

notes:

last updated on 1/13/26

color key:

ORANGE: people or a group of people

PURPLE: vocab

BLUE: documents / sc cases / laws / acts etc

PINK: processes to know

Unit 1: Foundations of American Democracy

- What is the **social contract**?
- What is **popular sovereignty**?
- What are **natural rights**?
- What is **republicanism**?
- What is **federalism**?
- What is **limited government**?
- What are **factions**?
- Who was **John Locke**?
- Who was **Thomas Hobbes**?
- Who wrote the **Declaration of Independence**? Main ideas?
- Who wrote the **Articles of Confederation**? Main ideas?
- Who wrote the **Federalist Papers**?
- What is **Federalist 10** about? Who wrote it?
- What is **Federalist 51** about? Who wrote it?
- What is **Federalist 70** about? Who wrote it?
- What is **Federalist 78** about? Who wrote it?
- What is **Brutus 1** about?
- Who wrote the **Constitution**? Main ideas?
- What is **Article 1**?
- What is **Article 2**?
- What is **Article 3**?
- What is **Article 4**?
- What is **separation of powers**? List some examples.
- What are **checks and balances**? List some examples.
- What is **participatory democracy**? What is an example of it in the US government?
- What is **pluralist democracy**? What is an example of it in the US government?

- What is **elitist democracy**? What is an example of it in the US government?
- What is a **direct democracy**? What is an example of it in the US government?
- List a few weaknesses of the **Articles of Confederation**.
- What was the significance of **Shays' Rebellion**?
- What problem did the **electoral college** solve?
- What is the **Virginia Plan**? What is the **New Jersey Plan**?
- What is the **Great/Connecticut Compromise**?
- What is the **3/5s Compromise**?
- How can the **Constitution be amended**?
- Who were **Federalists**? What were their arguments?
- Who were **Anti-Federalists**? What were their arguments?
- Why was the **Bill of Rights** added to the **Constitution**?
- What is the **impeachment process**?
- What is **Article 5**?
- What is **Article 6**?
- What is **Article 7**?
- What are **categorical grants**?
- What are **block grants**?
- What are **funded mandates**?
- What are **unfunded mandates**?
- What is the **Commerce Clause**?
- What is the **Necessary and Proper Clause**?
- What is the **Supremacy Clause**?
- What is **dual federalism**?
- What is **cooperative federalism**?
- What is **fiscal federalism**?

Unit 2: Interactions among branches of government

- What are **enumerated powers**?
- What are **exclusive powers**?
- What are **implied powers**?
- What are **reserved powers**?
- What are **concurrent powers**?
- What are **denied powers**?
- What is **bicameralism**?
- How many **House of Representative** members are there? How long do they serve?
- How many **Senators** are there? How long do they serve?
- How old do you have to be to be an **HOR** member? A **Senator**?

- List some powers the legislative branch were given.
- How are judicial appointments confirmed?
- What is the Speaker of the House?
- What is the President of the Senate? What is the president pro tempore?
- What are Majority and Minority Leaders (in both chambers of Congress)?
- What are party whips?
- What is a standing committee?
- What are select committees?
- What are joint committees?
- What are conference committees?
- What is the rules committee?
- What are constituents?
- What is a coalition?
- What is a filibuster?
- What is cloture? How many are needed for a cloture?
- What is a hold?
- What is a discharge petition?
- What is a unanimous consent agreement?
- Which chamber has stricter rules for debate?
- What are earmarks?
- What is logrolling?
- What is pork barrel spending?
- What is mandatory spending?
- What is discretionary spending?
- What is the delegate model of representation?
- What is the trustee model of representation?
- What is the politico model of representation?
- What is gerrymandering?
- What is a divided government?
- What is a unified government?
- What is gridlock?
- What does partisan mean?
- How often do we redistrict?
- What is the Vesting Clause?
- Define the following presidential powers and state if they are formal or informal.
 - ★ Veto Power:
 - ★ Make treaties:
 - ★ Commander in Chief of military:

★ Executive orders:

★ Executive agreements:

★ Signing Statements:

- What is the State of the Union Address?
- What is the bully pulpit?
- Why don't presidents always use executive orders and agreements?
- What is the cabinet? What are some of the departments called?
- Can the President introduce legislation to Congress?
- What is the War Powers Act?
- What is the Judiciary Act of 1789?
- What is judicial review?
- What is judicial independence?
- What is judicial activism?
- What is judicial restraint?
- Who is John Marshall?
- How long do justices on the Supreme Court serve?
- What is precedent?
- What is stare decisis?
- What is original jurisdiction?
- What is appellate jurisdiction?
- What is amicus curiae?
- What is a writ of certiorari?
- What are court curbing measures?
- Who can establish or abolish lower courts?
- What is the Rule of Four?
- What is the bureaucracy?
- What makes up the iron triangle?
- What is compliance monitoring?
- What is the spoils system? Who started it?
- What is the merit system? What did it do?
- What is an interest group? What are some examples?
- What are issue networks?
- What is discretionary authority?
- What is rule making authority?
- List some ways Congress can use oversight to oversee the bureaucracy.
- What is fire alarm oversight?
- What is police patrol oversight?

