 11-3a** House Leadership 245
 - 11-3b** Senate Leadership 247
 - 11-3c** Congressional Committees 247
 - 11-3d** The Differences between the House and the Senate 248
- 11-4** The Legislative Process 251
- 11-5** Investigation and Oversight 253
- 11-5a** The Investigative Function 254
 - 11-5b** Impeachment Power 254
 - 11-5c** Senate Confirmation 255
- 11-6** The Budgeting Process 256
- 11-6a** Authorization and Appropriation 256
 - 11-6b** The Actual Budgeting Process 257
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Should It Take Sixty Senators to Pass Important Legislation? 237
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** Was Banning Pork-Barrel Spending a Mistake? 242
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** Cutting Back Our Gigantic Tax Code 250
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** The Congress 259

12 THE PRESIDENCY 262

- 12-1 Who Can Become President? 264
 - 12-1a Why Would Anyone Want to Be President? 264
 - 12-1b Presidential Age and Occupation 265
 - 12-1c Race, Gender, and Religion 265
- 12-2 The President's Many Roles 265
 - 12-2a Chief Executive 266
 - 12-2b Commander in Chief 266
 - 12-2c Head of State 267
 - 12-2d Chief Diplomat 267
 - 12-2e Chief Legislator 267
 - 12-2f Political Party Leader 267
- 12-3 Presidential Powers 268
 - 12-3a The President's Constitutional Powers 268
 - 12-3b The President's Inherent Powers 270
 - 12-3c The Expansion of Presidential Powers 270
- 12-4 Congressional and Presidential Relations 277
 - 12-4a Advantage: Congress 277
 - 12-4b Advantage: The President 278
- 12-5 The Organization of The Executive Branch 279
 - 12-5a The President's Cabinet 279
 - 12-5b The Executive Office of the President 282
 - 12-5c The Vice Presidency and Presidential Succession 284

AMERICA AT ODDS: What Should Trump Do about the Middle East? 263

PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY: If You Like the President, You'll Love the Economy 273

JOIN THE DEBATE: Should We Make Trump Release His Tax Returns? 280

AMERICA AT ODDS: The Presidency 285

13 THE BUREAUCRACY 288

- 13-1 The Nature and Size of The Bureaucracy 290
 - 13-1a The Nature of Bureaucracy 290
 - 13-1b The Growth of Bureaucracy 290
 - 13-1c The Costs of Maintaining the Government 291
 - 13-1d Where Does All the Money Go? 292
- 13-2 How The Federal Bureaucracy Is Organized 293
 - 13-2a The Executive Departments 293
 - 13-2b A Typical Departmental Structure 293
 - 13-2c Independent Executive Agencies 294
 - 13-2d Independent Regulatory Agencies 296
 - 13-2e Government Corporations 296
- 13-3 How Bureaucrats Get Their Jobs 298
 - 13-3a The Civil Service 298
 - 13-3b Origins of the Merit System 298
 - 13-3c The OPM Hacking Scandal 298

- 13-4 Regulatory Agencies: Are They The Fourth Branch of Government? 300
 - 13-4a Agency Creation 300
 - 13-4b Rulemaking 300
 - 13-4c Policymaking 301
- 13-5 Curbing Waste and Improving Efficiency 303
 - 13-5a Whistleblowers 303
 - 13-5b Improving Efficiency and Getting Results 304
 - 13-5c Another Approach—Pay-for-Performance Plans 306
 - 13-5d Privatization 306
 - 13-5e Government in the Sunshine 306
 - 13-5f Government Online 306

AMERICA AT ODDS: Does National Security Require Us to Give Up Our Privacy? 289

JOIN THE DEBATE: Are Government Workers Paid Too Much? 299

THE REST OF THE WORLD: The Deep State 305

AMERICA AT ODDS: The Bureaucracy 308

14 THE JUDICIARY 310

- 14-1 The Origins and Sources of American Law 312
 - 14-1a The Common Law Tradition 312
 - 14-1b Primary Sources of American Law 313
 - 14-1c Civil Law and Criminal Law 314
 - 14-1d Basic Judicial Requirements 314
- 14-2 The Federal Court System 316
 - 14-2a U.S. District and Specialized Courts 316
 - 14-2b U.S. Courts of Appeals 317
 - 14-2c The United States Supreme Court 318
- 14-3 Federal Judicial Appointments 320
 - 14-3a The Nomination Process 320
 - 14-3b Confirmation or Rejection by the Senate 321
- 14-4 The Courts As Policymakers 322
 - 14-4a The Issue of Broad Language 323
 - 14-4b The Power of Judicial Review 324
 - 14-4c Judicial Activism versus Judicial Restraint 325
 - 14-4d Ideology and the Courts 325
 - 14-4e Ideology and Today's Supreme Court 326
 - 14-4f Approaches to Legal Interpretation 328
- 14-5 Assessing The Role of The Federal Courts 329
 - 14-5a Criticisms of the Federal Courts 329
 - 14-5b The Case for the Courts 329

AMERICA AT ODDS: Should the People Elect Judges? 311

JOIN THE DEBATE: Are Supreme Court Confirmations Too Political? 323

PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY: The Supreme Court Legislates from the Bench 330

AMERICA AT ODDS: The Judiciary 331

Part V

PUBLIC POLICY 334



15 DOMESTIC POLICY 334

- 15-1** The Policymaking Process 336
 - 15-1a** Issue Identification and Agenda Setting 338
 - 15-1b** Policy Formulation and Adoption 338
 - 15-1c** Policy Implementation 338
 - 15-1d** Policy Evaluation 338
 - 15-1e** Policymaking and Special Interests 339
 - 15-2** Health-Care Policy 339
 - 15-2a** Two Problems with U.S. Health Care 339
 - 15-2b** Medicaid and Medicare 340
 - 15-2c** The Democrats Propose Universal Coverage 341
 - 15-3** Energy and The Environment 343
 - 15-3a** The Problem of Imported Oil 343
 - 15-3b** Climate Change 343
 - 15-3c** New Energy Sources 344
 - 15-4** Economic Policy and Taxes 346
 - 15-4a** The Goals of Economic Policy 346
 - 15-4b** Monetary Policy 346
 - 15-4c** Fiscal Policy 348
 - 15-4d** The Federal Tax System 349
 - 15-4e** The Public Debt 351
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Do We Send Too Many People to Prison? 335
- JOIN THE DEBATE:** What Should We Do about Unauthorized Immigrants? 337
- PERCEPTION VERSUS REALITY:** Tax-Rate Cuts for the Rich 350
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Domestic Policy 352

16 FOREIGN POLICY 354

- 16-1** Who Makes U.S. Foreign Policy? 356
 - 16-1a** The President's Role 356
 - 16-1b** The Cabinet 357
 - 16-1c** Other Agencies 358
 - 16-1d** Powers of Congress 358
 - 16-2** A Short History of American Foreign Policy 358
 - 16-2a** Isolationism 359
 - 16-2b** The Beginning of Interventionism 359
 - 16-2c** The World Wars 359
 - 16-2d** The Cold War 360
 - 16-2e** Post-Cold War Foreign Policy 362
 - 16-3** Problems Requiring The Use of Force 362
 - 16-3a** The Problem of Terrorism 362
 - 16-3b** The U.S. Response to 9/11—The War in Afghanistan 364
 - 16-3c** The Focus on Iraq 364
 - 16-3d** Again, Afghanistan 365
 - 16-3e** The Civil War in Syria and the Growth of ISIS 365
 - 16-4** Diplomacy In An Unstable World 367
 - 16-4a** The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict 367
 - 16-4b** Weapons of Mass Destruction 369
 - 16-4c** China—The Next Superpower? 372
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** How Much of a Threat Is Putin's Russia? 355
- THE REST OF THE WORLD:** Europe in Crisis 368
- AMERICA AT ODDS:** Foreign Policy 373
- Appendix A** The Declaration of Independence A-1
- Appendix B** The Constitution of the United States A-3
- Appendix C** *Federalist Papers* No. 10 and No. 51 A-12
- Appendix D** Answers to Chapter Quiz Questions A-18
- Appendix E** Information on U.S. Presidents (Online)
- Appendix F** Party Control of Congress since 1900 (Online)
- Notes** N-1
- Glossary** G-1
- Index** I-1
- Chapter in Review Cards** 1-32



SKILL PREP

A Study Skills Module

Welcome!

With this course and this textbook, you've begun what we hope will be a fun, stimulating, and thought-provoking journey into the world of American government and politics.

In this course, you will learn about the foundation of the American system, culture and diversity, interest groups, political parties, campaigns, elections, the media, our governing institutions, public policy, and foreign policy. Knowledge of these basics will help you think critically about political issues and become an active citizen.

