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American Government — and — Politics Today

The Essentials



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AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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THE ESSENTIALS

Enhanced Nineteenth Edition

Barbara A. Bardes

University of Cincinnati

Mack C. Shelley II

Iowa State University

Steffen W. Schmidt

Iowa State University



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The Essentials**
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Bardes, Shelley, Schmidt

Product Manager: Richard Lena

Content Manager: David Martinson

Product Assistant: Haley Gaudreau

Senior Marketing Manager: Valerie
Hartman

Manufacturing Planner: Julio Esperas

IP Analyst: Nancy Dillon

IP Project Manager: Kelli Besse

Cover Designer: Sarah Cole

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BRIEF CONTENTS

Part 1 The American System

- Chapter 1 The Democratic Republic 1
- Chapter 2 The Constitution 29
- Chapter 3 Federalism 59

Part 2 Civil Rights and Liberties

- Chapter 4 Civil Liberties 85
- Chapter 5 Civil Rights 115

Part 3 People and Politics

- Chapter 6 Public Opinion and Political Socialization 149
- Chapter 7 Interest Groups 179
- Chapter 8 Political Parties 205
- Chapter 9 Campaigns and Elections 235
- Chapter 10 The Media 265

Part 4 Political Institutions

- Chapter 11 The Congress 287
- Chapter 12 The President 319
- Chapter 13 The Executive Branch 347
- Chapter 14 The Courts 377

Part 5 Public Policy

- Chapter 15 Domestic and Economic Policy 405
- Chapter 16 Foreign Policy 435

Appendices

- A The Declaration of Independence A-1
- B The Constitution of the United States A-3
- C *Federalist Papers* Nos. 10, 51, and 78 A-19
- D Justices of the United States Supreme Court since 1900 A-29
- E Party Control of Congress since 1904 A-33
- F Presidents of the United States A-34

Glossary G-1

Index I-1

DETAILED CONTENTS

A Letter to Instructors	xiii
A Letter to Students	xiv
MindTap QuickStart Guide	xv
Resources	xvi
Acknowledgments	xviii
Reviewers	xix
About the Authors	xx
Career Opportunities	xxi
Take Action: A Guide to Political Participation	xxiii

Part 1

The American System

Chapter 1 THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC 1

Politics and Government	3
Government Is Everywhere	3
Why Is Government Necessary?	5
Limiting Government Power	5
Authority and Legitimacy	6
Democracy and Other Forms of Government	6
Types of Government	6
Direct Democracy as a Model	7
The Dangers of Direct Democracy	7
A Democratic Republic	8
What Kind of Democracy Do We Have?	9
Fundamental Values	11
Liberty versus Order	11
Liberty versus Equality	12
The Proper Size of Government	14
Political Ideologies	16
Conservatism	17
Liberalism	17
The Traditional Political Spectrum	18
Problems with the Traditional Political Spectrum	19
A Four-Cornered Ideological Grid	19
One Nation, Divided	20
The Changing Face of America	21
The End of the Population Explosion	22
Ethnic Change in America	22
Are We Better Off?	24

Chapter 2 THE CONSTITUTION 29

The Colonial Background	31
Separatists, the <i>Mayflower</i> , and the Compact	31
More Colonies, More Government	32
British Restrictions and Colonial Reactions	33
The First Continental Congress	34
The Second Continental Congress	34
An Independent Confederation	35
The Resolution for Independence	35
July 4, 1776—The Declaration of Independence	35
The Rise of Republicanism	37
The Articles of Confederation: Our First Form of Government	37
The Constitutional Convention	39
Who Were the Delegates?	40
The Working Environment	40
Factions among the Delegates	40
Politicking and Compromises	41
Working toward Final Agreement	43
The Final Document	45
The Difficult Road to Ratification	46
The Federalists Push for Ratification	46
The March to the Finish	48
Did the Majority of Americans Support the Constitution?	49
The Bill of Rights	50
Altering the Constitution	51
The Formal Amendment Process	51
Informal Methods of Constitutional Change	54

Chapter 3 FEDERALISM 59

Federalism and Its Alternatives	61
A Unitary System	61
A Confederal System	61
A Federal System	62
Why Federalism?	63
Arguments against Federalism	64
The Constitutional Basis for American Federalism	65
Powers of the National Government	65

Powers of the State Governments	66
Prohibited Powers	67
Concurrent Powers	67
The Supremacy Clause	67
Interstate Relations	69

Defining Constitutional Powers—the Early Years 70

<i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819)	70
<i>Gibbons v. Ogden</i> (1824)	70
States' Rights and the Resort to Civil War	71

The Continuing Dispute over the Division of Power 72

Dual Federalism	72
The New Deal and Cooperative Federalism	73
Methods of Implementing Cooperative Federalism	74
Fiscal Federalism and State Budgets	76

The Politics of Federalism 78

What Has National Authority Accomplished?	78
The “New Federalism”	78
The Politics of Federalism Today	79
Federalism and the Supreme Court	79
Recent Supreme Court Rulings	80

Part 2

Civil Rights and Liberties

Chapter 4

CIVIL LIBERTIES 85

The Constitutional Bases of Our Liberties 87

Protections Listed in the Original Constitution	87
Extending the Bill of Rights to State Governments	88
Incorporation under the Fourteenth Amendment	88

Freedom of Religion 89

The Separation of Church and State— The Establishment Clause	89
The Free Exercise Clause	93

Freedom of Expression 94

No Prior Restraint	94
The Protection of Symbolic Speech	95
The Protection of Commercial Speech	95
Attempts to Ban Subversive or Advocacy Speech	96
The Eclipse of Obscenity as a Legal Category	97
Unprotected Speech: Slander	98
Student Speech	98
The Right to Assemble and to Petition the Government	99
Freedom of the Press	100

The Right to Privacy 101

Privacy Rights and Abortion	101
Privacy Rights and the “Right to Die”	102

Civil Liberties versus Security Issues 104

The USA Patriot Act	104
Roving Wiretaps	104
National Security Agency Surveillance	104
Subsequent Revelations of NSA Activity	104
National Security and the Civil Liberties of Immigrants	105

The Great Balancing Act: The Rights of the Accused versus the Rights of Society 106

Rights of the Accused	107
Extending the Rights of the Accused	107
The Exclusionary Rule	108
The Death Penalty	109

Chapter 5

CIVIL RIGHTS 115

The African American Experience and the Civil Rights Movement 117

Ending Servitude	117
The Ineffectiveness of the Early Civil Rights Laws	118
The End of the Separate-but-Equal Doctrine	120
<i>De Jure</i> and <i>De Facto</i> Segregation	120
The Civil Rights Movement	121
Modern Civil Rights Legislation	122
Consequences of Civil Rights Legislation	123

Civil Rights and the Courts 124

Standards for Judicial Review	126
The Courts Address Affirmative Action	127

Experiences of Other Minority Groups 129

Latinos and the Immigration Issue	129
The Agony of the American Indian	131
Asian Americans	132
Lingering Social and Economic Disparities	133

Women’s Struggle for Equal Rights 134

Early Women’s Political Movements	134
The Modern Women’s Movement	134
Women in Politics Today	136
Gender-Based Discrimination in the Workplace	137

The Rights and Status of Gay Males and Lesbians 138

Growth in the Gay Male and Lesbian Rights Movement	138
State and Local Laws Targeting Gay Men and Lesbians	139
“Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”	139
Same-Sex Marriage	140
The Rights of Transgender Individuals	141

The Rights and Status of Juveniles 143
Voting Rights and the Young 143
The Rights of Children in Civil and Criminal Proceedings 143

Part 3

People and Politics

Chapter 6 **PUBLIC OPINION AND** **POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION 149**

Public Opinion and Political Socialization 151
Consensus and Divided Opinion 151
Forming Public Opinion: Political Socialization 152
The Media and Public Opinion 154
Political Events and Public Opinion 155

Political Preferences and Voting Behavior 157
Party Identification and Demographic Influences 157
Election-Specific Factors 162

Measuring Public Opinion 163
The History of Opinion Polls 163
Sampling Techniques 164
The Difficulty of Obtaining Accurate Results 165
Additional Problems with Polls 166
Technology and Opinion Polls 168

Public Opinion and the Political Process 170
Political Culture and Public Opinion 170
Public Opinion about Government 172
Public Opinion and Policymaking 173
A Policy Example: Contraception Insurance 174

Chapter 7 **INTEREST GROUPS 179**

Interest Group Fundamentals 181
Interest Groups and Social Movements 182
Why Do Americans Join Interest Groups? 182

