

Chapter 04: The United States

The United States

1. The result of the 2012 election was that the _____ party controlled the presidency, the _____ party controlled the House of Representatives and the _____ party controlled the Senate.
 - a. Democratic; Democratic; Republican
 - b. Republican; Democratic; Democratic
 - c. Republican; Republican; Republican
 - d. Democratic; Democratic; Democratic
 - e. Republican; Republican; Democratic

2. What is the name for the process America underwent in 2013 whereby across-the-board spending cuts were imposed on the federal government?
 - a. Individualism
 - b. Judicial review
 - c. Federalism
 - d. Sequestration
 - e. Fiscal cliff

3. The idea that America's political system is a product of a uniquely tranquil political history, a supportive political culture, and a weak, fragmented state is known as American
 - a. individualism.
 - b. quality.
 - c. exceptionalism.
 - d. uniqueness.
 - e. ingenuity.

4. The only country that is geographically larger than the United States *and* has a larger population is
 - a. Canada
 - b. China
 - c. India
 - d. Russia
 - e. South Africa

5. Separation of powers was designed by the authors of the American Constitution to
 - a. create diversity among the country's political elites.
 - b. concentrate power in a single institution.
 - c. distract voters from the creation of a strong central government.
 - d. prevent domination of government by any single faction.
 - e. distribute power among the states.

6. Weaknesses in which system led to the creation of a new constitution in 1787?
 - a. Declaration of Independence

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- b. Constitution
 - c. Two Treatises on Government
 - d. Magna Carta
 - e. Articles of Confederation
7. Between 1776 and 1787 the United States was governed under the
- a. Constitution.
 - b. Charter of the United Federation of Planets.
 - c. Declaration of Independence.
 - d. Magna Carta.
 - e. Articles of Confederation.
8. One reason that the original governing document of the United States was so weak was because
- a. it was drafted by merchants who wanted to control finance.
 - b. George Washington wanted a weak state so that he could be president.
 - c. no one believed that a strong state could exist in the world at that time.
 - d. the colonists had just had a poor experience with a strong British crown.
 - e. France helped draft the document and the French government at the time was very weak.
9. All of the following are the key ideas and ideals that the Framers had taken from European roots EXCEPT
- a. rights of man.
 - b. separation of powers.
 - c. pursuit of life and liberty.
 - d. pursuit of happiness.
 - e. judicial review.
10. The arguments in favor of the ratification of the American constitution of 1787 were gathered together and are now known collectively
- a. the Declaration of Independence.
 - b. the Articles of Confederation.
 - c. the *Federalist Papers*.
 - d. the Magna Carta.
 - e. the *Anti-Federalist Papers*.
11. Your individual right to have whatever religious beliefs you want, free from government interference, is protected by
- a. the Declaration of Independence.
 - b. the First Amendment.
 - c. checks and balances.
 - d. the Second Amendment.
 - e. the United Nations Charter.

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12. The biggest crisis of legitimacy of the American constitutional regime was
- World War I.
 - the Civil War.
 - World War II.
 - the Great Depression.
 - the War of 1812.
13. The *Federalist Papers* were written by
- Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison
 - Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison
 - James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay
 - John Jay, James Monroe, and Alexander Hamilton
 - Alexander Hamilton, James Munroe, and John Jay
14. The *Federalist Papers* highlighted the ideas of this philosopher about separating powers.
- John Locke
 - Thomas Hobbs
 - Aristotle
 - Baron de Montesquieu
 - Rene Descartes
15. In _____ Madison advocated concentrating power in larger jurisdictions such as the federal government.
- Federalist* #10
 - Federalist* #21
 - Federalist* #51
 - Federalist* #15
 - Federalist* #85
16. The “new left” and “new right” in American politics describes primarily
- the emergence of new issues in the past 40 years.
 - the involvement of new and younger people in politics.
 - a realignment of voters.
 - a decline in participation.
 - an abandonment of traditional methods of participation.
17. Which groups emerged in the 1960s and were composed of liberal voters who sought economic equality and protection for the poor, but also introduced the promotion of civil rights and opposition to the Vietnam War?
- Old Left

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- b. New Left
- c. Old Right
- d. New Right
- e. Middle

18. Until the late _____, most observers thought that the United States was one of the countries most conducive to democracy.

- a. 1940s
- b. 1950s
- c. 1970s
- d. 1960s
- e. 1930s

19. American political culture can best be defined as

- a. being dominated by deep ideological divisions.
- b. having active participation in political life by most people.
- c. containing a general distrust of presidents.
- d. holding a widespread desire for limited government.
- e. seeing massive political demonstrations leading to the formulation of policy.

20. American political culture revolves most strongly around

- a. a desire to control immoral behavior.
- b. guarantees of absolute equality.
- c. individualism.
- d. high levels of political activism.
- e. unquestioning acceptance of social controls.

21. Which of the following has NOT been a significant part of American political culture?

- a. Widespread questioning of the Constitution
- b. Popular acceptance of limited government
- c. Strong sense of individualism
- d. General satisfaction with leadership
- e. Grudging acceptance of new groups into the system

22. Which political party was formed as a result of the coming together of several anti-slavery and anti-secession groups to compete in the 1860 presidential election, with Abraham Lincoln as their candidate?

- a. Whigs
- b. Democrats
- c. Republicans
- d. Bull Moose

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e. Greens

23. Durable shifts in the balance of power between party coalitions is known as

- a. review.
- b. realignment.
- c. identification.
- d. incrementalism.
- e. compromise.