We have developed this study skills module to help you gain the most from this course and this textbook. Whether you are a recent high school graduate or an adult returning to the classroom after a few years, you want

results when you study. You want to be able to understand the issues and ideas presented in the textbook, talk about them intelligently during class discussions, and remember them as you prepare for exams and papers.

This module is designed to help you develop the skills and habits you'll need to succeed in this course. With tips on how to be more engaged when you study, how to get the most out of your textbook, how to prepare for exams, and how to write papers, this guide will help you become the best learner you can be!

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STUDY PREP

What does it take to be a successful student? You may think success depends on how naturally smart you are. However, the truth is that successful students aren't born, they're made. Even if you don't consider yourself "book smart," you can do well in this course by developing study skills that will help you understand, remember, and apply key concepts.

Reading for Learning

Your textbook is the foundation for information in a course. It contains key concepts and terms that are important to your understanding of the subject. For this reason, it is essential that you develop good reading skills. As you read your textbook with the goal of learning as much of the information as possible, work on establishing the following habits:

FOCUS

Make an effort to focus on the book and tune out other distractions so that you can understand and remember the information it presents.

TAKE TIME

To learn the key concepts presented in each chapter, you need to read slowly, carefully, and with great attention.

REPEAT

To read for learning, you have to read your textbook a number of times. Follow a preview-read-review process:

1. PREVIEW: Look over the chapter title, section headings, and highlighted or bold words. This will give you a good preview of important ideas in the chapter. Notice that each major section heading in this textbook has one or more corresponding **Learning Objectives**. You can increase your understanding of the material by rephrasing the headings and subheadings in your textbook into questions, and then try to answer them. Note graphs, pictures, and other visual illustrations of important concepts.

QUICK TIP! Log in to GOVT10 Online with the access code in the front of your textbook to find interactive figures and tables from the chapters and to quiz yourself on the important material in the book.

2. READ: It is important to read with a few questions in mind: What is the main point of this paragraph or section? What does the author want me to learn from this? How does this relate to what I read before? Keeping these questions in mind will help you be an attentive reader who is actively focusing on the main ideas of the passage.

QUICK TIP! In GOVT10 Online, create StudyBits from Key Terms and definitions, photos, figures, and your text highlights. You can include notes in your StudyBits, and add your own tags—such as "Midterm Exam"—so you can collect them all later.

Also during this phase, it is helpful to take notes while reading in detail. You can mark your text or write an outline, as explained later in this module. Taking notes will help you read actively, identify important concepts, and remember them. When it comes time to review for the exam, the notes you've made should make your studying more efficient.

QUICK TIP! In GOVT10 Online, create practice quizzes from filtered StudyBits or use all quiz questions from the chapter to test yourself before exams.

3. REVIEW: When reviewing each section of the text and the notes you've made, ask yourself this question: **What was this section about?** You'll want to answer the question in some detail, readily identifying the important points. Use the Learning Objectives in the text to help focus your review.

QUICK TIP! Tear out the Chapter Review cards in the back of the textbook for on-the-go review!

A reading group is a great way to review the chapter. After completing the reading individually, group members should meet and take turns sharing what they learned. Explaining the material to others will reinforce and clarify what you already know. Getting a different perspective on a passage will increase your knowledge, because different people will find different things important during a reading.

Take Notes

Being *engaged* means listening to discover (and remember) something. One way to make sure that you are listening attentively is to take notes. Doing so will help you focus on the professor's words and will help you identify the most important parts of the lecture.



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The physical act of writing makes you a more efficient learner. In addition, your notes provide a guide to what your instructor thinks is important. That means you will have a better idea of what to study before the next exam if you have a set of notes that you took during class.

Make an Outline

As you read through each chapter of your textbook, you might want to make an outline—a simple method for organizing information. You can create an outline as part of your reading or at the end of your reading. Or you can make an outline when you reread a section before moving on to the next one. The act of physically writing an outline for a chapter will help you retain the material in this text and master it.

To make an effective outline, you have to be selective. Your objectives in outlining are, first, to identify the main concepts and, second, to add the details that support those main concepts.

Your outline should consist of several levels written in a standard format. The most important concepts are assigned Roman numerals; the second-most important, capital letters; and the third-most important, numbers. Here is a quick example.

- I. What Are Politics and Government?
 - A. Defining Politics and Government
 - 1. Politics and Conflict
 - 2. Government and Authority
 - B. Resolving Conflicts
 - C. Providing Public Services
 - 1. Services for All and Services for Some
 - 2. Managing the Economy
 - D. Defending the Nation and Its Culture
- II. Different Systems of Government
 - A. Undemocratic Systems
 - 1. Monarchy
 - 2. Dictatorship
 - B. Democratic Systems
 - 1. The Athenian Model of Direct Democracy
 - 2. Direct Democracy Today
 - 3. Representative Democracy
 - 4. Types of Representative Democracy
 - C. Other Forms of Government

Mark Your Text

If you own your own textbook for this course and plan to keep it, you can improve your learning by marking your text. By doing so, you will identify the most important concepts of each chapter, and at the same time, you'll be making a handy study guide for reviewing material at a later time. Marking allows you to become an active participant in the mastery of the material. Researchers have shown that the physical act of marking, just like the physical acts of note-taking during class and outlining, increases concentration and helps you better retain the material.

WAYS OF MARKING

The most common form of marking is to underline important points. The second-most commonly used method is to use a felt-tipped highlighter or marker, in yellow or some other transparent color. You can put a check mark next to material that you do not understand. Work on better comprehension of the checkmarked material after you've finished the chapter. Marking also includes circling, numbering, using arrows, jotting brief notes, or any other method that allows you to remember things when you go back to skim the pages in your textbook prior to an exam.

QUICK TIP! Don't forget about the StudyBit functionality when highlighting in GOVT10 Online! Change colors of your highlights to rate your understanding of each StudyBit, and use them in your review in the Studyboard.

TWO POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN MARKING

- ▶ **Read one section at a time before you do any extensive marking.** You can't mark a section until you know what is important, and you can't know what is important until you read the whole section.
- ▶ **Don't overmark.** Don't fool yourself into thinking that you have done a good job just because each page is filled with arrows, circles, and underlines. Be selective in your marking, so that each page allows you to see the most important points at a glance. You can follow up your marking by writing out more in your subject outline.

Researchers have shown that the physical act of marking, just like the physical act of note-taking during class increases concentration and helps you better retain the material.

Try These Tips

Here are a few more hints that will help you develop effective study skills.

- ▶ **Do schoolwork as soon as possible after class.** The longer you wait, the more likely you will be distracted by television, the Internet, video games, or friends.
- ▶ **Set aside time and a quiet, comfortable space where you can focus on reading.** Your

school library is often the best place to work. Set aside several hours a week of "library time" to study in peace and quiet. A neat, organized study space is also important. The only work items that should be on your desk are those that you are working on that day.

- ▶ **Reward yourself for studying!** Rest your eyes and your mind by taking a short break every twenty to thirty minutes. From time to time, allow yourself a break to do something else that you enjoy. These interludes will refresh your mind, give you more energy required for concentration, and enable you to study longer and more efficiently.
- ▶ **To memorize terms or facts, create flash (or note) cards.** On one side of the card, write the question or term. On the other side, write the answer or definition. Then use the cards to test yourself or have a friend quiz you on the material.

QUICK TIP! In GOVT10 Online, flash cards are available for all key terms (with definitions). Create more flash cards from your StudyBits or anything in the online narrative, and rate your understanding on each while you study!

- ▶ **Mnemonic (pronounced ne-mon-ik) devices are tricks that increase our ability to memorize.** A well-known mnemonic device is the phrase ROY G BIV, which helps people remember the colors of the rainbow—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet. You can create your own mnemonic devices for whatever you need to memorize. The more fun you have coming up with them, the more useful they will be.
- ▶ **Take notes twice.** First, take notes in class. Writing down your instructor's key points will help you be a more active, engaged listener. Taking notes will also give you a record of what your instructor thinks is important. Later, when you have a chance, rewrite your notes. The rewrite will act as a study session for you to think about the material again.



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TEST PREP

You have worked hard throughout the term, reading the book, paying close attention in class, and taking good notes. Now it's test time, and you want to show mastery of the material you have studied. To be well prepared, you should know which reading materials and lectures will be covered. You should also know whether the exam will contain essays, objective questions, or both. Finally, you should know how much time you will have to take the exam. The following steps can help to reduce any anxiety you may feel, allowing you to approach the test with confidence.