Types of Interest Groups 184
Economic Interest Groups 185
Environmental Groups 189
Public-Interest Groups 189
Other Interest Groups 190

The Influence of Interest Groups 191
What Makes an Interest Group Powerful? 191
Interest Groups and Representative Democracy 193
Interest Groups and the Political Parties 194

Interest Group Strategies 196
Direct Techniques 196
Indirect Techniques 198

Regulating Lobbyists 200
The Results of the 1946 Act 201
The Reforms of 1995 201
The Reforms of 2007 201

Chapter 8 **POLITICAL PARTIES 205**

Political Parties in the United States 207
Functions of Political Parties in the United States 207
The Three Faces of a Party 208
The Party-in-the-Electorate 209
The Party Organization 209
The Party-in-Government 211

A History of Political Parties in the United States 212
The Formative Years: Federalists and Anti-Federalists 213
Democrats and Whigs 213
The Civil War Crisis 214
The Post-Civil War Period 214
The Progressive Interlude 216
The New Deal Era 216
An Era of Divided Government 216

The Two Major U.S. Parties Today 217
A Series of Wave Elections 217
The Parties' Core Constituents 219
Divisions within the Parties 220
Cultural Politics and Party Loyalty 222

Why Has the Two-Party System Endured? 223
The Historical Foundations of the Two-Party System 223
Political Socialization and Practical Considerations 223
The Winner-Take-All Electoral System 223
State and Federal Laws Favoring the Two Parties 224
The Role of Minor Parties in U.S. Politics 225

Mechanisms of Political Change 229
Realignment 229
Dealignment 230
Tipping 231

Chapter 9 **CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS 235**

The Twenty-First-Century Campaign 237
Who Is Eligible? 237
Who Runs? 238
Managing the Campaign 239

Financing the Campaign 241
The Evolution of the Campaign Finance System 241
The Current Campaign Finance Environment 243

Running for President: The Longest Campaign 247

- Reforming the Presidential Primaries 247
- The Invisible Primary 248
- Primaries and Caucuses 249
- Front-Loading the Primaries 251
- On to the National Convention 252
- The Electoral College 253

How Are Elections Conducted? 254

- Office-Block and Party-Column Ballots 254
- Voting by Mail 255
- Voting Fraud and Voter ID Laws 255

Turning Out to Vote 256

- Factors Influencing Who Votes 258
- Legal Restrictions on Voting 259

Chapter 10**THE MEDIA 265****The Roles of the Media 267**

- Entertaining the Public 267
- Reporting the News 267
- Identifying Public Problems 268
- Socializing New Generations 268
- Providing a Political Forum 268
- Making Profits 269
- Television versus the New Media 271

The Media and Political Campaigns 272

- Television Coverage 272
- The Internet, Blogging, and Podcasting 275

Government Regulation of the Media 278

- Concentrated Ownership of the Media 278
- Government Control of Content 278
- The Issue of Net Neutrality 279

Opinion and Bias in the Media 281

- Talk Radio 282
- Bias in the Media 282

Part 4**Political Institutions****Chapter 11****THE CONGRESS 287****The Nature and Functions of Congress 289**

- Bicameralism 289
- The Lawmaking Function 290
- The Representation Function 290
- The Oversight Function 291
- The Public-Education Function 291

The Conflict-Resolution Function 292

The Powers of Congress 292

House–Senate Differences and Congressional Perks 293

- Size and Rules 293
- Debate and Filibustering 294
- Congresspersons and the Citizenry:
 - A Comparison 296
- Perks and Privileges 297

Congressional Elections and Apportionment 298

- Candidates for Congressional Elections 298
- Apportionment of the House 300

How Congress Is Organized 304

- The Power of Committees 304
- Committees versus the Leadership 304
- Types of Congressional Committees 305
- The Selection of Committee Members 306
- Leadership in the House 307
- Leadership in the Senate 308

Lawmaking and Budgeting 310

- The Lawmaking Process 310
- How Much Will the Government Spend? 310
- Congress Faces the Budget 313
- Budget Resolutions and Crises 314

Chapter 12**THE PRESIDENT 319****Who Can Become President? 321**

- A “Natural Born Citizen” 321
- Presidential Characteristics 321
- The Process of Becoming President 322

The Many Roles of the President 323

- Head of State 323
- Chief Executive 323
- Commander in Chief 326
- Chief Diplomat 327
- Chief Legislator 329
- The President as Party Chief and Superpolitician 332

Presidential Powers 334

- Emergency Powers 334
- Executive Orders 335
- Executive Privilege 336
- Signing Statements 337
- Abuses of Executive Power and Impeachment 337

The Executive Organization 338

- The Cabinet 338
- The Executive Office of the President 340

The Vice Presidency 341

- The Vice President's Job 341
- Presidential Succession 342

Chapter 13
THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH 347

The Nature and Scope

of the Federal Bureaucracy 349

- Public and Private Bureaucracies 349
- Models of Bureaucracy 349
- The Size of the Bureaucracy 350
- The Federal Budget 352

The Organization of the Federal Bureaucracy 353

- Cabinet Departments 353
- Independent Executive Agencies 356
- Independent Regulatory Agencies 357
- Government-Controlled Corporations 360

Staffing the Bureaucracy 362

- Political Appointees 362
- History of the Federal Civil Service 363

Modern Attempts at Bureaucratic Reform 365

- Sunshine Laws before and after 9/11 365
- Privatization, or Contracting Out 366
- Saving Costs through E-Government 366
- Helping Out the Whistleblowers 366

Bureaucrats as Politicians and Policymakers 368

- The Rulemaking Environment 370
- Negotiated Rulemaking 371
- Bureaucrats as Policymakers 371
- Congressional Control of the Bureaucracy 373

Chapter 14
THE COURTS 377

Sources of American Law 379

- The Common Law Tradition 379
- Constitutions 380
- Statutes and Administrative Regulations 380
- Case Law 380

The Federal Court System 381

- Basic Judicial Requirements 381
- Parties to Lawsuits 382
- Procedural Rules 382
- Types of Federal Courts 383
- Federal Courts and the War on Terrorism 385

The Supreme Court at Work 387

- Which Cases Reach the Supreme Court? 387
- Court Procedures 388
- Decisions and Opinions 388

The Selection of Federal Judges 389

- Judicial Appointments 390
- Partisanship and Judicial Appointments 392

Policymaking and the Courts 394

- Judicial Review 394
- Judicial Activism and Judicial Restraint 395
- Strict versus Broad Construction 395
- The Roberts Court 396
- What Checks Our Courts? 399

Part 5
Public Policy

Chapter 15
DOMESTIC AND
ECONOMIC POLICY 405

The Policymaking Process:

Health Care as an Example 407

- Health Care: Agenda Building 407
- Health Care: Policy Formulation 410
- Health Care: Policy Adoption 411
- Health Care: Policy Implementation 411
- Health Care: Policy Evaluation 412

Immigration 413

- The Issue of Unauthorized Immigration 414
- The Immigration Debate 414

Crime in the Twenty-First Century 415

- Crime in American History 415
- The Prison Population Bomb 417

Energy and the Environment 418

- Energy Independence—A Strategic Issue 418
- Climate Change 421

The Politics of Economic Decision Making 422

- Good Times, Bad Times 422
- Fiscal Policy 424
- Deficit Spending and the Public Debt 425
- Monetary Policy 427

The Politics of Taxes 429

- Federal Income Tax Rates 429
- Income Tax Loopholes and Other Types of Taxes 429

Chapter 16 FOREIGN POLICY 435

Facing the World: Foreign and Defense Policies 437

- Aspects of Foreign Policy 437
- Idealism versus Realism in Foreign Policy 438

Terrorism and Warfare 439

- The Emergence of Terrorism 439
- Wars in Iraq 441
- Afghanistan 442
- The Civil War in Syria and the Rise of ISIS 443

U.S. Diplomatic Efforts 444

- Nuclear Weapons 444
- The New Power: China 446
- Israel and the Palestinians 447
- Europe's Economic Troubles 449

Who Makes Foreign Policy? 452

- Constitutional Powers of the President 452
- Other Sources of Foreign Policymaking 453
- Congress Balances the Presidency 455

The Major Foreign Policy Themes 456

- The Formative Years: Avoiding Entanglements 456
- The Era of Internationalism 456
- Superpower Relations 458

