**Test Bank   
American Government Video Lectures**

**Note to instructor: For each video session, there are 4 multiple choice questions and 2 short answer questions, each accompanied by the answer key. The questions and answers align with the content of my introductory American government text,** [**We the People, 14e**](https://www.mheducation.com/highered/product/we-people-patterson/M9781260242928.html) **(McGraw Hill). The test bank is also compatible with other comprehensive intro American government texts – that is, the answers do not conflict with what students might conclude from the material in the text they are reading.**

**Table of Contents**

**CONSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS**Session 1. Political Culture pp. 2-4  
Session 2. Limited Government pp. 5-7  
Session 3. Representative Government pp. 8-10  
Session 4. Federalism pp. 11-14  
Session 5. Civil Liberties pp. 15-18  
Session 6. Civil Rights pp. 19-21

**MASS POLITICS**Session 7. Public Opinion pp. 22-25  
Session 8. Political Parties pp. 26-29  
Session 9. Campaigns & Elections pp. 30-32  
Session 10. Political Movements pp. 33-35   
Session 11. Interest Groups pp. 36-38  
Session 12. News Media pp. 39-41

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**Session 13. Congress and Constituency pp. 42-44  
Session 14. Congress and Party pp. 45-48  
Session 15. Presidents & Domestic Policy pp. 49-51  
Session 16. Presidents & Foreign Policy pp. 52-55  
Session 17. Federal Bureaucracy pp. 56-59  
Session 18. Supreme Court & Judiciary pp. 60-63

**PUBLIC POLICY**Session 19. Social Policy pp. 64-66  
Session 20. Fiscal & Monetary Policy pp. 67-69  
Session 21. Welfare & Income Policy pp. 70-73  
Session 22. Regulatory Policy pp. 74-76  
Session 23. Foreign Policy pp. 77-79  
Session 24. Review Session pp. 80-82

**1st SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS  
Political Culture**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which influence has not had an important role in the establishment of Americans’ political values?

a. nation’s origin in a revolution   
b. nation’s open frontier during its development  
c. nation’s need for a set of values that could serve to unify immigrants coming from many different countries.   
d. embrace of the ideals by each succeeding generation of Americans  
e. all of these have had an important role

*The correct answer is e. Each of the listed influences has played an important role. America’s core values were a response to the circumstances of life in the colonies, which contributed to the revolution against British rule. The nation’s open frontier of the next century created similar circumstances, which helped sustain America’s original values. So, too, did the need for a unifying bond in a nation of immigrants. The shared ancestry that was a bond in countries like France or China did not apply to Americans—their ancestry traced to many countries. Finally, each succeeding generation of Americans has seen fit to embrace the nation’s original values; these values appeal to people’s aspirations and are reinforced by national traditions and practices, such as Fourth of July celebrations and the Pledge of Allegiance that America’s children recite at the start of each school day.*

2. Which statement best describes the influence of America’s cultural values on the political behavior of its people?

a. They determine precisely how Americans behave politically.  
b. They are symbolic principles that have little practical influence on how Americans behave.  
c. They set boundaries on what Americans will regard as politically acceptable and desirable.

d. They are tools by which political leaders manipulate people’s behavior.  
e. They were important in getting Americans to revolt against Britain but since then have had little influence.

*The correct answer is “c.” That answer reflects the fact that cultural ideals do not determine exactly what people will do politically but nevertheless are more than symbolic. Cultural values affect how people think about politics, narrowing the range of actions that they will find acceptable and desirable—in other words, cultural values place boundaries on their actions.*

3. Which cultural value has had the most influence on U.S. social welfare policy?

a. liberty  
 b. equality  
 c. individualism  
 d. self-government

*The correct answer is “c.” Because of America’s cultural value of “individualism”—the notion that people should be self-reliant—U.S. social welfare policies are typically reserved for those individuals who can prove that they truly need help. A widespread assumption among Americans is that more generous policies would weaken people’s determination to be self-reliant. Thus, for example, whereas most European democracies provide government-paid medical care to all residents, the United States does not. Those who get government help in paying for their health insurance must prove that their income level is insufficient to afford it on their own.*

4. Politics is the process through which a society settles its conflicts. What are the two main sources of conflict in society?

a. ambition and power  
 b. scarce resources and conflicting values  
 c. wealth and status  
 d. generational differences and property rights

*The correct answer is “b.” Conflict in society results most commonly from scarce resources—the fact that society does not have enough resources to satisfy everyone’s demands—and conflicting values—opposing beliefs about values, such as the conflict between those who view abortion as a woman’s right to choose and those who see it as a violation of the rights of the unborn.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the American political culture with that of most Western democracies. What in the American experience has led its people to derive their national identify from a set of shared political ideals? How do these ideals affect what Americans will find acceptable and try to achieve through politics? What are the limits of these ideals in terms of their influence of people’s political behavior?