Follow Directions

Students are often in a hurry to start an exam, so they take little time to read the instructions. The instructions can be critical, however. In a multiple-choice exam, for example, if there is no indication that there is a penalty for guessing, then you should never leave a question unanswered. Even if only a few minutes are left at the end of an exam, you should guess on the questions that you remain uncertain about.

Additionally, you need to know the weight given to each section of an exam. In a typical multiple-choice exam, all questions have equal weight. In other types of exams, particularly those with essay questions, different parts of the exam carry different weights. You should use these weights to apportion your time. If the essay portion of an exam accounts for 20 percent of the total points on the exam, you should not spend 60 percent of your time on the essays.

Finally, you need to make sure you are marking the answers correctly. Some exams require a No. 2 pencil to

fill in the dots on a machine-graded answer sheet. Other exams require underlining or circling. In short, you have to read and follow the instructions carefully.

Objective Exams

An objective exam consists of multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, or matching questions that have only one correct answer. Students usually commit one of two errors when they read objective exam questions: (1) they read things into the questions that do not exist, or (2) they skip over words or phrases. Most test questions include key words such as:

>ALL >NEVER
>ALWAYS >ONLY

If you miss any of these key words, you may answer the question incorrectly even if you know the information being tested.

Whenever the answer to an objective question is not obvious, start with the process of elimination. Throw out the answers that are clearly incorrect. Typically, the easiest way to eliminate incorrect answers is to look for those that are meaningless, illogical, or inconsistent. Often, test authors put in some answers that make perfect sense and are indeed true, but do not answer the question under study. Here are a few more tips that will help you become an efficient, results-oriented student.

- ▶ **Review your notes thoroughly** as part of your exam preparation. Instructors usually lecture on subjects they think are important, so those same subjects are also likely to be on the exam.

- ▶ **Create a study schedule** to reduce stress and give yourself the best chance for success. At times, you will find yourself studying for several exams at once. When this happens, make a list of each study topic and the amount of time needed to review that topic.
- ▶ **Form a small group for a study session.** Discussing a topic out loud can improve your understanding of that topic and will help you remember the key points that often come up on exams.
- ▶ **Study from old exams.** Some professors make old exams available, either by posting them online or by putting them on file in the library. Old tests can give you an idea of the kinds of questions the professor likes to ask.
- ▶ **Avoid cramming just before an exam.** Cramming tires the brain unnecessarily and adds to stress, which can severely hamper your testing performance. If you've studied wisely, have confidence that you will be able to recall the information when you need it.
- ▶ **Be sure to eat** before taking a test so you will have the energy you need to concentrate.
- ▶ **Be prepared.** Make sure you have everything you will need for the exam, such as a pen or pencil. Arrive at the exam early to avoid having to rush, which will only add to your stress. Good preparation helps you focus on the task at hand.
- ▶ **When you first receive your exam, make sure that you have all the pages.** If you are uncertain, ask your professor or exam proctor. This initial scan may uncover other problems as well, such as illegible print or unclear instructions.
- ▶ **With essay questions, look for key words** such as “compare,” “contrast,” and “explain.” These will guide your answer. Most important, get to the point without wasting your time (or your professor's) with statements such as “There are many possible reasons for”
- ▶ **Review your answers** when you finish a test early. You may find a mistake or an area where some extra writing will improve your grade.
- ▶ **Keep exams in perspective.** Worrying too much about a single exam can have a negative effect on your performance. If you do poorly on one test, it's not the end of the world. Rather, it should motivate you to do better on the next one.



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WRITE PREP

A key part of succeeding as a student is learning how to write well. Whether writing papers, presentations, essays, or even e-mails to your instructor, you have to be able to put your thoughts into words and do so with force, clarity, and precision. In this section, we outline a three-phase process that you can use to write almost anything.

Phase 1: Getting Ready to Write

First, make a list. Divide the ultimate goal—a finished paper—into smaller steps that you can tackle right away. Estimate how long it will take to complete each step. Start with the date your paper is due and work backward to the present: For example, if the due date is December 1, and you have about three months to write the paper, give yourself a cushion and schedule November 20 as your targeted completion date. Then list what you need to get done by October 1 and November 1.

PICK A TOPIC

To generate ideas for a topic, any of the following approaches work well:

- ▶ **Brainstorm with a group.** There is no need to create in isolation. You can harness the energy and the natural creative power of a group to assist you.

▶ **Speak it.** To get ideas flowing, start talking. Admit your confusion or lack of clear ideas. Then just speak. By putting your thoughts into words, you'll start thinking more clearly.

▶ **Use free writing.** Free writing, a technique championed by writing teacher Peter Elbow, is also very effective when trying to come up with a topic. There's only one rule in free writing: Write without stopping. Set a time limit—say, ten minutes—and keep your fingers dancing across the keyboard the whole time. Ignore the urge to stop and rewrite. There is no need to worry about spelling, punctuation, or grammar during this process.

REFINE YOUR IDEA

After you've come up with some initial ideas, it's time to refine them:

▶ **Select a topic and working title.** Using your instructor's guidelines for the paper, write down a list of topics that interest you. Write down all of the ideas you think of in two minutes. Then choose one topic. The most common pitfall is selecting a topic that is too broad. "Political Campaigns" is probably not a useful topic for your paper. Instead, consider "The Financing of Modern Political Campaigns."

▶ **Write a thesis statement.** Clarify what you want to say by summarizing it in one concise sentence. This sentence, called a *thesis statement*, refines your working title. A thesis is the main point of the paper—it is a declaration of some sort. You might write a thesis statement such as "Recent decisions by the Supreme Court have dramatically changed the way that political campaigns are funded."

SET GOALS

Effective writing flows from a purpose. Think about how you'd like your reader or listener to respond after considering your ideas.

▶ If you want to persuade someone, make your writing clear and logical. Support your assertions with evidence.

There is no need to create in isolation. Brainstorm ideas for a topic with a group. Ask for feedback from your instructor or a friend as you prepare an outline and revise your first draft.

▶ If your purpose is to move the reader into action, explain exactly what steps to take, and offer solid benefits for doing so.

To clarify your purpose, state it in one sentence—for example, "The purpose of this paper is to discuss and analyze the role of women and minorities in law enforcement."

BEGIN RESEARCH

At the initial stage, the objective of your research is not to uncover specific facts about your topic. That comes later. First, you want to gain an overview of the subject. Say you want to advocate for indeterminate sentencing. You must first learn enough about determinate and indeterminate sentencing to describe the pros and cons of each one.

MAKE AN OUTLINE

An outline is a kind of map. When you follow a map, you avoid getting lost. Likewise, an outline keeps you from wandering off topic. To create your outline, follow these steps:

1. Review your thesis statement and identify the three to five main points you need to address in your paper to support or prove your thesis.



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2. Next, focus on the three to five major points that support your argument and think about what minor points or subtopics you want to cover in your paper. Your major points are your big ideas. Your minor points are the details you need to fill in under each of those ideas.

3. Ask for feedback. Have your instructor or a classmate review your outline and offer suggestions for improvement. Did you choose the right points to support your thesis? Do you need more detail anywhere? Does the flow from idea to idea make sense?

DO IN-DEPTH RESEARCH

Dig in and start reading. Keep a notebook, tablet, or laptop handy and make notes as you read. It can help to organize your research into three main categories:

- 1. Sources** (bibliographical information for a source),
- 2. Information** (nuggets of information from a correctly quoted source)
- 3. Ideas** (thoughts and observations that occur to you as you research, written in your own words)

You might want to use these categories to create three separate documents as you work. This will make it easy to find what you need when you write your first draft.

When taking research notes, be sure to:

- ▶ Copy all of the information correctly.
- ▶ Include the source and page number while gathering information. With Internet searches, you must also record the date a site was accessed.
- ▶ Stay organized; refer to your outline as you work.

If you get stuck, ask for help.
Most schools have writing resource centers where you can go for assistance and guidance.

Phase 2: Writing a First Draft

To create your draft, gather your notes and your outline (which often undergoes revision during the research process). Then write about the ideas in your notes. It's that simple. Just start writing. Write in paragraphs, with one idea per paragraph. As you complete this task, keep the following suggestions in mind:

- ▶ **Remember that the first draft is not for keeps.** You can worry about quality later. Your goal at this point is simply to generate words and ideas.
- ▶ **Write freely.** Many writers prefer to get their first draft down quickly and would advise you to keep writing, much as in free writing. You may pause to glance at your notes and outline, but avoid stopping to edit your work.
- ▶ **Be yourself.** Let go of the urge to sound "scholarly" and avoid using unnecessary big words or phrases. Instead, write in a natural voice.
- ▶ **Avoid procrastination.** If you are having trouble getting started, skip over your introduction and just begin writing about some of your findings. You can go back later and organize your paragraphs.
 - ▶ **Get physical.** While working on the first draft, take breaks. Go for a walk. From time to time, practice relaxation techniques and breathe deeply.
 - ▶ **Put the draft away for a day.** Schedule time for rewrites, and schedule at least one day between revisions so that you can let the material sit. After a break, problems with the paper or ideas for improvement will become more evident.