Appendices

A The Declaration of Independence A-1

B The Constitution of the United States A-3

C Federalist Papers, Nos. 10, 51, & 78 A-19

D Justices of the United States Supreme Court since 1900 A-29

E Party Control of Congress since 1904 A-33

F Presidents of the United States A-34

Glossary G-1

Index I-1

FEATURES

Chapter 1: The Democratic Republic 1

- What If... We Had No Bill of Rights? 2
- Election 2018: The Outcome of the Elections 4
- Beyond Our Borders: Civil Liberties in Germany and Japan 12
- Which Side Are You On? Does Our Tax System Promote Excessive Inequality? 15
- Consider the Source: How Many Americans Have Jobs? 25
- How You Can Make a Difference 26

Chapter 2: The Constitution 29

- What If... The Founders Adopted a Parliamentary System? 30
- Which Side Are You On? Is the United States a Christian Nation? 33
- Consider the Source: The Powers of Congress 47
- How You Can Make a Difference 56

Chapter 3: Federalism 59

- What If... Recreational Marijuana Were Legal in Every State? 60

- Beyond Our Borders: Canadian Federalism 63
- Which Side Are You On? Should States Raise the Minimum Wage? 68
- How You Can Make a Difference 82

Chapter 4: Civil liberties 85

- What If... *Roe v. Wade* Were Overturned? 86
- Consider the Source: The Second Amendment 89
- Which Side Are You On? When Can Wearing Religious Garb Be Restricted? 94
- How You Can Make a Difference 111

Chapter 5: Civil liberties 115

- What If... We Deported Most Unauthorized Immigrants? 116
- Which Side Are You On? Do Police Use Excessive Force against African Americans? 125
- Consider the Source: Measuring Poverty and Wealth by Race and Ethnicity 133
- Election 2018: Women and Minority Group Members 138
- How You Can Make a Difference 146

Chapter 6: Public Opinion and Political**Socialization 149**

- What If... Politicians Really Listened to the Polls? 150
- Which Side Are You On? Were the “Good Old Days” Really That Great? 156
- Election 2018: Polling Accuracy in the 2018 Elections 168
- Consider the Source: Political Trust 171
- How You Can Make a Difference 176

Chapter 7: Interest Groups 179

- What If... We Let More People Live in Big Cities? 180
- Beyond Our Borders: How Foreign Countries Subsidize Agriculture 186
- Which Side Are You On? Should We Let Uber and Lyft Pick Up Passengers? 195
- How You Can Make a Difference 202

Chapter 8: Political Parties 205

- What If... The Democrats Behaved More Like the Republicans? 206
- Consider the Source: Presidential Election Results 215
- Election 2018: Partisan Trends in the 2018 Elections 218
- Beyond Our Borders: Is Denmark Socialist? 228
- How You Can Make a Difference 232

Chapter 9: Campaigns and Elections 235

- What If... We Elected the President by Popular Vote? 236
- Which Side Are You On? Can Money Buy Elections? 245
- Election 2018: Campaign Finance in 2018 248
- Consider the Source: The Voting-Age Population and the Vote-Eligible Population 257
- How You Can Make a Difference 262

Chapter 10: The Media 265

- What If... There Were No Newspapers? 266
- Consider the Source: Ad Revenues 270
- Beyond Our Borders: Does the United Nations Threaten the Internet? 280
- Which Side Are You On? Should Net Neutrality Be Enforced by Law? 281
- How You Can Make a Difference 284

Chapter 11: The Congress 287

- What If... We Used Proportional Representation to Elect the House? 288

- Which Side Are You On? Is It Time to Get Rid of the Filibuster? 295
- Consider the Source: Finding Your Congressional District 300
- Election 2018: Party Control of Congress after the 2018 Elections 303
- How You Can Make a Difference 315

Chapter 12: The President 319

- What If... President Trump Tore Up Our Trade Agreements? 320
- Which Side Are You On? Does President Trump Know What He’s Doing? 327
- Beyond Our Borders: Presidents in Latin America 335
- How You Can Make a Difference 344

Chapter 13: The Executive Branch 347

- What If... We Tightened Our Gun Control Laws? 348
- Consider the Source: Federal Government Revenues 354
- Which Side Are You On? Do the Benefits of NSA Snooping Outweigh the Harms? 369
- How You Can Make a Difference 374

Chapter 14: The Courts 377

- What If... Arguments before the Supreme Court Were Televised? 378
- Beyond Our Borders: Gay Rights around the World 381
- Which Side Are You On? Should State Judges Be Elected? 391
- How You Can Make a Difference 402

Chapter 15: Domestic and Economic Policy 405

- What If... We Returned to the Gold Standard? 406
- Which Side Are You On? Does Entitlement Spending Corrupt Us? 409
- Consider the Source: How Many People Do Other Countries Send to Prison? 419
- How You Can Make a Difference 432

Chapter 16: Foreign Policy 435

- What If... We Brought Back the Draft? 436
- Which Side Are You On? Is China’s Nationalism a Threat to World Peace? 448
- Beyond our Borders: The Impact of Population Growth on America’s Future Role in the World 450
- How You Can Make a Difference 462

A Letter to INSTRUCTORS

The fundamental theme of *American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials, Enhanced 19th Edition* continues to be the importance of participating in active citizenship, emphasizing critical thinking about political issues, and encouraging students to take action and become involved in the political process. Whether the topic is immigration, trade deals, Supreme Court rulings, or taxation, we constantly strive to involve students in the analysis. Our goal is to make sure that politics is not just an abstract process, but a very human enterprise. We emphasize how different outcomes can affect students' civil rights and liberties, employment opportunities, and economic welfare. To make sure students understand the link between themselves and the subject matter they are reading, new ***Why Should You Care about...?*** features grab students' attention while they are reading the materials. We further encourage interaction with the political system by ending each chapter with a feature titled ***How You Can Make a Difference***, which shows students how to become politically involved and why it is important that they do so. ***Which Side Are You On?*** features challenge students to find the connection between a current controversy and their personal positions. And to help students think critically about the world around them and spark discussion in your classroom, we pose questions for critical analysis with almost every boxed feature, table, chart, exhibit, and photo.

New to This Edition

We have made numerous changes to this volume for the Enhanced 19th Edition. We have rewritten the text as necessary and updated the book to reflect the events of the past two years. For a detailed list of changes, please contact your Cengage learning consultant.

- Because we know that students respond to up-to-date information about political events, we incorporate compelling, thought-provoking current examples throughout. We also include the results of the November 2018 elections and analyze how the rise of Donald Trump has changed the way we look at American politics. In each ***new Election 2018*** feature, we place the election results in the context of the chapter's subject matter.

- The Enhanced 19th Edition includes a **separate Chapter 10 on The Media**. Because the new media have become so important, we felt it necessary to devote an entire chapter to this topic. We look at content providers and aggregators. We look at the importance of media in campaigns. Net neutrality is an important topic in this chapter. Finally, we examine the issue of media bias and talk radio.
- **More demographics material** is included throughout, particularly in Chapter 1, which presents material on positive and negative trends, such as unemployment and inequality, and falling crime and teen pregnancy rates, and rising mortality rates among members of the rural white working class.
- **Major updates to the content** have been made in the areas of public opinion, interest groups, modern political parties, social media in politics, and the Obama legacy. The chapters on Domestic and Economic Policy and Foreign Policy have been completely updated and modernized. The text reflects the current events that most interest you and your students, including recent Supreme Court rulings and state legislation on same-sex marriage, marijuana, voting rights, President Trump's executive orders, current civil rights issues including the role of the police, foreign policy coverage of Syria, Ukraine, and trade relations, and more!

MindTap

MindTap is here to simplify your workload as an instructor, organize and immediately grade your students' assignments, and allow you to customize your course as you see fit. Through deep-seated integration with your Learning Management System (LMS), grades are easily exported and analytics are pulled with just the click of a button. MindTap provides you with a platform to easily add in current events videos and RSS feeds from national or local news sources.

Barbara A. Bardes, Mack C. Shelley II, Steffen W. Schmidt

A Letter to STUDENTS

The 2018 elections were among the most consequential ever. In effect, American voters reassessed their decision in the 2016 presidential elections, which featured Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump. Clinton carried the popular vote—but our presidential elections are decided by the *electoral college*. There, Trump won. Trump did not run as a conventional Republican, but during his first year in office, he governed as one. He backed Republican attempts to repeal Obamacare and their successful effort to pass pro-business tax reforms. In 2018, however, Trump turned to his own issues, imposing tariffs (taxes) on imports from friend and foe alike. Throughout, he championed his “base”—culturally conservative whites—against minority groups, feminists, and liberals alike. In November, the public passed judgment on this record by choosing members of the U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the Senate.