24. The Republican Party generally attracts more votes than the Democratic Party does from all of the following groups EXCEPT

- a. men.
- b. those over 65.
- c. rural voters.
- d. whites.
- e. environmentalists.

25. _____ movements burst onto the political scene during the campaign for the 2010 mid-term congressional elections.

- a. Euroskeptic
- b. Greens
- c. Anti-Masons
- d. The Freedom Party
- e. Tea Party

26. According to Mann and Ornstein, _____ played a central role in creating the dysfunctional mess of wasteful spending during Obama's first term.

- a. the legislature
- b. The Tea Party
- c. republicans
- d. democrats
- e. interest groups

27. If a bill is sent to a congressional committee and the committee chooses not to "take on" the bill, what happens to that bill?

- a. It gets assigned to another committee.
- b. It goes to the other chamber of Congress for them to assign to a committee.
- c. It gets "marked up" by the committee.
- d. It must wait ten days, and then be resubmitted to the same committee for a new hearing.
- e. It is considered "dead."

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28. Which of the following is NOT terribly important in determining the way representatives and senators vote on bills before them?
- Their own opinions
 - What they think their constituents want
 - Opinions of lobbyists and campaign contributors
 - Classical themes in political theory
 - What their party leaders want
29. The American presidential system is different from most parliamentary systems because
- of the inability of party leadership to force its elected representatives to vote certain ways.
 - the president can get what he wants through Congress easily.
 - all adults have the right to vote in the United States.
 - civil liberties are always respected in the United States.
 - executive power is not separate from legislative power.
30. A distinguishing feature of American courts that is rare in other liberal democracies is the
- presumption of defendants' innocence.
 - possibility of judicial review.
 - determination of verdicts by judges alone.
 - presidential control of the courts.
 - government attorneys as prosecutors and defenders.
31. Policy making in the United States tends to be
- quick.
 - effective.
 - incremental.
 - strong.
 - ideological.
32. While the United States is a _____ system, other liberal democracies have _____ states.
- federal; unitary
 - unitary; federal
 - federal; confederal
 - confederal; unitary
 - federal; confederal
33. The United States is structured in such a way that the national government shares power with the state and local governments, a system known by what name?
- Federal

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- b. Unitary
 - c. Confederal
 - d. National
 - e. Anarchical
34. More than _____ uninsured Americans have to fend for themselves.
- a. 75 million
 - b. 100 million
 - c. 25 million
 - d. 45 million
 - e. 10 million
35. _____ is the only industrialized democracy that does not provide at least basic health care coverage for everyone.
- a. Canada
 - b. France
 - c. Great Britain
 - d. The United States
 - e. Italy
36. What is the term used to describe the packaging of statements or actions in ways that politicians think people will find most attractive, often hiding the real import of the words or activities in the process?
- a. Strategic speaking
 - b. Attention deficit
 - c. Speaking in code
 - d. Spin doctoring
 - e. Layered discussions
37. _____ is the process that America underwent in 2013 whereby across-the-board spending cuts were imposed on the federal government?
38. _____ is the one thing America currently leads the world in exporting to other countries.
39. Prior to 1787, the governing document of the United States was the _____.
40. The “checks and balances” system in the United States is based on a(n) _____, which means that usually no one part of the government can act without the possibility of being reversed by another part of the government.
41. The _____ was the biggest crisis of legitimacy of the American constitutional regime.

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43. The _____ party was formed in 1860 with Abraham Lincoln as their candidate?
44. The framers intentionally built into the system multiple, overlapping layers of authority so that no one person, group, or party could get everything, referred to as _____.
45. Unlike most of the world's industrialized democracies, which rely on a parliamentary form of government, the United States uses a _____ system.
46. One of the unusual features of the government of the United States is _____, in which a national government shares power with states and local governments.
47. What are two ways in which the U.S. political system is different from that in other industrialized democracies? What is the primary factor that explains each difference?
48. There has been significant debate in the United States regarding health care policy, including the need to provide coverage to all. How has the political system shaped the debate? How has it helped or hindered getting new laws passed and implemented to address this issue?
49. Analysts have often pointed to the civil nature of American politics as a critical factor leading to over a century of stability. Is civil culture still an important contribution to stability here in the United States? What evidence is there for a continuing civil culture today? What evidence is there for a changing civil culture? Do you think the stability or the change is more powerful in the country today? Why?
50. Who are the "New Left" and "New Right" in American politics? Where did they come from? How are their ideas affecting American politics today? Give specific examples.
51. The authors discuss five factors that can potentially affect the way a member of Congress votes on a piece of legislation. Identify and define three of the five factors. Of the five factors, which of the five factors is more important? Why? Use a specific example to support your argument.
52. Identify the two major parties in America and explain what blocs of voters make up each party's typical voting coalition. How have these voting coalitions changed in the past century?
53. Why does America only have two major parties? Do you believe that having two, as opposed to three or five or more major parties is good or bad for the creation of public policy?
54. In the 1950s many political scientists critiqued American parties for not having strong enough stances that differed from one another. Today many political scientists critique American parties for having stances that are too rigid and extreme. Which do you prefer and why? Which do you believe leads to better public policy outcomes?

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

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55. What do we mean when we say that America has a “weak state”? How has America’s historical legacies contributed to this weak state?

56. What do we mean when we talk about American exceptionalism? Do you believe that America is exceptional according to that definition? Why or why not?

57. Some analysts argue that Donald Trump's administration will "make America great again," while others are convinced that the president and his team represent a threat to American democracy. Given what you have learned about comparative politics, which of these interpretations do you agree with? More importantly, **why** did you reach this conclusion?