Phase 3: Revising Your Draft

During this phase, keep in mind the saying, "Write in haste; revise at leisure." When you are working on your first draft, the goal is to produce ideas and write them down. During



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the revision phase, however, you need to slow down and take a close look at your work. One guideline is to allow 50 percent of writing time for planning, researching, and writing the first draft. Then use the remaining 50 percent for revising.

Here are some good ways to revise your paper:

1. READ IT OUT LOUD. The combination of speaking and hearing forces us to pay attention to the details. Is the thesis statement clear and supported by enough evidence? Does the introduction tell your reader what's coming? Do you end with a strong conclusion that expands on your introduction rather than just restating it?

2. HAVE A FRIEND LOOK OVER YOUR PAPER. This is never a substitute for your own review, but a friend can often see mistakes you miss. With a little practice, you will learn to welcome feedback, because it provides one of the fastest ways to approach the revision process.

3. CUT. Look for excess baggage. Also, look for places where two (or more) sentences could be rewritten as one. By cutting text you are actually gaining a clearer, more polished product. For efficiency, make the larger cuts first—sections, chapters, pages. Then go for the smaller cuts—paragraphs, sentences, phrases, words.

4. PASTE. The next task is to rearrange what's left of your paper so that it flows logically. Look for consistency within paragraphs and for transitions from paragraph to paragraph and section to section.

5. FIX. Now it's time to look at individual words and phrases. Define any terms that the reader might not know. In general, focus on nouns and verbs. Too many words add unnecessary bulk to your writing. Write about the details, and be specific. Also, check your writing to ensure that you:

- ▶ **Prefer the active voice.** Write *“The research team began the project”* rather than *“A project was initiated,”* which is a passive statement.
- ▶ **Write concisely.** Instead of *“After making a timely arrival and observing the unfolding events, I emerged totally and gloriously victorious,”* be concise with *“I came, I saw, I conquered.”*
- ▶ **Communicate clearly.** Instead of *“The speaker made effective use of the television medium, asking in no uncertain terms that we change our belief systems,”* you can write specifically, *“The senatorial candidate stared straight into the television camera and said, ‘Take a good look at what my opponent is doing! Do you really want six more years of this?’”*



6. PREPARE. Format your paper following accepted standards for margin widths, endnotes, title pages, and other details. Ask your instructor for specific instructions on how to cite the sources used in writing your paper. You can find useful guidelines in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. If you are submitting a hard copy (rather than turning it in online), use quality paper for the final version. For an even more professional appearance, bind your paper with a plastic or paper cover.

7. PROOFREAD. As you ease down the home stretch, read your revised paper one more time, and look for the following:

- ▶ A clear thesis statement.
- ▶ Sentences that introduce your topic, guide the reader through the major sections of your paper, and summarize your conclusions.
- ▶ Details—such as quotations, examples, and statistics—that support your conclusions.
- ▶ Lean sentences that have been purged of needless words.
- ▶ Plenty of action verbs and concrete, specific nouns.
- ▶ Spelling and grammar mistakes. Use contractions sparingly, if at all. Use spell-check by all means, but do not rely on it completely, as it will not catch everything.

Academic Integrity: Avoiding Plagiarism

Using another person's words, images, or other original creations without giving proper credit is called *plagiarism*. Plagiarism amounts to taking someone else's work and presenting it as your own—the equivalent of cheating on a test. The consequences of plagiarism can range from a failing grade to expulsion from school.

To avoid plagiarism, ask an instructor where you can find your school's written policy on this issue. Don't assume that you can resubmit a paper you wrote for another class for a current class. Almost all schools will regard this as plagiarism even though you wrote the paper. The basic guidelines for preventing plagiarism are to cite a source for each phrase, sequence of ideas, or visual image created by another person. While ideas cannot be copyrighted, the specific way that an idea is *expressed* can be. You also need to list a source for any idea that is closely identified with a particular person. The goal is to clearly distinguish your own work from the work of others. There are several ways to ensure that you do this consistently:

- ▶ **Identify direct quotes.** If you use a direct quote from another source, put those words in quotation marks. If you do research online, you might copy text from a website and paste it directly into your notes. This is a direct quote. You must use quotation marks or if the quote is long, an indented paragraph.
- ▶ **Paraphrase carefully.** Paraphrasing means restating the original passage in your own words, usually making it shorter and simpler. Students who copy a passage word for word and then just rearrange or delete a few phrases are running a serious risk of plagiarism. Remember to cite a source for paraphrases, just as you do for direct quotes. When you use the same sequence of ideas as one of your sources—even if you have not paraphrased or directly quoted—cite that source.
- ▶ **Note details about each source.** For books, include the author, title, publisher, publication date, location of publisher, and page number. For articles from print sources, record the author,

date, article title, and the name of the magazine or journal as well. If you found the article in an academic or technical journal, also include the volume and number of the publication. A librarian can help identify these details.

- ▶ **Cite online sources correctly.** If your source is a website, record as many identifying details as you can find—author, title, sponsoring organization, URL, publication date, and revision date. In addition, list the date that you accessed the page. Be careful when using Internet resources, as not all sites are considered legitimate sources. For example, many professors don't regard Wikipedia as an acceptable source.
- ▶ **Include your sources as endnotes or footnotes to your paper.** Ask your instructor for examples of the format to use. You do not need to credit wording that is wholly your own. Nor do you need to credit general ideas, such as the suggestion that people use a to-do list to plan their time. But if you borrow someone else's words or images to explain the idea, do give credit.
- ▶ **When in doubt, don't.** Sometimes you will find yourself working against a deadline for a paper, and in a panic, you might be tempted to take shortcuts. You'll find a source that expressed your idea perfectly, but you must cite it or completely rephrase the idea in your own words. Professors are experts at noticing a change in tone or vocabulary that signals plagiarism. Often, they can simply Google a phrase to find its source online. Do not let a moment's temptation cause you to fail the course or face an academic integrity hearing.





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TAKE ACTION

A Guide to Political Participation

GET INFORMED

Find Out Where You Fit and What You Know

- You already have some opinions about a variety of political issues. Do you have a sense of where your views place you on the political map? Get a feel for your ideological leanings by taking *The World's Smallest Political Quiz*: theadvocates.org/quiz.

It's easy to think of politics as a spectator sport—something that politicians do, pundits analyze, and citizens watch. But there are many ways to get engaged with politics, to interact with the political world and participate in it, and even to effect change.

- **Which Founder Are You?** The National Constitutional Center can help you with that. Go to constitutioncenter.org/foundersquiz to discover which Founding Father's personality most resembles your own.
- The U.S. Constitution is an important part of the context in which American politics takes place. Do you know what the Constitution says? *Take the Constitution I.Q. Quiz*: constitutionfacts.com. Was your score higher than the national average?
- At the National Constitution Center, you can explore the interactive Constitution and learn more about the provisions in that document: constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution.



- Find out what those who want to become U.S. citizens have to do—and what they have to know. Go to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website at uscis.gov/. What is involved in applying for citizenship? Take the *Naturalization Self-Test* at <https://my.uscis.gov/prep/test/civics>. How did you do?

Think about How Your Political Views Have Been Shaped

- Consider how agents of political socialization—your family, your schools, and your peers, for example—have contributed to your political beliefs and attitudes. Then have conversations with people in your classes or where you live about the people, institutions, and experiences that influenced the way they view the political world. Try to understand how and why your views might differ.
- Explore how your views on political issues compare with those of a majority of Americans. There are a number of good polling sites that report public opinion on a range of topics.
 - o The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press conducts monthly polls on politics and policy issues: people-press.org.
 - o Public Agenda reports poll data and material on major issues: publicagenda.org.
 - o The results of recent polls and an archive of past polls can be found at Gallup: gallup.com.
 - o The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research is a leading archive of data from surveys of public opinion: ropercenter.cornell.edu.

GET CONNECTED

News

Keep up with news—print, broadcast, and online. Don't avoid certain news sources because you think you might not agree with the way they report the news. It's just as important to know how people are talking about issues as it is to know about the issues themselves.

- One way to follow the news is to get your information from the same place that journalists do. Often they take their cues or are alerted to news events by news agencies such as the nonprofit cooperative Associated Press: ap.org.
- Installing a few key apps on your phone or tablet can help you stay informed. Try downloading the Associated Press (AP) app for timely updates about news around the world. There are tons of other great political apps—some are fairly polarizing, some are neutral, and still others are just plain silly.