You’ll learn about all of these developments and more in the *Enhanced 19th Edition American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials*.

Our hope is that this book inspires you to join the exciting process of being an active, informed citizen. Your American Government course and the material you’ll read here will give you the knowledge you’ll need to understand our political system and develop well-informed opinions on the current issues and controversies you’ll encounter in your daily life. We strive to highlight how American government and politics directly affect you in every chapter. We also suggest easy ways that you can take action in your community and become involved in the political process.

Special Features

- **Take Action: A Guide to Political Participation** is filled with resources and suggestions to help students stay informed and get involved in the political process.
- Thought-provoking **What If . . . ?**, **Beyond Our Borders**, and **Consider the Source** features help you understand key concepts and current events as well as develop a more informed and global perspective.
- **Why You Should Care about . . . ?** marginal features demonstrate why the topic at hand directly affects you and matters in your life.
- **Which Side Are You On?** sections challenge you to take a stand on controversial issues.
- **How You Can Make a Difference** features conclude each chapter with ways in which you can become actively involved in American politics.
- **Election 2018** features highlight the important impact of the 2018 elections and include an analysis of the campaigns and election results.
- **Critical-thinking questions** now accompany almost all boxed features, figures, tables, and photo captions, helping you apply and analyze the information presented.
- **Learning Outcomes** appear in each chapter opener, correlate to each major section to help you target your reading, and are revisited in each Chapter Summary and end-of-chapter Quiz to help you assess your comprehension and master the book’s key concepts. Every chapter also concludes with key terms and a list of additional print and media resources. And the book is now seamlessly integrated with MindTap, directing you to a variety of online interactive activities that will help you test yourself on the book’s Learning Outcomes.

The Benefits of Using MindTap

For you as a student, the benefits of using **MindTap** with this book are endless. With automatically graded practice quizzes and activities, an easily navigated learning path, and an interactive eBook, you will be able to test yourself inside and outside of the classroom with ease. The accessibility of current events coupled with interactive media makes the content fun and engaging. On your computer, phone, or tablet, MindTap is there when you need it, giving you easy access to flashcards, quizzes, readings, and assignments.

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REVIEWERS

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Pat Andrews, *West Valley College*
Marcos Arandia, *North Lake College*
Augustine Ayuk, *Clayton State University*
Sara C. Benesh, *University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee*
Sherman Brewer, Jr., *Rutgers University, Newark*
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Soomin Chun-Hess, *Red Rocks Community College*
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Dr. Michael Mitchell, *Georgia Perimeter College*
Carolyn Myers, *Southwestern Illinois College*
Eric Nobles, *Atlanta Metropolitan College*
Tamra Ortgies-Young, *Georgia Perimeter College*
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John Raulston, *Kilgore College*
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Margaret E. Scranton, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*
Hermant Sharma, *University of Tennessee*
Shyam Sriram, *Georgia Perimeter College*
Arlene Story Sanders, *Delta State University*
Judy Tobler, *NorthWest Arkansas Community College*
June Trudel, *California State University, San Marcos*
Scott Wallace, *Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis*
Shannon Warman, *University of Northwestern Ohio*
Natasha Washington, *Northwest Arkansas Community College*
Robert Whitaker, *Hudson Valley Community College*
Dr. Adam M. Williams, *Kennesaw State University*

About the AUTHORS

Barbara A. Bardes

Barbara A. Bardes is professor emerita of political science and former dean of Raymond Walters College at the University of Cincinnati. She received her B.A. and M.A. from Kent State University. After completing her Ph.D. at the University of Cincinnati, she held faculty positions at Mississippi State University and Loyola University in Chicago. She returned to Cincinnati, her hometown, as a college administrator. She has also worked as a political consultant and directed polling for a research center.

Bardes has written articles on public opinion and foreign policy and on women and politics. She has authored *Thinking about Public Policy*; *Declarations of Independence: Women and Political Power in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction*; and *Public Opinion: Measuring the American Mind* (with Robert W. Oldendick).

Bardes's home is located in a very small hamlet in Kentucky called Rabbit Hash, famous for its 150-year-old general store. Her hobbies include traveling, gardening, needlework, and antique collecting.

Mack C. Shelley II

Mack C. Shelley II is professor of political science and statistics at Iowa State University. After receiving his bachelor's degree from American University in Washington, D.C., he completed graduate studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he received a master's degree in economics and a Ph.D. in political science. He taught for two years at Mississippi State University before arriving at Iowa State in 1979.

Shelley has published numerous articles, books, and monographs on public policy. From 1993 to 2002, he served as elected co-editor of the *Policy Studies Journal*. His published books include *The Permanent Majority: The Conservative Coalition in the United States Congress*; *Biotechnology and the Research Enterprise* (with William F. Woodman and Brian J. Reichel); *American Public Policy: The Contemporary Agenda* (with Steven G. Koven and Bert E. Swanson); *Redefining Family Policy: Implications for the 21st Century* (with Joyce M. Mercier and Steven Garasky); and *Quality Research in Literacy and Science Education: International Perspectives and Gold Standards* (with Larry Yore and Brian Hand).

His leisure time includes traveling, working with students, and playing with the family dog and cats.

Steffen W. Schmidt

Steffen W. Schmidt is professor of political science at Iowa State University. He grew up in Colombia, South America, and studied in Colombia, Switzerland, and France. He obtained his Ph.D. in public law and government from Columbia University in New York.

Schmidt has published 14 books and more than 130 journal articles. He is also the recipient of numerous prestigious teaching prizes, including the Amoco Award for Lifetime Career Achievement in Teaching and the Teacher of the Year award. He is a pioneer in the design, production, and delivery of Internet courses and a founding member of the American Political Science Association's section on Computers and Multimedia. He is known as "Dr. Politics" for his extensive commentary on U.S. politics in U.S. and international media. He is a weekly blogger for Gannett and comments on CNN en Español and Univision. He is the chief political and international correspondent of the Internet magazine InsiderIowa.com.

Schmidt likes to snow ski, ride hunter jumper horses, race sailboats, and scuba dive.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES:

Political Science

Introduction

It is no secret that college graduates are facing a very tough job market. Despite this challenge, those with a college degree have done much better than those without since the 2008 recession. One of the most important decisions a student has to make is the choice of a major. Many consider future job possibilities when making that call. A political science degree is useful for a successful career in many different fields, from lawyer to policy advocate, pollster to humanitarian worker. Employer surveys reveal that the skills that most employers value in successful employees—critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and clarity of verbal and written communication—are precisely the tools that political science courses should be helping you develop. This brief guide is intended to help spark ideas for what kinds of careers you might pursue with a political science degree and the types of activities you can engage in now to help you secure one of those positions after graduation.

Careers in Political Science

Law and Criminal Justice

Do you find that your favorite parts of your political science classes are those that deal with the Constitution, the legal system, and the courts? Then a career in law and criminal justice might be right for you. Traditional jobs in the field range from lawyer or judge to police or parole officer. Since 9/11, there has also been tremendous growth in the area of homeland security, which includes jobs in mission support, immigration, and travel security, as well as prevention and response.

Public Administration

The many offices of the federal government combined represent one of the largest employers in the United States. Flip to the bureaucracy chapter of this textbook and consider that each federal department, agency, and bureau you see looks to political science majors for future employees. A partial list of such agencies would include the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Federal Trade Commission. There are also thousands of staffers who work for members of Congress or the Congressional Budget Office, many of whom were

political science majors in college. This does not even begin to account for the multitude of similar jobs in state and local governments that you might consider as well.

Campaigns, Elections, and Polling

Are campaigns and elections the most exciting part of political science for you? Then you might consider a career in the growing industry based around political campaigns. From volunteering and interning to consulting, marketing, and fundraising, there are many opportunities for those who enjoy the competitive and high-stakes electoral arena. For those looking for careers that combine political knowledge with statistical skills, there are careers in public opinion polling. Pollsters work for independent national organizations such as Gallup and YouGov, or as part of news operations and campaigns. For those who are interested in survey methodology there are also a wide variety of non-political career opportunities in marketing and survey design.

Interest Groups, International and Nongovernmental Organizations

Is there a cause that you are especially passionate about? If so, there is a good chance that there are interest groups out there that are working hard to see some progress made on similar issues. Many of the positions that one might find in for-profit companies also exist in their non-profit interest group and nongovernmental organization counterparts, including lobbying and high-level strategizing. Do not forget that there are also quite a few major international organizations—such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the International Monetary Fund—where a degree in political science could be put to good use. While competition for those jobs tends to be fierce, your interest and knowledge about politics and policy will give you an advantage.