Unit 3: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

- What is the difference between **civil liberties** and **civil rights**?
- What was the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**?
- What was the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**?
- What was **Title IX**?
- What is the **Establishment Clause**?
- What is the **Free Exercise Clause**?
- What is the **clear and present danger test**?
- What is **libel**? What is **slander**?
- What is **hate speech**?
- What is **prior restraint**?
- What is the **exclusionary rule**?
- What is **selective incorporation**?
- What is **total incorporation**?
- What is the **due process clause**?
- What was the **Seneca Falls Convention**?
- What were the **Stonewall Riots**?
- What is **civil disobedience**?
- What is the **separate but equal doctrine**?
- What is the **Letter From Birmingham Jail** about? Who wrote it? Main ideas?
- What is **affirmative action**?

Unit 4: American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

- What is **individualism**?
- What is **equality of opportunity**?
- What is **free market**?
- What is **rule of law**?
- What is **political socialization**?
- What are **generational effects**?
- What are **life-cycle effects**?
- What is **globalization**?
- What's a **benchmark poll**? **Tracking poll**? **Entrance poll**? **Exit poll**?
- What is a **focus group**?
- Why is the wording of a question important in a poll?
- What is a **sample size**?
- What demographics are more likely to identify as **Democrats** (gender, income status, race, religion, age)?

- What demographics are more likely to identify as **Republicans** (gender, income status, race, religion, age)?
- List some **Democratic** policies.
- List some **Republican** policies.
- What is **American exceptionalism**?
- What is **libertarianism**?
- What is **party realignment**?
- What is **fiscal policy**?
- What is **monetary policy**?
- What is **Keynesian economics**?
- What is **supply-side economics**?
- What is **laissez-faire**?
- What are examples of **social policy**?

Unit 5: Political Participation

- Which amendments increased **political participation**?
- What is **retrospective voting**?
- What is **prospective voting**?
- What is **party line/straight ticket voting**?
- What is **rational choice voting**?
- What type of elections is **voter turnout** higher in?
- What kind of factors influence who people vote for?
- What is **political efficacy**?
- What is a **primary election**?
- What are **open primaries**? **Closed primaries**?
- What are **general elections**?
- What are **midterm elections**?
- How do state laws influence **voter turnout**?
- What is a **caucus**?
- How does the **electoral college** work? What do proponents say about it versus opponents?
- What are **poll taxes**?
- What are **linkage institutions**? What are some examples?
- What are some functions of **political parties**?
- What is a **candidate-centered campaign**?
- What are some examples of **third parties**?
- What is the **winner take all method**?
- What is the **proportional allocation system**?
- What are some reasons why **third parties** don't do as well as the other two parties?
- What is the **free rider problem**?

- What is lobbying?
- What is electioneering?
- What is a single-issue group?
- What is the incumbency advantage?
- What are the effects of social media in elections?
- What are the effects of concentration of media ownership?
- What is the difference between soft money and hard money?
- What are the main differences between PACs and SuperPACs?
- What is the Bipartisan Reform Act of 2002?
- What is horse race journalism?
- What is watchdog journalism?
- What effects does the media have on public opinion/voter turnout?
- What is agenda-setting?
- What are referendums?
- What are ballot measures?

Amendments: write them in your own words!

the most important ones (in my opinion) are highlighted!

- What is the 1st amendment?
- What is the 2nd amendment?
- What is the 3rd amendment?
- What is the 4th amendment?
- What is the 5th amendment?
- What is the 6th amendment?
- What is the 7th amendment?
- What is the 8th amendment?
- What is the 9th amendment?
- What is the 10th amendment?
- What is the 11th amendment?
- What is the 12th amendment?
- What is the 13th amendment?
- What is the 14th amendment?
- What is the 15th amendment?
- What is the 16th amendment?
- What is the 17th amendment?
- What is the 18th amendment?
- What is the 19th amendment?
- What is the 20th amendment?
- What is the 21st amendment?
- What is the 22nd amendment?

- What is the 23rd amendment?
- What is the 24th amendment?
- What is the 25th amendment?
- What is the 26th amendment?
- What is the 27th amendment?

SCOTUS Cases (Required)

Tinker v. Des Moines:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What is symbolic speech?
4. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Schenck v. US:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What is the clear and present danger test?
4. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

NYT CO. v. US:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What is prior restraint?
4. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Wisconsin v. Yoder:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Engel v. Vitale:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Citizens United v. FEC:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

McDonald v. Chicago:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Gideon v. Wainwright:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Brown v. Board of Education:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

US v. Lopez:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What are the 2 related clauses?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Baker v. Carr:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

McCulloch v. Maryland:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What are the 2 related clauses?
3. What are enumerated vs implied powers?

4. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Marbury v. Madison:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. What important judicial power was gained through this case?
4. Which foundational document discussed this power?
5. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

Shaw v. Reno:

1. Describe the case briefly (background info, ruling, dissent etc):
2. What is the related clause?
3. Which vocab word is important in this case? (Hint: It has to do with redistricting.)
4. What did this case incorporate to the states if anything?

SCOTUS Cases (Not Required)

Summarize the outcome of the case very briefly.

1. Griswold v. Connecticut:
2. Roe v. Wade:
3. Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization:
4. Plessy v. Ferguson:
5. District of Columbia v. Heller:
6. Loving v. Virginia:
7. Miranda v. Arizona:
8. Mapp v. Ohio:
9. Obergefell v. Hodges:
10. Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.:

references:

Kaplan Review Book
Heimler's History
Khan Academy

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thank you <3