Blogs

The blogosphere affords views of politics that tend to be slanted according to the political orientation of the blog sponsor. In the last several decades, blogs have surged in popularity as a source for political news and opinion.

Social Media

Staying connected can be as simple as following local, national, or international politics on social media. Former President Barack Obama, Senator Elizabeth Warren, House Speaker Paul Ryan, and even the White House have Instagram accounts worth following. Most politicians and political outlets are also on Twitter and Facebook.

Check the Data

- It's not always easy to figure out whether a news report or public statement is accurate. PolitiFact, a project of the *Tampa Bay Times*, is a good place to go to get the facts: politifact.com. Check out the Truth-O-Meter, and get it on your smartphone or tablet.
- A project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, factcheck.org is a nonpartisan, nonprofit "consumer advocate" for voters that monitors the factual accuracy of what political players are saying in TV ads, speeches, and interviews.

Keep Up during Election Season

- Project Vote Smart offers information on elections and candidates: votesmart.org.
- Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight features election analysis, in addition to covering sports and economics: fivethirtyeight.com.
- Stay connected to the horse-race aspect of electoral politics by tracking election polls. There are many good sources:
 - For a comprehensive collection of election polls, go to the RealClearPolitics website: realclearpolitics.com/polls. RealClearPolitics is a good source for other political news and opinions as well.
 - Polls for U.S. federal elections, including state-by-state polls, can be found at electoral-vote.com.
 - HuffPost Pollster publishes pre-election poll results combined into interactive charts: elections.huffingtonpost.com/pollster. During presidential elections, additional maps and electoral vote counts can be found at HuffPost Politics Election dashboard.
- If you have the opportunity, attend a speech by a candidate you're interested in.



Monitor Money and Influence in Politics

The Center for Responsive Politics website is an excellent source for information about who's contributing what amounts to which candidates: opensecrets.org. You can also use the lobbying database to identify the top lobbying firms, the agencies most frequently lobbied, and the industries that spend the most on lobbying activities.

Connect with Congress

You can, of course, learn a lot about what's going on in Congress from the websites of the House of Representatives and the Senate: house.gov and senate.gov. Look up the names and contact information for the senators and the representative from your area. If you want your voice to be heard, simply phone or e-mail your senators or your representative. Members of Congress listen to their constituents and often act in response to their constituents' wishes. Indeed, next to voting, contacting those who represent you in Congress is probably the most effective way to influence government decision making.

Check GovTrack to find out where your representative and senators fall on the leadership and ideology charts, and learn about their most recently sponsored bills and votes on legislation: govtrack.us.



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financial health, accountability and transparency, and reporting of results.

Design Your Own Ways to Take Action

- **Start a network to match those who need assistance and those who want to help.** For example, there may be people on your campus who, because of a disability or recent injury, need someone to help carry belongings, open doors, or push wheelchairs.
- **Do you want to raise awareness about an issue? Is there a cause that you think needs attention? Talk with friends. Find out if they share your concerns. Turn your discussions into a blog. Create videos of events you think are newsworthy and share them online. Sign or start a petition.**

GET INVOLVED

Take an Interest in Your Community—Offer to Help

Every community—large and small—can use energetic people willing to help where there is a need. Local nonprofit agencies serving the homeless, battered women, or troubled teens often welcome volunteers who are willing to pitch in.

The Internet also has abundant resources about nonprofits and charities and how you can get involved:

- **Idealist.org** is a great place to find organizations and events that are looking for employees, interns, and volunteers. Filter by type and area of focus (women, disaster relief, animals, etc.) to find a cause that fits you.
- **Tinyspark.org** is a watchdog for nonprofits and charity organizations. It highlights individuals and groups that are doing good things around the globe and investigates those who may not be doing as much good as you'd think. Tiny Spark also has a podcast.
- **Charitynavigator.org** is another tool for checking on charities. It evaluates and rates charities on

Join a Group on Campus

You probably see flyers promoting groups and recruiting members posted all over campus. Chances are, there's a group organized around something you're interested in or care about.

Maybe it's an organization that works to bring clean water to remote parts of the world. The American Red Cross may be looking for help with campus blood drives. You'll find groups organized around race, culture, or political parties; groups that go on spring break trips to serve communities in need; service organizations of all kinds; and groups that focus on the environment. The list goes on and on.

If you have an interest that isn't represented by the groups on your campus, start your own. Your college or university should have an office of campus life (or something similar) that can help you establish a student organization.

Vote (but Don't Forget to Register First)

- **You can learn about the laws governing voting in your state by going to the website of the National Conference**

of State Legislatures and its link to Voter Identification Requirements: [ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id](https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id).

- **Register:** Enter “register to vote in [your state]” in a search engine. The office in your state that administers voting and elections will have a website that outlines the steps you will need to follow. You can also find out how to obtain an absentee ballot.
- If you want to view a sample ballot to familiarize yourself with what you’ll see at the polls, you will probably be able to view one online. Just enter “sample ballot” in a search engine. Your local election board, the League of Women Voters, or your district library often post a sample ballot online.
- **Vote:** Familiarize yourself with the candidates and issues before you go to the polls. If you’d like to influence the way things are done in your community, state, or Washington, D.C., you can do so by helping to elect local, state, and federal officials whose views you endorse and who you think would do a good job of running the government. Make sure you know the location and hours for your polling place.

Support a Political Party

Getting involved in political parties is as simple as going to the polls and casting your vote for the candidate of one of the major parties—or of a third party. You can also consider becoming a delegate to a party convention. Depending on the state, parties may hold conventions by U.S. House district, by county, or by state legislative district. In many states, the

lowest-level conventions (or, in some states, caucuses) are open to anyone who shows up. Voting rights at a convention, however, may be restricted to those who are elected as precinct delegates in a party primary.

In much of the country, precinct delegate slots go unfilled. If this is true in your area, you can become a precinct delegate with a simple write-in campaign, writing in your own name and persuading a handful of friends or neighbors to write you in as well. Whether you attend a convention as a voting delegate or as a guest, you’ll have a firsthand look at how politics operates. You’ll hear debates on resolutions. You might participate in electing delegates to higher-level conventions—perhaps even the national convention if it is a presidential election year.



Work for a Campaign

Candidates welcome energetic volunteers. So do groups that are supporting (or opposing) ballot measures. While sometimes tiring and frustrating, working in campaign politics can also be exhilarating and very rewarding.

Find the contact information for a campaign you’re interested in on its website, and inquire about volunteer opportunities. Volunteers assemble mailings, answer the telephone, and make calls to encourage voters to support their candidate or cause. Even if you have little free time or are not comfortable talking to strangers, most campaigns can find a way for you to participate.



Be Part of Campus Media

Do you have a nose for news and do you write well? Try reporting for the university newspaper. Work your way up to an editor’s position. If broadcast media are your thing, get involved with your college radio station or go on air on campus TV.

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Engage with Political Institutions, Government Agencies, and Public Policymakers— at Home and Abroad

- **Visit the government websites for your state and community and learn about your representatives.** Contact them with your thoughts on matters that are important to you. Attend a city council meeting. You can find the date, location, and agenda on your city's website. And if you're passionate about a local issue, you can even sign up to speak.
- **Check to see if internships or volunteer opportunities are available close to home.** Your U.S. representative has a district office, and your U.S. senators also have offices in various locations around the state. If you plan to be in Washington, D.C., and want to visit Capitol Hill, book a tour in advance through your senators' or representative's offices. That's also where you can obtain gallery passes to the House and Senate chambers.
- **Spend some time in Washington, D.C.** Many colleges and universities have internship programs with government agencies and institutions. Some have semester-long programs that will bring you into contact with policymakers, journalists, and a variety of other prominent newsmakers. Politics and government will come alive, and the contacts you make while participating in such programs can often lead to jobs after graduation.
- **If you're interested in the Supreme Court** and you're planning a trip to Washington D.C., try to watch oral arguments. Go to the Court's website to access the link for oral arguments: [supremecourt.gov](https://www.supremecourt.gov). You'll find the argument calendar and a visitor's guide. (The secret is to get in line early.)
- **Become a virtual tourist.** If you can't make it to Washington, D.C., for a semester-long program or even a few days, take the U.S. Capitol Virtual Tour: <https://www.capitol.gov>.