Foreign Service

Does a career in diplomacy and foreign affairs, complete with the opportunity to live and work abroad, sound exciting for you? Tens of thousands of people work for the State Department, both in Washington, D.C., and in consulates throughout the world. They represent the diplomatic interests of the United States abroad. Entrance into the Foreign Service follows a very specific process, starting with the

Foreign Service Officers Test—an exam given three times a year that includes sections on American government, history, economics, and world affairs. Being a political science major is a significant help in taking the FSOT.

Graduate School

While not a career, graduate school may be the appropriate next step for you after completing your undergraduate degree. Following the academic route, being awarded a Ph.D. or Master's degree in political science could open additional doors to a career in academia, as well as many of the professions mentioned earlier. If a career as a researcher in political science interests you, you should speak with your advisors about continuing your education.

Preparing While Still on Campus

Internships

One of the most useful steps you can take while still on campus is to visit your college's career center to discuss an internship in your field of interest. Not only does it give you a chance to experience life in the political science realm, it can lead to job opportunities later down the road and add experience to your resume.

Skills

In addition to your political science classes, there are a few skills any number of which will prove useful as a complement to your degree:

Writing: Like anything else, writing improves with practice. Writing is one of those skills that is applicable regardless of where your career might take you. Virtually every occupation relies on an ability to write cleanly, concisely, and persuasively.

Public Speaking: An oft-quoted 1977 survey showed that public speaking was the most commonly cited

fear among respondents. And yet oral communication is a vital tool in the modern economy. You can practice this skill in a formal class setting or through extracurricular activities that get you in front of a group.

Quantitative Analysis: As the Internet aids in the collection of massive amounts of information, the nation is facing a drastic shortage of people with basic statistical skills to interpret and use this data. A political science degree can go hand-in-hand with courses in introductory statistics.

Foreign Language: One skill that often helps a student or future employee stand out in a crowded job market is the ability to communicate in a language other than English. Solidify or set the foundation for your verbal and written foreign language communication skills while in school.

Student Leadership

One attribute that many employers look for is "leadership potential," which can be quite tricky to indicate on a resume or cover letter. What can help is a demonstrated record of involvement in clubs and organizations, preferably in a leadership role. While many people think immediately of student government, most student clubs allow you the opportunity to demonstrate your leadership skills.

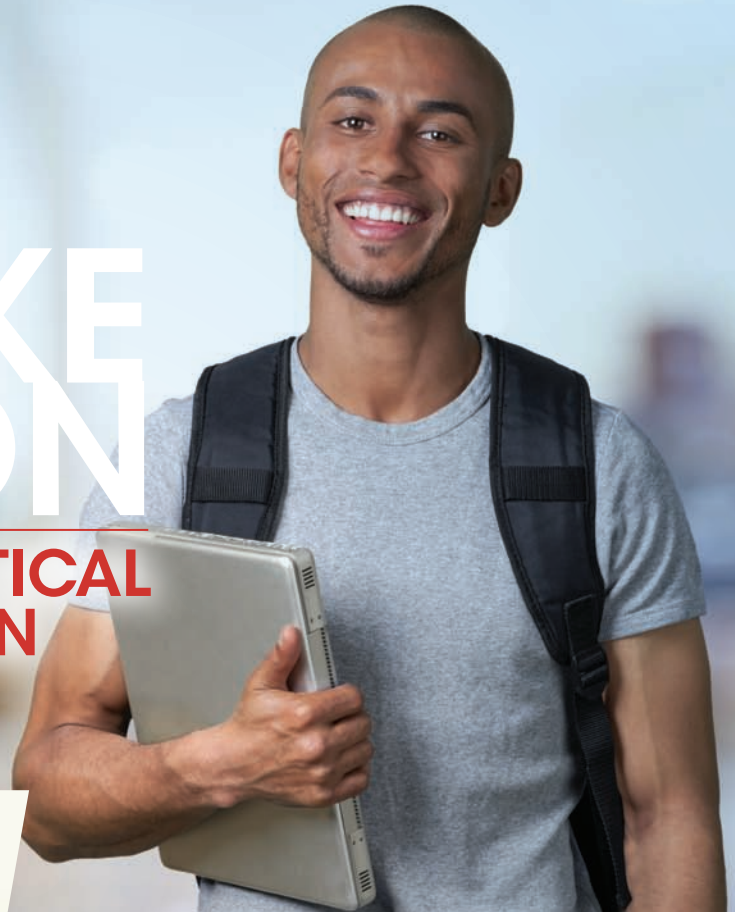
Conclusion

We hope that reading this has sparked some ideas on potential future careers. As a next step, visit your college's career placement office, which is a great place to further explore what you have read here. You might also visit your college's alumni office to connect with graduates who are working in your field of interest. Political science opens the door to a lot of exciting careers; have fun exploring the possibilities!



TAKE ACTION

A GUIDE TO POLITICAL PARTICIPATION



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.



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 Pew Research Center's short Political Party Quiz at: www.people-press.org/quiz/political-party-quiz.
- Which of the founders are you most like? The National Constitutional Center can help you with that. Go to

constitutioncenter.org/foundersquiz to discover which of the founders' personalities 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: www.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 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 www.uscis.gov. What is involved in applying for citizenship? Take the Naturalization Self-Test at my.uscis.gov/prep/test/civics. How did you do?

Think about How Your Political Views Have Been Shaped

- Giving some thought to how agents of political socialization—your family, your schools, your peers, for example—have contributed to your political beliefs and attitudes may help you understand why others might not share your views on politics. Then have conversations with people in your classes or in your residence hall about the people, institutions, and experiences that influenced the way they view the political world.
- 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.
 - The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press conducts regular polls on politics and policy issues: www.people-press.org.
 - Public Agenda seeks to find common ground among those with different opinions: publicagenda.org.
 - The results of recent polls and an archive of past polls can be found at Gallup: news.gallup.com.
 - The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research is a leading archive of data from surveys of public opinion: ropercenter.cornell.edu.
 - PollingReport organizes public opinion data from various sources by keyword: pollingreport.com.
- Keep up with news—print, broadcast, and online. Remember that different news organizations (or media brands) will report the same information in



GET CONNECTED.

different ways. 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 of the best ways to get to the source of 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 like the nonprofit cooperative, Associated Press: ap.org.
- Installing a few key apps on your phone or tablet can make all the difference in being informed. Try downloading the Associated Press (AP) app from Google Play for Android or Apple's App Store for the iPhone. There are tons of other great political apps, some of which are fairly polarized, others that are neutral, and still others that are just plain silly.

Blogs

The blogosphere affords views of politics that may be presented differently than the way the mainstream media does it. 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. U.S. House Majority Whip Kevin McCarthy, President Barack Obama, Senator Elizabeth Warren, House Speaker Paul Ryan, and even the White House have Instagram accounts worth following. Numerous 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: www.politifact.com. Check out the Truth-O-Meter, and get it on your smartphone or tablet.
- A project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, www.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 and polling analysis, in addition to covering sports and economics: www.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. While run by conservatives, RealClearPolitics offers articles and opinion pieces from many points of view.

- Polls for U.S. federal elections, including state-by-state polls, can be found at electoral-vote.com.
- HuffPost Pollster by the liberal Huffington Post 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.

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: www.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. Explore the site's information on the revolving door, which identifies the lobbying firms, agencies, and industries that have the highest numbers of people who have moved between government and interest group positions.

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: www.house.gov and www.senate.gov. But check out GovTrack to find out where your representative and senators fall on the leadership and ideology charts, as well as their most recently sponsored bills and votes on legislation: www.govtrack.us.





GET INVOLVED.

Take an Interest in Your Community—Offer to Help

Every community—large or 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. You can learn a lot about the public policies that focus on social services while doing some good for others.

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 in communities and around the globe and checks on those who may not be doing as much good as you'd think. Tinyspark also has a podcast.
- **Charitynavigator.org** is another tool for checking on charities. It reports on charities in terms of how much of their donations go to the cause, which charities are in the red, which are worth promoting, and so on—it's kind of like opensecrets.org for charities.

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.

