Study Guide for AP US Government and Politics Final Exam
FRQ's for Final Exam

1) When James Madison proposed a new constitution, he tried to balance the need for "proper energy" in government with a clear limitation on government power as well.
   a. Identify two features Madison proposed for keeping any branch of government from becoming too powerful.
   b. Explain how each feature identified in A. balances the need for strong government with a need for limited government. Use two examples to support your answer.
   c. Identify one feature Madison proposed for dividing powers between national and state governments.
   d. Explain how this feature balanced the need for a strong central government while assuring the states of adequate power.

2) Trust and confidence in government have declined in recent decades.
   a) Explain how divided government has contributed to the decline in trust and confidence in government. Be sure to include a definition of divided government in your response.
   b) Explain how the increased cost of election campaigns has contributed to the decline in trust and confidence in government.
   c) Explain two specific consequences of the decline in trust and confidence in government for individual political behavior.

3) In the United States political system, there are several linkage institutions that can connect citizens to government. Elections constitute one such institution. Because of lower voter turnout, elections represent an imperfect method of linking citizens to their government. Even when there is low voter turnout, however, other linkage institutions can connect citizens to government.
   a) Describe how each of the following is related to the likelihood of voting
      • Age
      • Education
   b) Identify one current government electoral requirement that decreased voter turnout. Explain how it decreases voter turnout
   c) Identify one linkage institution other than elections and explain two ways it connects citizens to government.

4) Presidents are generally thought to have advantages over Congress in conducting foreign policy because of the formal and informal powers of the presidency.
(a) Identify two formal constitutional powers of the President in making foreign policy.
(b) Identify two formal constitutional powers of Congress in making foreign policy.
(c) Identify two informal powers of the President that contribute to the President’s advantage over Congress in conducting foreign policy.
(d) Explain how each of the informal powers identified in (c) contributes to the President’s advantage over Congress in conducting foreign policy.

5) Initially, the United States Constitution did little to protect citizens from actions of the states. In the twentieth century, the Supreme Court interpreted the Constitution to protect the rights of citizens from state governments in a process referred to as incorporation.
   a. Define selective incorporation.
   b. For two of the following, explain how each has been incorporated. Each of your explanations must be based on a specific and relevant Supreme Court decision.
      • rights of criminal defendants
      • First Amendment
      • privacy rights

Unit I- Constitutional Underpinnings of the U.S. Government

I) Concepts of American Democracy
   A) Americans have a low level of participation in government. Majority of electorate does not vote.
   B) Know: Pluralist, Elitists, and Hyperpluralist Theories

II) Constitution
   A) Articles of Confederation replaced by the Constitution to create a stronger national government. (Weakenes included no power to tax or regulate trade, as well as preventing the formation of a united nation because individual states had too much power)
   1) Shay’s rebellion was the final straw in proving the Articles were not a sufficient plan for the government under the Articles. (Illustrates the importance of property rights to the founders)
   B) 2 Principles of the Constitution (According to the Madisonian Model):
   1) Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances
      • Legislative Checks
        (a) House and Senate can veto a bill of the other house
        (b) Senate approves presidential nominations for judges and other officials,
        (c) Can impeach the president
        (d) Controls the budget
      2) Executive Branch
        (a) Can veto bills passed by Congress
        (b) Nominates judges and other government officials.
      3) Judicial Branch
        (a) Can declare laws passed by Congress to be unconstitutional
        (b) Can declare acts of the president to be unconstitutional (Not asserted until Marbury v. Madison in 1803)
   C) Amendment Process
   1) Proposal: By Congress with a 2/3 vote in each House or by National Convention called by 2/3 of states
   2) Ratification: By ¾ of state legislatures or by Conventions in ¾ of the states.
   D) The amendment process is a reflection of our federal system of government.