- **You can take a virtual tour of the Supreme Court** at the website of the Oyez Project at IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law: www.oyez.org/tour. You can also listen to Supreme Court oral arguments wherever you are. Go to the Oyez site and check out ISCOTUSnow (blogs.kentlaw.iit.edu/iscotus/).
- **Check with the study-abroad office** at your college or university. Studying abroad is a great way to expand your horizons and get a feel for different cultures and the global nature of politics and the economy. There are programs that will take you almost anywhere in the world.
- **Participate in the Model UN Club** on your campus (or start a Model UN Club if there isn't one). By participating in Model UN, you will become aware of international issues and conflicts and gain hands-on experience in diplomacy.

**GET INFORMED.
GET CONNECTED.
GET INVOLVED.**



Every day in America, almost 12,000 people turn age 18 and become eligible to vote. Each vote makes a difference!

Rock the Vote! is the largest nonprofit and nonpartisan organization providing the tools college students need to get registered to vote. It also provides resources about becoming a more active citizen.

Go to the website below and get involved. Let your voice be heard!

Go to the Rock the Vote website below and ...

ROCK THE VOTE
Building political power for young people. ID rules
News
Report: Wisconsin voter ID caused some problems, mostly in student areas, on election day
05/11/16 | Wisconsin State Journal

REGISTER TO VOTE PLEDGE TO ROCK THE VOTE

How to Rock the Vote

- Am I Registered?
- Absentee Voting
- Register to Vote
- Get Election Reminders
- Vote as a Student
- Voter ID
- Where to Vote
- Overseas/Military

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO #ROCKTHEVOTE

Source: Rock the Vote

1 AMERICA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY



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LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1-1 Explain what is meant by the terms *politics* and *government*.
- 1-2 Identify the various types of government systems.
- 1-3 Summarize some of the basic principles of American democracy and basic American political values.
- 1-4 Define common American ideological positions, such as “conservatism” and “liberalism.”

After finishing this chapter, go to **PAGE 22** for **STUDY TOOLS**



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During the first week of the Trump administration, press secretary Sean Spicer announced that the new administration was not going to let the “mainstream media get away with anything.” During the years leading up to his presidential victory, Trump relied heavily on communications methods that bypassed the mainstream media. He was, and still is, famous for his constant barrage of tweets.

But even before Trump and his blizzard of tweets, the great news institutions of the twentieth century

were fading. These include print newspapers, weekly news magazines, and the televised evening news, presented by trusted anchorpersons. With the advent of the Internet, social media, and unlimited access to videos and blogs, we now live in a world of hyper information, most of it unfiltered. Does that mean that we can forget about the mainstream media and just let them ride off into the sunset?

Forget the Mainstream Media— They Are Biased Anyway

Trump’s people certainly seem to believe that the mainstream media are doomed. They see these sources as a collection of has-beens with liberal biases who can’t accept that the world has changed. As chief White House strategist Steve Bannon told the *New York Times*: “The media should be embarrassed and humiliated and keep its mouth shut and just listen for awhile.”

Leaving aside the contention that the mainstream media are pro-liberal and anti-Trump, more and more news consumers today use mobile devices to find out what is happening. Young people simply have no interest in reading the print edition of any newspaper or magazine. They get their news from Twitter, Facebook, online bloggers, and just about any place except the mainstream media.

In the past, most Americans had to put up with the opinions of their local newspaper and network anchorpersons, whether they agreed with those opinions or not. That is no longer necessary. You can find the news presented in whatever way you wish on hundreds of Internet news sites and thousands of blogs.

Don’t Kid Yourself—We Need Real Reporters and Real Facts

Defenders of the mainstream media have a very different view of what is happening. The real world is not just made up of tweets, retweets, and Facebook’s news feed. If all we rely on are tweets from politicians and their supporters, we are in for real trouble. When a president tweets a falsehood, it takes the mainstream media to fight back so that the public knows the truth. Politifact, a Pulitzer Prize-winning fact-checker, has found that more than two out of every three statements made by Trump are mostly false, false, or “pants on fire.”

The mainstream media have and will continue to serve a civic role, one in which they function as useful filters of information. They sort facts from lies. Rather than simply criticizing the mainstream media as irrelevant, we should be looking for ways to strengthen them. And that does cost money. After all, journalists have families to feed and thus must be paid. Companies that are part of the mainstream media must make profits to stay in business. New types of media are all very fine, but we also need to support and encourage the media that have served us well since this nation was founded.

Where do you stand?

1. What is the danger, if any, in obtaining news only from your friends, tweets, and Facebook’s trending topics?
2. What methods could you use to find out whether your favorite news sources are biased?

Explore this issue online

- Search for “state of the news media” to see a comprehensive report by the Pew Research Center.
- Ann Arbor is now the largest city in the nation without a for-profit daily newspaper. (The University of Michigan still supports a daily.) See what replaced the *Ann Arbor News* at www.mlive.com/ann-arbor.

INTRODUCTION

Regardless of how Americans feel about government, one thing is certain: they can't live without it. James Madison (1751–1836) once said, "If men were angels, no government would be necessary." Today, his statement still holds true. People are not perfect. People need an organized form of government and a set of rules by which to live.

Government performs a wide range of extremely important functions. From the time we are born until the day we die, we constantly interact with various levels of government. Most (although not all) students attend government-run schools. All of us travel on government-owned streets and highways. Many of us serve in the military—a completely government-controlled environment. A few of us get into trouble and meet up with the government's law enforcement system. Every citizen reaching the age of sixty-five can expect the government to help with medical and living expenses. To fund all these functions, the government collects taxes.

In a representative democracy such as ours, it is politics that controls what the government decides to do. What combination of taxes and government services is best? When should our leaders use military force against foreign nations or rebellions in foreign countries? As discussed in this chapter's opening *America at Odds* feature, how do citizens gain the information they need to make these decisions? How the nation answers these and many other questions will have a major impact on your life—and participation in politics is the only way you can influence what happens.

1-1 WHAT ARE POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT?

LO Explain what is meant by the terms *politics* and *government*.

institution An ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society.

social conflict Disagreements among people in a society over what the society's priorities should be.

Even if—contrary to Madison's observation—people were perfect, they would still need to establish rules to guide their behavior. They would somehow have to agree on how to divide up a society's resources,

such as its land, among themselves and how to balance individual needs and wants against those of society generally.

These perfect people would also have to decide *how* to make these decisions. They would need to create a process for making rules and a form of government to enforce those rules. It is thus not difficult to understand why government is one of humanity's oldest and most universal **institutions**.

As you will read in this chapter, a number of different systems of government exist in the world today.

In the United States, we have a democracy in which decisions about pressing issues ultimately are made politically by the people's representatives in government.

Because people rarely have identical thoughts and feelings about issues, it is not surprising that in any democracy citizens are often at odds over many political and social problems. Throughout this book, you will read about contemporary controversies that have brought various groups of Americans into conflict with one another.

Differences in political opinion are essential parts of a democratic government. Ultimately, these differences are resolved, one way or another, through the American political process and our government institutions.

1-1a Defining Politics and Government

Politics means many things to many people. There are also many different notions about the meaning of government. How should we define these two central concepts?

Politics and Conflict To some, politics is an expensive and extravagant game played in Washington, D.C., in state capitols, and in city halls, particularly during election time. To others, politics involves all of the tactics and maneuvers carried out by the president and Congress. Most formal definitions of politics, however, begin with the assumption that **social conflict**—disagreements among people in a society over what the society's priorities should be—is inevitable. Conflicts will naturally arise over how the society should use its scarce resources and who should receive various benefits, such as health care and higher education. Resolving such

conflicts is the essence of **politics**. Political scientist Harold Lasswell perhaps said it best in his classic definition of politics as the process of determining “who gets what, when, and how” in a society.¹

Government and Authority

Disputes over how to distribute a society’s resources inevitably arise because valued resources, such as property, are limited, while people’s wants are unlimited. To resolve such disputes, people need ways to determine who wins and who loses, and how to get the losers to accept those decisions. Who has the legitimate power—the *authority*—to make such decisions? This is where governments step in.

From the perspective of political science, **government** can best be defined as the individuals and institutions that make society’s rules and also possess the power and authority to enforce those rules. Generally, in any country, government uses its authority to serve at least three essential purposes:

- ▶ **Resolving conflicts,**
- ▶ **providing public services, and**
- ▶ **defending the nation and its culture against attacks by other nations.**

1-1b Resolving Conflicts

Governments decide how conflicts will be resolved so that public order can be maintained. Governments have **power**—the ability to influence the behavior of others. Power is getting someone to do something that he or she would not otherwise do. Power may involve the use of force (often called coercion), persuasion, or rewards. Governments typically also have **authority**, which they can exercise only if their power is legitimate. As used here, the term *authority* means the ability to use power that is collectively recognized and accepted by society as legally and morally correct. Power and authority are central to a government’s ability to resolve conflicts by making and enforcing laws, placing limits on what people can do, and developing court systems to make final decisions.