Join a Group on Campus

You probably see fliers promoting groups and recruiting members posted all over campus—in the student center, in the residence halls, in classroom buildings. 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. Perhaps it's an organization that works to foster tolerance on campus. The American Civil Liberties Union may have a chapter on your campus. The American Red Cross may be there, too. You'll find College Republicans, College Democrats, groups organized around race or culture, groups that go on alternative spring break trips to give direct service to communities in need, service organizations of all kinds; groups that serve to create community among culturally underrepresented students, and groups that care about 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 navigate the process for establishing a student organization.

Remember, too, that there are hundreds of political interest groups with national reach. Check out their Websites to see if you want to join.

Vote (But Don't Forget to Register First)

- Voting is one of the most widely shared acts of participation in American democracy. You can learn about the laws governing voting in your state—and all of the others—by going to the Websites of Ballotpedia, a digital encyclopedia of American politics and elections. For voter identification requirements, see ballotpedia.org/Voter_identification_laws_by_state.
- Register: Enter “register to vote in [your state]” in a search engine. The office in your state that administers voting and elections (in some states it's the office of the Secretary of State, in others it might be the State Board of Elections) will have a Website that outlines the steps you will need to follow. If you need to vote absentee, you'll find out how to do that here, too.
- If you want to view a sample ballot to familiarize yourself with what you'll be looking at when you go to 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: Make sure you know the location and hours for your polling place.

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 their Website and inquire about volunteer opportunities.

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 is your thing, get involved with your college radio station or go on air on campus TV.

Try Your Hand at Governing

Get involved with student government. Serve on committees. Run for office.

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

- Remember that your U.S. Representative has district offices—one may be in the town in which you live. Your U.S. Senators also have offices in various locations around the state. Check to see if internships are available or if there are opportunities for volunteering. If you plan to be in Washington, D.C. and want to visit Capitol Hill, you can book a tour in advance through your senators' or representative's offices. That's where you get gallery passes, too.
- Spend some time in Washington. Many colleges and universities have established internship programs with government agencies and institutions. Some have semester-long programs that will bring you into contact with policymakers in Congress and in the bureaucracy, with journalists, and with a variety of other prominent newsmakers. Politics and government 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, try to watch oral argument. Go to the Court's Website to access the link for oral arguments: www.supremecourt.gov/oral_arguments. You'll find the argument calendar and a visitor's guide. (The secret is to get in line early.)



GET INFORMED.

GET CONNECTED.

GET INVOLVED.

- If you can't make it to Washington, D.C. for a semester-long program or even a few days, become a virtual tourist. Take the U.S. Capitol Virtual Tour: www.aoc.gov/virtual-tours/capitolbldg/tourfiles.
- 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. For a vast collection of Supreme Court information, go to the Oyez site and check ISCOTUSnow: blogs.kentlaw.iit.edu/iscotus.
- Studying abroad, of course, is a great way to expand your horizons and to get a feel for different cultures and the global nature of politics and the economy. There are programs that will take you virtually anywhere in the world. Check with the Study Abroad Office at your college or university to find out more.
- You can gain some insight into dealing with global issues even if you stay stateside. 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 recognize the role that the United Nations can play in forging collective responses to global concerns. Model UN conferences are simulations of a session of the United Nations; your work as part of a country's UN delegation will give you hands-on experience in diplomacy.



7 THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

A voter-registration drive on a university campus. *What do we call a system in which we elect the people who govern us?*

Blend Images/Alamy



These five **LEARNING OUTCOMES** below are designed to help improve your understanding of this chapter:

- 1:** Define the terms *politics, government, order, liberty, authority, and legitimacy*.
- 2:** Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy, and describe majoritarianism, elite theory, and pluralism.
- 3:** Summarize the conflicts that can occur between the values of liberty and order, and between those of liberty and equality.
- 4:** Discuss conservatism, liberalism, and other popular American ideological positions.
- 5:** Explain how a changing American population and other social trends may affect the future of our nation.

What if...

We Had No Bill of Rights?

Background

You know that you have the right to speak freely about the government without fear of being arrested for what you say. You have probably heard of the right to bear arms. These rights come from the Bill of Rights, the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. Because of these amendments, the government may not pass laws that limit freedom of speech, religion, and many other freedoms.

The Bill of Rights is built into the founding document that guides our government. As a result, it commands a certain reverence. Merely by its existence, it can dissuade citizens and government leaders from impairing the civil liberties of fellow Americans.

What If We Had No Bill of Rights?

Because the Bill of Rights protects our fundamental liberties, some people jump to the conclusion that, without it, we would have no rights. Consider, though, that almost all state constitutions enumerate many of the same rights. It is true that if the rights of the people were not written into state and national constitutions, these rights would be entirely dependent on the political process—on elections and on laws passed by the U.S. Congress and state legislatures. Popular rights would still be safe. Unpopular ones would be in danger.

The Right to Bear Arms

Take as an example the Second Amendment, which guarantees to citizens the right to bear arms. If the Bill of Rights did not exist, would it mean that individuals would be unable to keep firearms in their homes? Probably not. Few localities in the United States have tried to ban handguns completely. Almost all states have gun laws that are far more permissive than they have to be under the Constitution. Indeed, it was not until 2008 and 2010 that the highest court in the land, the Supreme Court, even addressed this issue. The Court ruled that complete bans on possessing handguns are unconstitutional.

The Rights of Criminal Defendants

According to the Sixth Amendment, accused individuals have the right to a speedy and public trial. Also, according to the Fifth Amendment, no accused “shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” These rules protect people who are accused of crimes. Certainly, without the Bill of Rights, we could imagine many more restrictions on the rights of criminal defendants. Why? Because those accused of crimes are not a popular group of people. Many of the protections now given to criminal defendants would probably not exist if there were no Bill of Rights.

Free Speech

Without the Bill of Rights, we would probably see many more laws restricting political contributions and advertising. We could expect laws against violent video games and pornography on the Internet. In contrast, given current popular attitudes, it is unlikely that “subversive” speech would be greatly restricted. Most Americans and their elected representatives support the right to denounce the government.

For Critical Analysis

- ▶ **The Fifth Amendment guarantees that no one can lose her or his liberty or property without due process. Yet, during World War II, we imprisoned tens of thousands of Japanese American citizens, based solely upon their race. Could that happen today to some other group of citizens, such as Muslim Americans? Why or why not?**
- ▶ **Which of the rights mentioned in this feature do you think are the most important? Why?**



Tom Carter/Alamy

Image 1–1 A protester holds up a copy of the Bill of Rights. Which of the rights mentioned here might be especially popular with conservatives?

Politics, for many people, is the “great game”—better than soccer, better than chess. Scores may be tallied only every two years, at elections, but the play continues at all times. The game, furthermore, is played for high stakes. Politics can affect what you spend. It can determine what you can legally do in your spare time. (The *What If . . .* feature that opened this chapter examined some of the ways in which your freedoms might be restricted if the Bill of Rights did not exist.) In worst-case circumstances, politics can even threaten your life.

Few topics are so entertaining as politics—and so important. How did the great game turn out in the elections held on November 6, 2018? We address that question in this chapter’s *Election 2018* feature.

In our democratic republic, citizens play an important role by voting. Although voting is extremely important, it is only one of the ways that citizens can exercise their political influence. Americans can also join a political organization or interest group, stage a protest, or donate funds to a political campaign or cause. There are countless ways to become involved. Informed participation begins with knowledge, however, and this text aims to provide you with a strong foundation in American government and politics.

Politics and Government

Learning Outcome 1:

What is politics? **Politics** can be understood as the process of resolving conflicts and deciding, as political scientist Harold Lasswell put it in his classic definition, “who gets what, when, and how.”¹ More specifically, politics is the struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant benefits or privileges.

We can identify many such groups and organizations. In every community that makes decisions through formal or informal rules, politics exists. For example, when a church decides to construct a new building or hire a new minister, the decision is made politically. Politics can be found in schools, social groups, and any other organized collection of individuals. Of all the organizations that are controlled by political activity, however, the most important is the government.

What is the government? Certainly, it is an **institution**—that is, an ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society. An institution has a life separate from the lives of the individuals who are part of it at any given moment in time. The **government** can be defined as an institution within which decisions are made that resolve conflicts and allocate benefits and privileges. The government is also the preeminent institution within society because it has the ultimate authority for making these decisions.

Define the terms *politics, government, order, liberty, authority, and legitimacy.*

Government Is Everywhere

The government is even more important than politics. Many people largely ignore politics, but it is impossible to ignore government. It is everywhere, like the water you drink and the air you breathe. Both air and water, by the way, are subject to government pollution standards. The food you eat comes from an agricultural industry that is heavily regulated and subsidized by the government. Step outside your residence, and almost immediately you will walk down a government-owned street or drive on a government-owned highway.