***Answer:*** *The American political culture’s distinctiveness owes to the special circumstances that gave rise to the nation’s core values—the wilderness society that marked life in the American colonies and was a sharp contrast with European society, with its ruling families and feudal order. Ideas of liberty, equality, individualism, and self-government emerged almost naturally from Americans’ colonial experience, and were at odds with the values of the Old World. These ideas were not the sole cause of the American Revolution but they were, as the Declaration of Independence indicates, its animating ideals. These ideals proved appealing to a wide spectrum of Americans, which contributed to their persistence. With time, they also became the foundation of America’s national identity—the connecting glue in a nation of immigrants.*

*Like the cultural values of other people, Americans’ core values affect how they think about politics, and the choices they make. In the highly religious countries of the Middle East, for example, religious values affect people’s political opinions and actions. Americans’ core values work in a similar way, sensitizing them to issues of liberty, equality, individualism, and self-government. The effect of individualism on Americans’ thinking can be seen, for example, in policy areas such as social welfare (the United States is almost alone among industrialized nations in not having a universal system of government-paid health care) and taxation (the United States has nearly the lowest income tax rate among industrialized nations).*

*Cultural values, such as a professed belief in equality, do not determine exactly how people will behave. Other influences, such as partisanship and self-interest, also play into the political choices they make. But cultural values serve as boundaries on what people will try to achieve, and what they will accept politically. The influence of America’s cultural values is also limited by the fact that they’re not entirely compatible with each other. Self-government, for example, implies the right of the majority to rule, whereas liberty implies that individuals have rights beyond the reach of the majority.*

**Short Answer**

The U.S. system of public education is rooted in the concept of equality of opportunity. How has that concept shaped the American education system? What are the practical limits on the application of that concept (why do some American children not have access to an “equal education”)?

***Answer:*** *From the beginning of the public school movement in the early 1800s, America’s public education system has aimed at educating a broad segment of the population. This system stood in contrast to most European systems of the time, which aimed at educating the children of social and economic elites. The American system was rooted in two cultural values—individualism and equality. If children were to become self-reliant, they would need to be educated. And if they had a right to equality, free public education would have to be widely available. Out of these two values came the notion of American education as rooted in the idea of “equal opportunity”—children would be educated in much the same way so that they would have something resembling an equal opportunity to get ahead in life. That theory has continued to guide public education policy in the United States.*

*At the same time, American children do not have access to “equal education.” Some public schools have much better facilities and teachers than do other public schools. The primary reason is that the United States has a federal system of government, and the public schools are governed largely by state and local governments rather than by the national government. Some states spend less than others on their public schools as a result of differing levels of resources and commitment. Variation within each state also exists. Public schools are funded in substantial part by local taxes, and some localities are wealthier than others, and thus better positioned to spend more heavily on their public schools.*

**2ND SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS  
Limited Government**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which of the following is not part of America’s system of limited government?

a. separation of powers   
 b. denials of power  
 c. grants of power   
 d. Bill of Rights  
 e. all of the above are part of that system

*The correct answer is “e.” Each of the listed items is part of America’s system of limited government. The separation of powers is intended as a check on government; each branch has a share of the other two branches’ power so that it can try to restrain unconstitutional action on their part. Denials of power are a direct form of limited government; they identify actions that government is prohibited from taking. Grants of power might not seem to be part of the limited government system; however, by granting the government specified powers, rather than granting it the authority to decide what its powers will be, this feature of the Constitution serves as a limit on government. The Bill of Rights is a direct form of limited government. The Bill of Rights contains a list of citizen rights that government is constitutionally required to protect.*

2. Judging from the lecture, which institution poses the greatest threat to America’s system of limited government?

a. presidency  
 b. House of Representatives  
 c. Senate  
 d. Supreme Court

*The correct answer is “a.” Unlike the other institutions where power is shared among individuals, the presidency is an office where authority is vested in a single individual. That arrangement allows a degree of secrecy that the other institutions cannot achieve. Unconstitutional action taken in secret by a president can remain hidden or not be discovered soon enough to make a difference.*

3. Which quote best represents the concept of limited government?

a. “the government that governs least is the government that governs best”  
b. “a government of the people, by the people, and for the people”  
c. “power must never be trusted without a check”  
d. “all men are created equal”  
e. “The basis of our political system is the right of the people to make and to alter their constitutions of government."