For example, the judicial branch of government—specifically, the United States Supreme Court—resolved



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Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Secret Service agents set up security equipment outside an upcoming rally by senator and presidential candidate Bernie Sanders (D., Vt.) in Santa Cruz, California. Why is passenger screening at airports carried out by federal government employees such as TSA staff?

the highly controversial question of whether the Second Amendment to the Constitution grants individuals the right to bear arms. In 2008 and 2010, the Court affirmed that such a right does exist. Because of the Court’s stature and authority as a government body, there was little resistance to its decision, even from gun control advocates.

1-1c Providing Public Services

Another important purpose of government is to provide **public services**—essential services that many individuals cannot provide for themselves. Governments undertake projects that individuals usually would not or could not carry out on their own.

politics The process of resolving conflicts over how society should use its scarce resources and who should receive various benefits, such as public health care and public higher education.

government The individuals and institutions that make society’s rules and possess the power and authority to enforce those rules.

power The ability to influence the behavior of others, usually through the use of force, persuasion, or rewards.

authority The ability to legitimately exercise power, such as the power to make and enforce laws.

public services Essential services that individuals cannot provide for themselves, such as building and maintaining roads, establishing welfare programs, operating public schools, and preserving national parks.

These projects include building and maintaining roads, establishing welfare programs, operating public schools, and preserving national parks. Governments also provide such services as law enforcement, fire protection, and public health and safety programs. As Abraham Lincoln once stated:

The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people, whatever they need to have done, but cannot do, *at all*, or cannot, *so well* do, for themselves—in their separate, individual capacities. In all that the people can individually do as well for themselves, government ought not to interfere.²

Services for All and Services for Some Some public services are provided equally to all citizens of the United States. For example, government services such as national defense and domestic law enforcement allow all citizens, at least in theory, to feel that their lives and property are safe. Laws governing clean air and safe drinking water benefit all Americans.

Other services are provided only to citizens who are in need at a particular time, even though they are paid for by all citizens through taxes. Such services include health and welfare benefits. For example, a program such as Social Security Disability Insurance provides a source of income to people whose ability to work is limited by a notable disability. Americans contribute to the program through the Social Security payroll tax, regardless of whether they ever become disabled.

Managing the Economy

One of the most crucial public services that the government is expected to provide is protection from hardship caused by economic recessions or depressions. From 2008 on, this governmental objective became more important than almost any other, due to the severity of the Great Recession that began in December 2007.

One of the most damaging consequences of the recession has been low rates of employment, which have continued into the present, even though the recession officially ended in June 2009 when economic growth resumed. True, the official *unemployment* rate was 4.7 percent at the beginning of 2017, down from a high

of 10 percent. Yet the unemployment rate counts only people who are actively looking for work. The share of Americans of prime working age without a job in 2017 was almost 2 percentage points higher than in 2007. That translates into more than 2 million people who have not gone back to work. As you will learn later in this chapter, when many Americans continue to face economic hardships, they often have negative views about how well our government is “running the ship.”

1-1d Defending the Nation and Its Culture

Historically, matters of national security and defense have been given high priority by governments and have demanded considerable time, effort, and expense. The U.S. government provides for the common defense and national security with its Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard. The departments of State, Defense, and Homeland Security, plus the Central Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, and other agencies, also contribute to this defense network.

As part of an ongoing policy of national security, many departments and agencies in the federal government are constantly dealing with other nations. The Constitution gives our national government exclusive power over relations with foreign nations. No individual state can negotiate a treaty with a foreign nation.



A U.S. Navy SEAL with diving gear and weapons. As of early 2017, participation by U.S. troops in Syria was limited to special operations forces such as the SEALs. Why would the federal government be reluctant to introduce regular infantry soldiers into that conflict?

Of course, in defending the nation against attacks by other nations, a government helps to preserve the nation's culture, as well as its integrity as an independent unit. Failure to defend successfully against foreign attacks may have significant consequences for a nation's culture. For example, consider what happened in Tibet in the 1950s. When that country was taken over by the People's Republic of China, the conquering Chinese set out on a systematic program, the effective result of which was large-scale cultural destruction.

Attacks by foreign governments are not the only threat that nations must address. Since the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, defending the homeland against future terrorist attacks has become a priority of our government. Terrorists often operate independently of any foreign authority, even if they are inspired from abroad. Examples include the killings in San Bernardino, California, in December 2015 and the massacre at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in 2016.

CRITICAL THINKING

- *Would it be a good idea to send U.S. ground forces to attack ISIS in Iraq or Syria, or would doing so lead to even greater problems than we already face? Explain your answer.*

1-2 DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT

LO Identify the various types of government systems.

Through the centuries, the functions of government just discussed have been performed by many different types of structures. A government's structure is influenced by a number of factors, such as a country's history, customs, values, geography, resources, and human experiences and needs. No two nations have exactly the same form of government. Over time, however, political analysts have developed ways to classify different systems of government. One of the most meaningful ways is according to *who* governs. Who has the power to make the rules and laws that all must obey?

1-2a Undemocratic Systems

Before the development of modern democratic systems, the power of the government was typically in the hands of an authoritarian individual or group. When such power is exercised by an individual, the system is called an **autocracy**. Autocrats can gain power by traditional or nontraditional means.

Monarchy One form of autocracy, known as a **monarchy**, is government by a king or queen, an emperor or empress—or a person with some other aristocratic title, such as emir, grand duke, or prince. In a monarchy, the monarch, who usually acquires power through inheritance, is the highest authority in the government.

Historically, many monarchies were *absolute monarchies*, in which the ruler held complete and unlimited power. Until the eighteenth century, the theory of “divine right” was widely accepted in Europe. This **divine right theory**, variations of which had existed since ancient times, held that God gave those of royal birth the unlimited right to govern other men and women. In other words, those of royal birth had a “divine right” to rule, and only God could judge them. Thus, all citizens were bound to obey their monarchs, no matter how unfair or unjust they seemed to be. Challenging this power was regarded not only as treason against the government but also as a sin against God.

Most modern monarchies, however, are *constitutional monarchies*, in which the monarch shares governmental power with elected lawmakers. Over time, the monarch's power has come to be limited, or checked, by other government leaders and perhaps by a constitution or a bill of rights. Most constitutional monarchs today serve merely as ceremonial leaders of their nations, as in Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (Britain).

Dictatorship Undemocratic systems that are not supported by tradition are called **dictatorships**. Often, a dictator is a single individual, although dictatorial power can be exercised by a group, such as the Communist Party of China. Dictators are not accountable to anyone else.

A dictatorship can be *totalitarian*, which means that a leader or group of leaders seeks to control almost all aspects of social and economic life. The leadership establishes the goals of society. Citizens must conform to the government's dictates in all fields of endeavor—in the economy, in literature and entertainment, and even in private conversation. Typically, these collective goals

autocracy A form of government in which the power and authority of the government are in the hands of a single person.

monarchy A form of autocracy in which a king, queen, or other aristocrat is the highest authority in the government. Monarchs usually obtain their power through inheritance.

divine right theory The theory that a monarch's right to rule was derived directly from God rather than from the consent of the people.

dictatorship A form of government in which absolute power is exercised by an individual or group whose power is not supported by tradition.

benefit only the leaders and are damaging to the nation as a whole.

Examples of the totalitarian form of government include Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime in Germany from 1933 to 1945 and Joseph Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union (Russia) from 1929 to 1953. A more contemporary example of a totalitarian dictator is the latest leader of North Korea, Kim Jong-un.

1-2b Democratic Systems

The most familiar form of government to Americans is **democracy**, in which the supreme political authority rests with the people. The word *democracy* comes from the

democracy A system of government in which the people have ultimate political authority. The word is derived from the Greek *demos* ("the people") and *kratia* ("rule").

direct democracy A system of government in which political decisions are made by the people themselves rather than by elected representatives. This form of government was practiced in some parts of ancient Greece.

Greek *demos*, meaning "the people," and *kratia*, meaning "rule." The main idea of democracy is that government exists only by the consent of the people and reflects the will of the majority. Figure 1-1 shows the extent of democracy in the world today—with "democratic" defined as "free."