E) Our nation has become more democratic over time through formal and informal amendments
   1) Example: in areas of significant linguistic minorities, voting materials must be made available in the preferred language of the population.
   F) Federal Government has become more powerful over time. The necessary and proper clause (Article 1, Section 8) has been used to expand the power of the Federal Government (elastic clause). Most of the expansion of the federal government has been justified using the commerce clause, beginning with McCulloch v. Maryland in 1819 and furthered by Gibbons v. Ogden in 1824

III) Federalism
   A) Understand Dual vs. Cooperative. Unitary Governments, Confederation, enumerated, reserved, concurrent powers, Supremacy Clause
   B) Decentralization of Government results in: opportunities for political participation at all levels (local, state, and federal representatives), greater public involvement through elective local, state, and federal representatives, greater access to government because a number of concerns can be represented across all levels. Decisions can be made at lower levels allowing the federal government to concentrate on fewer issues, parties functioning at two levels, and increases the importance of intergovernmental relations because of elaborate communication necessary to share power.
   C) The 10th Amendment to the Constitution has been interpreted by the Supreme Court to reserve powers to the states
   D) Fiscal Federalism (Cooperative Federalism—categorical grants, block grants, mandates, cross-cutting requirements, cross over sanctions, etc….)


1
1) Generally, the federal, state, and local governments work together to complete a project, with the federal government providing much of the project funding.

2) Trends: Federal Grants to state and local governments have increased since 1950. After 1980, grants decreased as a percentage of federal outlays as part of the trend of devolution, which employed more block grants.

Unit II: Political Beliefs and Behaviors

I) Beliefs (key terms): Political Socialization, Political Ideology, Political efficacy (see Ch. 10), Divided government

A) Factors influencing political socialization: family, mass media, school, religion. Takes place over one’s entire life with family being the most important influence.

B) Americans have a low sense of trust in government since the 1950’s.

C) Americans strongly believe in the following core values: legal and political equality; freedom of religion and speech (NOT economic equality)...However, Americans are not tolerant of those they disagree with.

II) Behaviors

A) Forms of participation (voting, protest, grassroots campaigns, civil disobedience, join a political party/interest group, donate $, community service). Voter turnout has been on the decline in the past few decades while campaign contributions have been on the rise.

B) Obstacles to participation (voter registration, apathy, extension of suffrage, ineffectiveness of political parties).

C) Demographics:

1) Age- older voter, more likely to vote, but drops off after getting too old.
2) Education: More education = more likely to vote and be politically active. Most important factor
3) Religious
4) High income

5) Race – African American, Hispanic, and Asian (most unrepresented groups of American voters)
6) Gender: Female = more likely to vote
7) Marital Status: Married = more likely to vote
8) Union Membership: Union member = more likely to vote
9) Traits are cumulative—possessing several adds up

Unit III: Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media

I) The trend is to have shorter, less in-depth coverage of the news. They also engage in investigative journalism often with the intent of revealing political scandals.

A) The media covers campaign day-to-day activities (like a horse race...i.e. "horse race journalism")

B) The President is more likely to command media attention than a member of Congress

II) Political Parties

A) Issue generalists. Political parties are generally separate and largely independent party organizations who exist at the national, state, and local levels.

B) The influence of political parties has weakened with the rise of interest groups. People are more likely to call themselves independent more recently.

C) Third Parties find it difficult to get involved because of our winner-take-all system (plurality elections). Single member districts usually result in legislatures dominated by two political parties.

III) Elections and Campaigns

A) 2 Phases: nomination (caucus and primaries) and the general election.

B) Primaries are also unrepresentative of the American voting electorate because so few vote. Those who do are generally affluent.

C) Political parties are generally separate and largely independent party organizations who exist at the national, state, and local levels.

IV) 70% of Interest Groups have been established since the 1970’s

A) In Federalist #10, Madison argued that factions are natural, but controllable through the checks and balances and separation of powers built into our political institutions.

B) Issue specialists. Try to influence legislators through providing legislators with information on technical issues.

Unit IV: Institutions of National Government (Congress, Presidency, and Bureaucracy)

Congress (435 representatives and 100 senators)...House v. Senate (study chart on page 375 “...Key Differences”)

B) Powers Unique to the Senate

1) Treaty ratification
2) Confirmation of judicial and executive appointments.
3) Try impeachment/conviction/removal from office
4) These powers are unique because:
5) More mature body

C) Powers Unique to the House

1) Initiate revenue bills.
2) Choose the President when the Electoral College is deadlocked.
3) Impeachment.