From Your Birth. The county government records your birth. Your toys, crib, and baby food must meet government safety standards. After a few years, you’ll start school, and 86 percent of all children attend public—which is to say, government—schools. Some children attend private schools or are home schooled, but their education must also meet government

politics

The struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant benefits or privileges.

institution

An ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society.

government

The institution that has the ultimate authority for making decisions that resolve conflicts and allocate benefits and privileges within a society.

1. Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (1936; repr., Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publisher, 1990).

standards. Public school students spend many hours in an environment designed and managed by teachers and other government employees. If you get into trouble, you'll meet government employees you'd rather not see: the police, court employees, or even jail staff.

Throughout Your Life. Most young people eagerly look forward to receiving their government-issued driver's license. Many join the military on graduating from high school, and for those who do, every minute of the next several years will be 100 percent government issue. (That's why we call soldiers "GIs.") A majority of young adults attend college at some point, and if you are reading this textbook, you are probably one of them. Many private colleges and universities exist, but 73 percent of all college students attend public institutions. Even most private universities are heavily dependent on government support.

In nearly all states, you began paying sales taxes from the moment you had your own funds to spend. Some of those funds are made up of currency issued by the government. When you enter the workforce, you'll begin paying payroll and income taxes to the government. If, like most people, you are an employee, government regulations will set many of your working conditions. You might even work for the government itself—16 percent of employees do. If you are unfortunate enough to lose a job or fall into poverty, government programs will lend you a hand.

To the Very End. Later in life, you may have health problems. Even before President Barack Obama's health-care plan went into effect on January 1, 2014, the federal government was already providing half of all the nation's health-care funding. Much of that spending came, and continues to come, from the federal Medicare program, which funds health care for almost everyone over the age of sixty-five. At that point in your life, you'll probably receive Social Security, the national government's pension plan that



Election 2018

The Outcome of the Elections

The headline news in the 2018 elections was the Democratic takeover of the U.S. House of Representatives. Republicans, however, posted gains in the Senate. The Democrats now had 231 seats in the House, and the Republicans 201—a net gain of at least 35 for the Democrats. Three House races were too close to call. The Republicans expected to have 52 senators, compared to 47 for the Democrats. (These totals count a runoff election that Republicans were sure to win, but not the Florida senate race, which was too close to call.) The Republicans therefore gained at least one seat in the Senate. The Democrats picked up a net of six additional governorships and took control of several state legislatures.

The elections were widely seen as a rebuke to President Donald Trump, but not a total repudiation. Democratic

voters turned out in very large numbers—but Republican turnout was also high. Republicans continued to hemorrhage votes from well-educated suburbanites, especially women. Democrats were able to win back at least a few of the less-well-educated Midwestern white voters who broke for Trump in 2016.

Democratic control of the House meant that it was impossible for Republicans to pass legislation without Democratic support. Oversight committees in the House now had the power to investigate the administration and force it to hand over documents. Right after the election, Trump fired Attorney General Jeff Sessions in a possible attempt to rein in Special Counsel Robert Mueller, who was also investigating the administration. Trump had no power, however, over the House.

covers most employees. Eventually, the county government will record your death, and a government judge will oversee the distribution of your assets to your heirs.

Why Is Government Necessary?

Perhaps the best way to assess the need for government is to examine circumstances in which government, as we normally understand it, does not exist. What happens when multiple groups compete violently with one another for power within a society? There are places around the world where such circumstances exist. A current example is the Middle Eastern nation of Syria, run by the dictator Bashar al-Assad. In 2011, peaceful protesters were killed, which led to an armed rebellion. The government lost control of much of the country, and its forces repeatedly massacred civilians in contested areas. Some rebels, such as the so-called Islamic State, were extreme Islamists. Others were more moderate. By 2013, rebels were fighting each other as well as the government. In much of Syria, law and order had broken down completely. By 2018, almost 500,000 people had been killed, and about half of the country's people had been driven from their homes.

As the example of Syria shows, one of the original purposes of government is the maintenance of security, or **order**. By keeping the peace, a government protects its people from violence at the hands of private or foreign armies and criminals. If order is not present, it is not possible for the government to provide any of the other benefits that people expect from it. Order is a political value to which we will return later in this chapter.

Limiting Government Power

A complete collapse of order and security, as seen in Syria, is actually an uncommon event. Much more common is the reverse—too much government control. In 2018, the human rights organization Freedom House judged that 49 of the world's countries were “not free.” These nations contain 37 percent of the world's population. Such countries may be controlled by individual kings or dictators. Saudi Arabia's king Abdullah bin Abdulaziz and North Korea's dictator Kim Jong-un are obvious examples. Alternatively, a political party, such as the Communist Party of China, may monopolize all the levers of power. The military may rule, as in Thailand since 2014.

In all of these examples, the individual or group running the country cannot be removed by legal means. Freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial are typically absent. Dictatorial governments often torture or execute their opponents. Such regimes may also suppress freedom of religion. Revolution, whether violent or nonviolent, is often the only way to change the government.

In short, protection from the violence of domestic criminals or foreign armies is not enough. Citizens also need protection from abuses of power by their own government. To protect the liberties of the people, it is necessary to limit the powers of the government.

Liberty—the greatest freedom of the individual consistent with the freedom of other individuals—is a second major political value, along with order. We discuss this value in more detail later in this chapter.



Image 1–2 Syrians in a government-held district gather at the scene of a suicide bombing. Members of the group known as the Islamic State or ISIS blew themselves up during the morning rush hour. *How would we describe what is happening in Syria?*

order

A state of peace and security. Maintaining order by protecting members of society from violence and criminal activity is one of the oldest purposes of government.

liberty

The greatest freedom of the individual that is consistent with the freedom of other individuals in the society.

Authority and Legitimacy

Every government must have **authority**—that is, the right and power to enforce its decisions. Ultimately, the government’s authority rests on its control of the armed forces and the police. Few people in the United States, however, base their day-to-day activities on fear of the government’s enforcement powers. Most people, most of the time, obey the law because this is what they have always done. Also, if they did not obey the law, they would face the disapproval of friends and family. Consider an example: Do you avoid injuring your friends or stealing their possessions because you are afraid of the police—or because if you undertook these actions, you no longer would have friends?

Under normal circumstances, the government’s authority has broad popular support. People accept the government’s right to establish rules and laws. When authority is broadly accepted, we say that it has **legitimacy**. Authority without legitimacy is a recipe for trouble.

Events in several Arab nations since 2011 serve as an example. The dictators who ruled Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia had been in power for decades. All three dictators had some popular support when they first gained power. None of these nations had a tradition of democracy, and so it was possible for undemocratic rulers to enjoy a degree of legitimacy. After years of oppressive behavior, these regimes slowly lost that legitimacy. The rulers survived only because they were willing to employ violence against any opposition. In Egypt and Tunisia, the end came when soldiers refused to use force against massive demonstrations. Having lost all legitimacy, the rulers of these two countries lost their authority as well. In Libya, the downfall and death of the dictator Muammar Gaddafi came only after a seven-month civil war. (Egypt’s shaky new democracy collapsed in 2013 when the army seized power.)

Democracy and Other Forms of Government

Learning Outcome 2:

Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy, and describe majoritarianism, elite theory, and pluralism.

authority

The right and power of a government or other entity to enforce its decisions.

legitimacy

Popular acceptance of the right and power of a government or other entity to exercise authority.

totalitarian regime

A form of government that controls all aspects of the political, social, and economic life of a nation.

authoritarianism

A type of regime in which only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions exist that are not under the government’s control.

The different types of government can be classified according to which person or group of people controls society through the government.

Types of Government

At one extreme is a society governed by a **totalitarian regime**. In such a political system, a small group of leaders or a single individual—a dictator—makes all decisions for the society. Every aspect of political, social, and economic life is controlled by the government. The power of the ruler is total (thus, the term *totalitarianism*). Examples of such regimes include Germany under Adolf Hitler and the former Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin.

A second type of system is authoritarian government. **Authoritarianism** differs from totalitarianism in that only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions, such as churches, businesses, and labor unions, exist that are not under the government’s direct control.