The Athenian Model of Direct Democracy

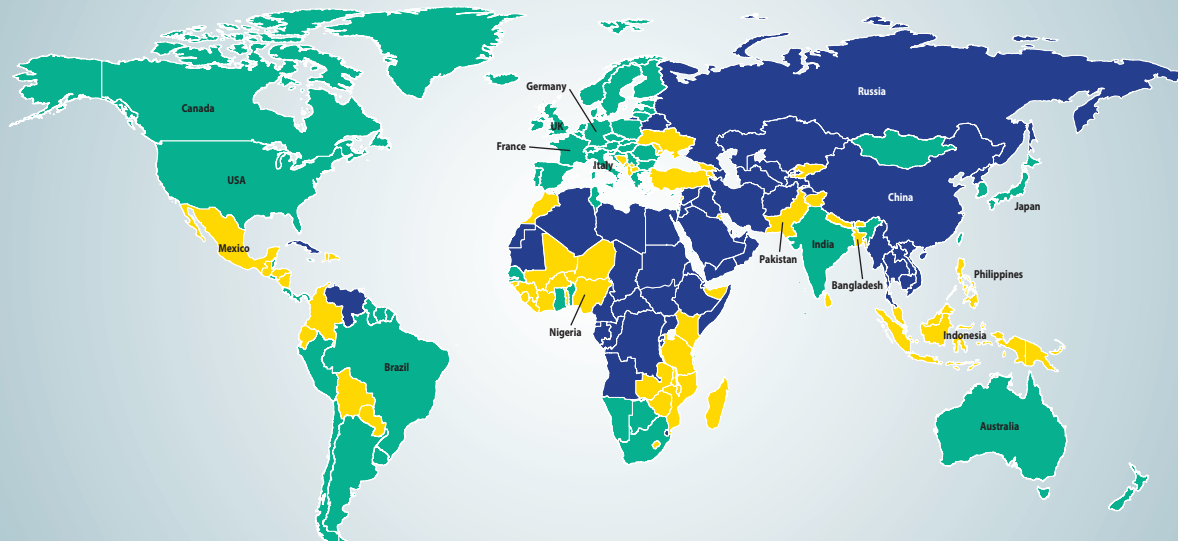
Democracy as a form of government began long ago. In its earliest form, democracy was simpler than the system we know today. What we now call **direct democracy** exists when the people participate directly in government decision making. In its purest form, direct democracy was practiced in Athens and several other ancient Greek city-states about 2,500 years ago. Every Athenian citizen participated in the governing assembly and voted on all major issues. Some consider the Athenian form of direct democracy ideal because it demanded a high degree of citizen participation. Others point out that most residents in the Athenian city-state (women, foreigners, and slaves) were not considered citizens. Thus, they were not allowed to participate in government.³

Direct Democracy Today Clearly, direct democracy is possible only in small communities in which citizens can meet in a chosen place and decide key issues and policies. Nowhere in the world does pure direct democracy exist today. Some New England towns, though, and a few of the smaller political subunits, or cantons, of Switzerland still use a modified form of direct democracy.

Another modern institution with some of the characteristics of direct democracy is the ballot proposal,

FIGURE 1-1 FREE AND UNFREE NATIONS OF THE WORLD, JANUARY 2017

In this classification of nations by Freedom House, green means free, yellow means partly free, and blue means unfree. Bear in mind that these are the assessments of a single organization. *Why might another organization come up with a different system of classification?*



Sources: Arch Puddington and Tyler Roylance, *Populists and Autocrats: The Dual Threat to Global Democracy* (Washington, D.C.: Freedom House, 2017). Outline map adapted from Wikimedia.



In this rather idealized painting by Norman Rockwell, a working man rises to speak at a New England town meeting. The 1943 work, titled “Freedom of Speech,” was one of four. The others illustrated freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. Why would Rockwell paint such images in the middle of World War II (1939–1945)?

in which the voters themselves decide a specific question rather than letting their elected officials resolve the issue. Ballot proposals are used in many American states. In one type, the *referendum*, the legislature sends a ballot proposal to the voters. The *initiative* differs in that a question is placed on the ballot by gathering signatures, not by action of the legislature. A related process is *recall*, an initiative to remove an elected official immediately, before his or her term of office comes to an end.

Representative Democracy Although the founders of the United States were aware of the Athenian model and agreed that government should be based on the consent of the governed, they believed that direct democracy would deteriorate into mob rule. They thought that large groups of people meeting together would ignore the rights and opinions of people in the minority and would make decisions without careful thought. They believed that representative assemblies were superior because they would enable public decisions to be made in a calmer and more deliberate manner.

In a **representative democracy**, the will of the majority is expressed through smaller groups of individuals elected by the people to act as their representatives. These representatives are responsible to the people for their conduct and can be voted out of office.

Our founders preferred to use the term **republic**, which means essentially a representative system with one qualification. A democratic republic, by definition, has no king or queen. Rather, the people are sovereign. In contrast, a representative democracy may be headed by a monarch. For example, as Britain evolved into a representative democracy, it retained its monarch as the head of state (but with no real power).

Types of Representative Democracy In the modern world, there are basically two forms of representative democracy: presidential and parliamentary. In a *presidential democracy*, the lawmaking and law-enforcing branches of government are separate but equal. For example, in the United States, Congress is charged with the power to make laws, and the president is charged with the power to carry them out.

In a *parliamentary democracy*, the lawmaking and law-enforcing branches of government are united. In Britain, for example, the prime minister and the cabinet are members of the legislature, called Parliament, and are responsible to that body. A **parliament** thus both enacts the laws and carries them out.

CRITICAL THINKING

► **Chinese Communist leader Mao Zedong (1893–1976) once said, “Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.” Was Mao right? Why or why not?**

1–3

AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

LO Summarize some of the basic principles of American democracy and basic American political values.

“This country, with all its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional right to

representative democracy A form of democracy in which the will of the majority is expressed through groups of individuals elected by the people to act as their representatives.

republic Essentially, a representative system in which there is no king or queen and the people are sovereign.

parliament The national legislative body in countries governed by a parliamentary system, such as Britain and Canada.

“The thing about democracy, beloveds, is that it is not neat, orderly or quiet. It requires a certain relish for confusion.”

~ MOLLY IVINS, AMERICAN JOURNALIST, 1944–2007

amend it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it.”⁴

With these words, Abraham Lincoln underscored the most fundamental concept of American government: the people, not the government, are ultimately in control.

1-3a The British Legacy

In writing the U.S. Constitution, the framers incorporated two basic principles of government that had evolved in England: *limited government* and *representative government*. In a sense, then, the beginnings of our form of government are linked to events that occurred centuries earlier in England. They are also linked to the writings of European philosophers, particularly the English political philosopher John Locke (1632–1704). From these writings, the founders of our nation derived ideas to justify their rebellion against Britain and their establishment of a “government by the people.”

Limited Government At one time, the English monarch claimed to have almost unrestricted powers. This changed in 1215, when King John was forced by his nobles to accept the Magna Carta, or the Great Charter. This

monumental document provided for a trial by a jury of one’s peers (equals). It prohibited the taking of a free man’s life, liberty, or property except through due process of law. The Magna Carta also forced the king to obtain the nobles’ approval of any taxes he imposed on them. Government thus became a contract between the king and his subjects.

The importance of the Magna Carta to England

limited government

A form of government based on the principle that the powers of government should be clearly limited either through a written document or through wide public understanding.

social contract

A voluntary agreement among individuals to create a government and to give that government adequate power to secure the mutual protection and welfare of all individuals.

cannot be overemphasized, because it clearly established the principle of **limited government**—a government on which strict limits are placed, usually by a constitution. This form of government is characterized by institutional checks to ensure that it serves public rather than private interests. Hence, the Magna Carta signaled the end of the monarch’s absolute power. Although many of the rights provided under the original Magna Carta applied only to the nobility, the document formed the basis of the future constitutional government for England and eventually the United States.

Representative Government In a representative government, the people, by whatever means, elect individuals to make governmental decisions for all of the citizens. Usually, these representatives of the people are elected to their offices for specific periods of time. In England, as mentioned earlier, this group of representatives is called a *parliament*. The English form of government provided a model for Americans to follow. Each of the American colonies established its own legislature.

In 1689, the English Parliament passed the English Bill of Rights, which further extended the concepts of limited and representative government. This document included several important ideas:

- ▶ The king or queen could not interfere with parliamentary elections.
- ▶ The king or queen had to have Parliament’s approval to levy (collect) taxes or to maintain an army.
- ▶ The king or queen had to rule with the consent of the people’s representatives in Parliament.

The English colonists in North America were also English citizens, and nearly all of the major concepts in the English Bill of Rights became part of the American system of government.

Political Philosophy: Social Contracts and Natural Rights

Our democracy resulted from what can be viewed as a type of **social contract** among early Americans to create and abide by a set of governing rules. Social-contract theory was developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by philosophers such as John Locke. According to this theory, individuals voluntarily agree with one another, in a “social contract,” to give up some of their freedoms to obtain the benefits of orderly government. The government is given adequate power to secure the mutual protection and welfare of all individuals.