D) Additional Powers

1) Congress is empowered to create new federal courts and specify the number of judges who will sit on them.
2) One of the formal tools used by Congress for oversight of the bureaucracy is authorization of spending.
3) The congressional power that has been contested most frequently in the federal courts is the power to regulate interstate commerce (think: Gibbons vs. Ogden)

4) A legislative veto is unconstitutional because they violate the principle of separation of powers.
### Differences in House and Senate (procedures)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>House</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>Reason(s) [Examples Below]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>435 members; 2 yr terms</td>
<td>100 members; 6 yr terms</td>
<td>• House closer to the people with representation based on population and 2 yr terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate smaller, more deliberative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low turnover</td>
<td>Moderate turnover</td>
<td>• Incumbents win re-election over 90% of the time in the House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate races are state-wide and more competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaker bill referral hard to challenge</td>
<td>Referral decisions easily challenged</td>
<td>• Difficult for individual members to challenge the Speaker of the House; members limited by strict rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Members of the Senate more independent operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling/rules controlled by majority party; powerful Rules Committee</td>
<td>Scheduling/rules agreed to by majority &amp; minority leaders</td>
<td>• House - majority party tightly controls Leadership and Rules with little minority party. Rules committee plays “traffic cop” role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate – much more cooperation between parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate limited to 1 hour</td>
<td>Unlimited debate unless cloture invoked</td>
<td>• Impractical with 435 members to have unlimited debate in the House; nothing would get done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate has only 100 members; more time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members policy specialists</td>
<td>Members policy generalists</td>
<td>• House – in order to get re-elected, members must become experts in policies that directly effect their districts; must serve on those committees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senators represent diverse interest of an entire state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasizes tax &amp; revenue policy</td>
<td>Emphasizes foreign policy</td>
<td>• All tax and revenue bills must originate in the House; much of public policy decisions in HR involve the budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate “advice and consent” of ambassadors, cabinet; ratify treaties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More formal &amp; impersonal</td>
<td>More informal &amp; personal</td>
<td>• House much bigger, need strict rules to be efficient; members 1 of 435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate smaller, more collegial; members 1 of only 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee System important</td>
<td>Committee system less important</td>
<td>• House is larger so more work can be accomplished through committees on floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Senate smaller so committees not as necessary to complete work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My not “hold” a bill</td>
<td>May “hold” a bill</td>
<td>• House may pass a bill with an individual member’s objections.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• An individual Senator can allow a Senator to temporarily stop a motion from reaching the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No unanimous consent</td>
<td>Unanimous consent agreements allowed</td>
<td>• The Senate can ease passage of a bill with unanimous consent agreements. Thus, if no one objects to a motion, it is passed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The House has no such mechanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May not use germaneness</td>
<td>May use germaneness</td>
<td>• Senate can add unrelated content that members of the House might find objectionable. Germaneness is the right to challenge the ruling of a presiding officer during debate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A) Franking privilege is extended to all members of Congress. It means members of Congress can send mail to their constituents at the government’s expense.

### Congressional boundaries are drawn by state legislatures (know: gerrymandering)

1) “critical elections” are most likely associated with party realignment.

### Committees

A) House Rules Committee sets conditions for debate and amendment of most legislation. Also puts bills on calendar for debate.

B) Appropriations Committees (both houses)- decides how government money will be apportioned to federal agencies.

C) House Ways and Means Committee- writes bills concerning tax and other public revenue

### Presidency

**Terms**: line-item veto, 25th Amendment, impeachment, pocket veto

I) **Roles of President (= Constitutional)**

   (a) Chief of State  
   (b) Chief Executive  
   (c) Chief Diplomat (negotiate treaties)  
   (d) Chief of Party  

   (e) Commander in Chief  
   (f) Chief Legislator (present State of Union)*  
   (g) Chief Executive*  

   (h) Chief Citizen  
   (i) Crisis Manager  
   (j) Moral Persuader

II) Be familiar with the chart on page 406 (Presidential Powers). . . distinguish between formal and informal powers.

III) Informal Presidential Powers include: **Executive Orders** (used more frequently since 1970’s because do not need to be passed/approved by Congress), Executive Privilege, and Executive Agreements

   A) The Public President. . . A President’s popularity tends to fall during his term in office.

IV) Running the Government

   A) **Cabinet**: advisors to the President regarding a specific policy area. Not a constitutional office, but every President has had one. (1 Attorney General, 14 Secretaries).