Many of our terms for describing the distribution of political power are derived from the ancient Greeks, who were the first Western people to study politics systematically. One form of rule was known as *aristocracy*, literally meaning “rule by the best.” In practice, this meant rule by wealthy members of ancient families. Another term from the Greeks is *theocracy*, which literally means “rule by God” (or the gods). In practice, theocracy means rule by self-appointed religious leaders. Iran is a rare example of a country in which supreme power is in the hands of a religious leader, the Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. One of the most straightforward Greek terms is *oligarchy*, which simply means “rule by a few.”

Anarchy is a term derived from a Greek word meaning the absence of government. Advocates of anarchy envision a world in which each individual makes his or her own rules for behavior. In reality, the absence of government typically results in rule by competing armed factions, many of which are indistinguishable from gangsters. This is the state of affairs in Syria, which we described earlier.

Finally, the Greek term for rule by the people was **democracy**. Within the limits of their culture, some of the Greek city-states operated as democracies. Today, in much of the world, the people will not grant legitimacy to a government unless it is based on democracy.

Direct Democracy as a Model

The Athenian system of government in ancient Greece is usually considered the purest model for **direct democracy** because the citizens of that community debated and voted directly on all laws, even those put forward by the ruling council of the city. The most important feature of Athenian democracy was that the **legislature** was composed of all of the citizens. (Women, resident foreigners, and slaves, however, were excluded because they were not citizens.) This form of government required a high level of participation from every citizen. That participation was seen as benefiting the individual and the city-state. The Athenians believed that although a high level of participation might lead to instability in government, citizens, if informed about the issues, could be trusted to make wise decisions.

Direct democracy also has been practiced at the local level in Switzerland and, in the United States, in New England town meetings. At these town meetings, important decisions—such as levying taxes, hiring city officials, and deciding local ordinances—are made by majority vote. (In recent years, however, turnout for such meetings has declined.) Some states provide a modern adaptation of direct democracy for their citizens. In these states, representative democracy is supplemented by the **initiative** or the **referendum**. Both processes enable the people to vote directly on laws or constitutional amendments. The **recall** process, which is available in many states, allows the people to vote to remove an official from state office before his or her term has expired.

The Dangers of Direct Democracy

Although they were aware of the Athenian model, the framers of the U.S. Constitution were opposed to such a system. Democracy was considered to be dangerous and a source of instability. But in the 1700s and 1800s, the idea of government based on the *consent of the people* gained increasing popularity. Such a government was the main aspiration of the American Revolution in 1775, the French Revolution in 1789, and many subsequent revolutions. At the time of the American Revolution, however, the masses were still considered to be too uneducated to govern themselves. The masses were too prone to the influence of demagogues (political leaders who manipulate popular prejudices), and too likely to subordinate minority rights to the tyranny of the majority.

democracy

A system of government in which political authority is vested in the people. The term is derived from the Greek words *demos* (“the people”) and *kratos* (“authority”).

direct democracy

A system of government in which political decisions are made by the people directly, rather than by their elected representatives. It is probably attained most easily in small political communities.

legislature

A governmental body primarily responsible for the making of laws.

initiative

A procedure by which voters can petition to vote on a law or a constitutional amendment.

referendum

An electoral device whereby legislative or constitutional measures are referred by the legislature to the voters for approval or disapproval.

recall

A procedure allowing the people to vote to dismiss an elected official from state office before his or her term has expired.



Image 1–3 These Woodbury, Vermont, residents cast their ballots after a town meeting. They voted on the school budget and sales taxes. *What type of political system does the town meeting best represent?*

James Madison, while defending the new scheme of government set forth in the U.S. Constitution, warned of the problems inherent in a “pure democracy”:

A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole . . . and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention, and have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths.²

Like other politicians of his time, Madison feared that pure, or direct, democracy would deteriorate into mob rule. What would keep the majority of the people, if given direct decision-making power, from abusing the rights of those in the minority?

A Democratic Republic

The framers of the U.S. Constitution chose to craft a **republic**, meaning a government in which sovereign power rests with the people, rather than with a king or a monarch. A republic is based on **popular sovereignty**. To Americans of the 1700s, the idea of a republic also meant a government based on common beliefs and virtues that would be fostered within small communities.

The U.S. Constitution created a form of republican government that we now call a **democratic republic**. The people hold the ultimate power over the government through the election process, but all national policy decisions are made by elected officials. For the founders, even this distance between the people and the government was not sufficient. The Constitution made sure that the Senate and the president would not be elected by a direct vote of the people. Senators were chosen by state legislatures, although a later constitutional amendment allowed for the direct election of senators. The founders also established an *electoral college* to choose the president, in the hope—soon frustrated—that such a body would prevent voters from ultimately making the choice.

Despite its limits, the new American system was unique in the amount of power it granted to the ordinary citizen. Over the course of the following two centuries, democratic values became more and more popular, at first in Western nations and then throughout the rest of the world. The spread of democratic principles gave rise to another name for our system of government—**representative democracy**. The term *representative democracy* has almost the same meaning as *democratic republic*, with one exception. Recall that in a republic, not only are the people sovereign, but there is no king. What if a nation develops into a democracy but preserves the monarchy as a largely ceremonial institution? That is exactly what happened in Britain. The British, who have long cherished their kings and queens, found the term *democratic republic* unacceptable. A republic, after all, meant there could be no monarch. The British therefore described their system as a representative democracy instead.

Principles of Democratic Government. All representative democracies rest on the rule of the people as expressed through the election of government officials. In the 1790s in the United States, only free white males were able to vote, and in some states they had to be property owners as well. Women in many states did not receive the right to vote in national elections until 1920, and the right to vote was not secured in all states by African Americans until the 1960s. Today, **universal suffrage** is the rule.

republic

A form of government in which sovereign power rests with the people, rather than with a king or a monarch.

popular sovereignty

The concept that ultimate political authority is based on the will of the people.

democratic republic

A republic in which representatives elected by the people make and enforce laws and policies.

representative democracy

A form of government in which representatives elected by the people make and enforce laws and policies. It may, however, retain the monarchy in a ceremonial role.

universal suffrage

The right of all adults to vote for their government representatives.

2. James Madison, in Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers*, No. 10 (New York: Signet, 2003), p. 71. See Appendix C of this textbook.

Because everyone's vote counts equally, the only way to make fair decisions is by some form of *majority* will. But to ensure that **majority rule** does not become oppressive, modern democracies also provide guarantees of minority rights. If political minorities were not protected, the majority might violate the fundamental rights of members of certain groups—especially groups that are unpopular or dissimilar to the majority population, such as racial minorities.

To guarantee the continued existence of a representative democracy, there must be free, competitive elections. Thus, the opposition always has the opportunity to win elective office. For such elections to be totally open, freedom of the press and speech must be preserved so that opposition candidates can present their criticisms of the government to the people.

Constitutional Democracy. Another key feature of Western representative democracy is that it is based on the principle of **limited government**. Not only is the government dependent on popular sovereignty, but the powers of the government are also clearly limited, either through a written document or through widely shared beliefs. The U.S. Constitution sets down the fundamental structure of the government and the limits to its activities. Such limits are intended to prevent political decisions based on the whims or ambitions of individuals in government rather than on constitutional principles.

What Kind of Democracy Do We Have?

Political scientists have developed a number of theories about American democracy, including *majoritarianism*, *elite theory*, and *pluralism*. Advocates of these theories use them to describe American democracy either as it actually is or as they believe it should be.

Some scholars argue that none of these three theories, which we discuss next, fully describes the workings of American democracy. These experts say that each theory captures a part of the true reality but that we need all three theories to gain a full understanding of American politics.

Democracy for Everyone. Many people believe that, in a democracy, the government ought to do what the majority of the people want. This simple proposition is the heart of majoritarian theory. As a theory of what democracy should be like, **majoritarianism** is popular among both political scientists and ordinary citizens. Many scholars, however, consider majoritarianism to provide a surprisingly poor description of how U.S. democracy actually works. Policies adopted by the government are often quite different from the ones endorsed by the public in opinion polls. For example, solid majorities advocate a greater role for religion in the public schools—including teachers leading students in prayer. Most officials, however, have tried to uphold the principle of the “separation of church and state.”

Democracy for the Few. If ordinary citizens are not really making policy decisions with their votes, who is? One theory suggests that elites really govern the United



Image 1–4 The actor Wilmer Valderrama promotes National Voter Registration Day at Miami Dade College in Florida. *Why is voting so important for democracy?*

majority rule

A basic principle of democracy asserting that the greatest number of citizens in any political unit should select officials and determine policies.

limited government

A government with powers that are limited either through a written document or through widely shared beliefs.

majoritarianism

A political theory holding that, in a democracy, the government ought to do what the majority of the people want.