

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE

Your charge is to develop answers to these terms and essays on this review sheet. For each key term, what is needed is a definition and an application or example. Some terms require more detailed definitions than others. This will be helpful in preparing for both the terms, short answers, and major essays on your final exam. Dr. Vietri will conduct a Final exam review in our classroom at 12:30 on Thursday, May 15 study day and will have additional office hours during the week of May 19. **Please note that a few terms and questions overlap with the first half of the semester.**

Part I: Key Terms and Applications

- models of democracy: protective, developmental, direct, pluralist
- "Separated Institutions Sharing Power" v "Separation of Powers"
- "Necessary and proper clause"
- "Supremacy clause"
- American Federalism: dual federalism; new deal federalism pragmatic federalism; new federalism(devolution)
- Implied powers, police powers, concurrent powers,
- Bill of Rights and selective incorporation
- Judicial review
- Judicial Activism v Judicial Restraint
- Political socialization
- Americans as passive political participants
- "The Vanishing Voter"
- Campaign finance reform
- Triad: Party Organization, Party in Government, Party in Electorate
- Redistricting, gerrymandering
- 7 major types of interest groups
- biased pluralism and interest group liberalism
- Agenda setting role of the media
- Media concentration
- Democrats v. Republicans
- Congress as the most representative branch: 7 major functions
Bicameralism; House v Senate: structure, terms, rules;
Committee system; how a bill becomes a law
- Sources of presidential power
- "The Imperial Presidency"
- The Federal Bureaucracy as a "Fourth Branch of Government"?
- Organization of the federal bureaucracy: executive departments;
independent agencies; regulatory commissions; government corporations
executive office of the president
- The Department of Homeland Security
- U.S. Patriot Acts I, II
- Appellate v original jurisdiction of the Federal Courts
- Certiorari
- Opinion writing and the Supreme Court
- Welfare system for the poor, middle class and rich
- Devolution and the Welfare Reform Act of 1996
- The National security Bureaucracy: cold war to post 9-11
- isolationism, unilateralism, multilateralism
- fiscal v monetary policy
- protective v competitive regulatory policy
- Dillon's Law
- "Fend for Yourself Federalism" and the "Intergovernmental Vise"
- funded v unfunded mandates
- structure of state and local governments

Part II. Essay Preparation

What are the differences between civil liberties and civil rights? Trace the evolution of either civil liberties or civil rights in the United States mentioning key cases and major political developments. What does the history of civil rights and civil liberties demonstrate about the "promise and performance" of American democracy?

What makes federalism uniquely American? Why was it created and how has it changed? Why has federalism persisted in the US? How does federalism impact your life? Choose at least three of the following examples in your exploration of personal impacts: higher education; homeland security; environmental regulation; voting and elections; the courts; and taxation.

Elections can be interpreted as "mirrors of American society". Using this "mirror analogy" what do the elections of 2000 and 2002 say about American society, political institutions, and political parties as organizations, in government and in the electorate?

There is widespread agreement that agenda-setting shapes media power nationally and globally. Explore the agenda-setting role of the media using at least two of the following cases: the cold war; 9-11; elections; Gulf War II; and the Clinton presidency.

The President has many tools to manage the economy but shares the responsibility for the economy with other institutions in the public sector like Congress and the Federal Reserve and the private or corporate sector. In what ways is the president's economic management role aided as well as compromised by the system of elections and campaign finance and corporate control of the media.

Describe the system of checks and balances on the powers of the three branches of American government and assess its effectiveness in controlling the abuse of political power by Congress, the President, and the Courts? What concerns are raised about "checks and balances" in the post 9-11 political environment in the United States?

Discuss the complexity of the legislative role in the policymaking process? How does "the system work"? And what "model of democracy" did you observe operating in the *Senate ICONS simulation*?

How did the Founding Fathers view the role of the courts in the American political system? How much does the Constitution tell you about their intentions for the Judicial branch? Or do you learn more from political developments like the current affirmative action case or the 2000 presidential election decision or alternatively from political documents like The Federalist Papers? How might the founders evaluate the judicial activism of the Rehnquist Supreme Court?

What are the enduring themes in American government and politics? And how might you explain them to another student unfamiliar with the complexities and contradictions of the American political system? It is suggested you come up with a minimum of five broad themes and provide concrete examples for each.