   B) **Executive Office Of President**: Principal staff for the President is made up of the White House Office. Administrator and advisory bodies that assist President in overseeing policy. Consists of National Security Council, Council of Economic Advisors, Office of Management and Budget, and White House Office (Personal and political advisors to the President. Takes care of political needs and manages the press. Principal staff for President has been made up of members of this office)

   I) Cabinet appointments require Senate confirmation as well as some key independent executive agencies (Secretary of State, Director of the FBI, and Attorney General, for example). The White House Staff and the Executive Office of the President do NOT require Senate approval. (Chief of Staff, for example).

V) **War Powers Resolutions**

   A) It was designed to assure congressional involvement in decisions committing military forces in hostile situations overseas.

   B) **Provisions**

      1) The President must notify Congress within 48 hours of sending troops into combat.

      2) President must consult with Congress whenever feasible

      3) Conflicts are limited to 60 days unless Congress takes action
IV - Public Policy

I) Entitlement spending is the largest portion of “uncontrollable spending” in the federal budget (because nondiscretionary)

A) Federal benefits that must be funded by Congress and must be paid to all citizens who meet eligibility criteria are called “individual entitlements.”

Unit VI - Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights

I) Judicial Branch

A) Terms to know:
   1) Amicus curiae briefs: briefs written by interest groups on behalf of litigants to the SC’s jurisdiction (original and appellate), district courts, circuit courts of appeal, precedent or stare decisis

B) Supreme Court appointments are life-time appointments, which mean the President’s appointments can influence public policy far beyond their terms in office. This is why SC judges are likely to have political experience so the President knows their views on certain issues.

C) The Supreme Court is unlikely to hear a case on appeal from a lower court. They only hear about 100 out of 8000 appeals per year.

D) Original intent seeks to determine the meaning of the Constitutional according to the intentions of the framers. Many “originalists” believe that the judicial branch has become too powerful and favor judicial restraint. Judicial activists wish to allow justices the freedom to forge new policies, especially concerning people underrepresented in the political process.

E) Checks on Judiciary (ways judges are accountable to the people)
   1) Impeachment, Congress can clarify “legislative intent” or pass laws regarding jurisdiction, executive enforcement of judicial interpretations, and amendments to the Constitution.

II) Civil Liberties. The legal constitutional protections against the government

A) REVIEW ALL THE SC CASES FROM THE LIST GIVEN OUT IN CLASS. While reviewing, ask self: In what ways were the following incorporated to the states? rights of criminal defendants, First Amendment, privacy rights

B) Define selective incorporation, gradual interpretation, one case at a time, that interpreted the Fourteenth Amendment as extending most of the requirements of the Bill of Rights to the states, as well as the federal government.

C) First Amendment (religion)
   1) 5 components: speech, press, religion, assembly, petition
   2) 2 parts of freedom of religion: establishment clause (“wall of separation” principle) and free exercise clause (no one may interfere with one’s right to practice religion of choice).
   4) Speech is limited if it presents a “clear and present danger.”
   5) Permissible to advocate the violent overthrow of government in abstract, but not to incite anyone to imminent lawless action
   6) Speech is generally protected in public places, but usually not on another’s private property
   7) Obscenity: The SC has made it clear that nudity and sex are not, by definition, obscene, and that they will provide First Amendment protection to anything that has political, literary, or artistic merit, allowing the government to punish only the distribution of “hard-core pornography”

D) Fifth Amendment, etc - Due Process of Law (Part III) KNOW: 4th, 5th, 6th, and 8th Amendment, self-incrimination
   1) Miranda v. Arizona declared that police must inform criminal suspects of their constitutional rights before questioning suspects after arrest.

E) Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection under the Law (Part IV)….designed to turn over Dred Scott decision.
   1) The principle that the government must respect ALL of the legal rights that are owed to a person according to the law.
   2) Conceptions of Equality
      (a) Equal opportunity: same chances
      (b) Equal results: same rewards

F) Right of Privacy (Part V)
   1) Roe v. Wade and Griswold v. Connecticut were based on the right to privacy implied in the Bill of Rights

III) Civil Rights - policies that extend basic rights to protect people against arbitrary or discriminatory treatment by government or by other individuals

A) Know: 24th Amendment, 19th Amendment

B) Civil Rights Act of 1964
   1) Made racial discrimination illegal in hotels, restaurants, and other public accommodation
   2) Forbade employment discrimination based on race
   3) Created Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

C) Voting Rights Act of 1965 was one of the best implemented acts because it had a well-defined mission and contained sufficient support to carry out its provisions. It resulted in a greater participation of voter registration by African American voters in the South.