*The correct answer is “c.” The Constitution is not designed to prevent government from acting. The framers of the Constitution understood that government must be granted the powers it needs to serve society’s needs. What worried the framers were abuses of power—officials who exercise powers not granted to them. For this reason, they built a series of checks into the Constitution—checks that would allow other officials to block action by an official or institution that was acting outside the law. Thus the validity of the expression: “power must never be granted without a check.”*

4. Which of the following is least likely to contribute to the breakdown of America’s system of limited government?

a. presidential secrecy  
b. when one party controls both the presidency and Congress  
c. when the three branches of government are united in the belief that a breach of the Constitution is in the national interest  
d. when the Supreme Court is dominated by appointees of the same party

*The correct answer is “d.” Historically, the first three items—presidential secrecy, one party domination of Congress and the presidency, and agreement on a constitutional breach by all three branches—have been associated with actions that have violated the spirit and letter of limited government. Although it is conceivable that a Supreme Court dominated by justices from one party could be a threat to limited government (option “d”), the Court has typically been the institution that has served to check breaches by the other branches.*

**Short Answer**

Why is it more accurate to say that the United States has a system of “separated institutions sharing power” rather than a system of “separated powers”? Provide examples of how shared power can act to check and balance the power of each institution.

***Answer:*** *Several decades before the writing of the Constitution, the French theorist Montesquieu proposed a separation of powers. Montesquieu argued for a strict separation of legislative, executive, and judicial power. The framers of the U.S. Constitution rejected his idea and instead divided legislative, executive, and judicial power among separate branches while also granting each branch a share of the power of the other two branches. To the framers, this “sharing of power” was an important mechanism for keeping each branch in check. No branch would be able to exercise full power even within its sphere because the other two branches had a share of it, positioning them to counter an attempt by that branch to act beyond its constitutionally assigned powers.*

*There are a fairly large number of examples of how shared power can act as a check on power. Here are a few of them: The executive branch has an ability to check the legislative branch through use of the veto—in casting a veto, the president voids a legislative act of Congress. Meanwhile, the legislative branch’s can check the executive branch through its funding power. The president is authorized to spend money for an activity only if Congress has appropriated money for that purpose. An example of the judicial branch’s ability to check Congress or the president is to declare its action null and void on the grounds it violates the Constitution. In turn, Congress and the president have checks on the judicial branch—an example is the president’s power to nominate federal judges and the Senate’s power to confirm them.*

**Short Answer**

In 2015, Congress enacted legislation that gives the National Security Agency (NSA) the authority to monitor (but not listen to or read) telephone and Internet traffic, looking for patterns that might suggest terrorist activity. If the NSA detects a suspicious pattern, it presents the evidence to a secret judicial court, which decides whether the NSA’s evidence is sufficient to justify granting it a search warrant. Only if such a warrant is granted can the NSA lawfully investigate the actual content of the messages. In terms of limited government, what argument could be made in support of the program? What argument could be made in opposition to it?

**Answer:** *Among the arguments in favor is the claim that international terrorism is a new kind of threat that is dangerous in part because modern communication allows a degree of coordination not possible at earlier times. The Internet can be used to recruit terrorists, train them, and instruct them in terrorist attacks. The safeguard against overly intrusive government in the NSA’s monitoring program is that the agency is not authorized to hear or see the content of messages without a warrant issued by the secret judicial court. The court can be expected to withhold such a warrant unless the NSA can present sufficient evidence that a particular pattern of message traffic is likely to be a sign of terrorist activity.*

*Among the arguments in opposition is the claim that the process lacks transparency. Acceptance of the program requires trust in the NSA to honor the limitation on its monitoring and to present its evidence honestly to the secret judicial court. Trust in the secret judicial court is also required. Since the court’s proceedings are secret, one must trust that its judges are applying proper legal standards in the granting of search warrants. Opponents of the policy are also concerned about the precedent. If the monitoring is allowed, will the government, as new and more sophisticated methods of surveillance are developed, be tempted to intrude even more fully on Americans’ private communication?*

**3rd SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS   
Representative Government**

**Multiple Choice**

1. In providing for representative government, the writers of the Constitution were determined to

a. give the majority absolute governing power.  
b. make the president dependent on popular support.  
c. reduce the likelihood that a tyrannical majority would gain control of government.  
d. make the Senate directly responsible to the voters.  
e. give the House substantially greater power than the Senate.

*The correct answer is “c.” The framers of the Constitution recognized the importance of giving ordinary citizens a voice in their governing but, on the basis of historical experience, were concerned that popular government could devolve into tyranny of the majority—the situation where a popular majority gains control of government and uses its power to trample on the rights and interests of others. Accordingly, only members of the House of Representatives were subject to direct popular election. The Senate (with members chosen by the state legislatures) and the president (chosen by electors) were elected by different methods. Moreover, the Senate, though not directly elected, was established as co-equal of the directly elected House.*

2. The U.S. Constitution provides for representative government mainly

a. through direct and indirect systems of election.  
b. by defining and limiting the lawful powers of government.  
c. by dividing governing powers among competing institutions.  
d. by requiring government to take steps to ensure that citizens can easily exercise their right to vote.

*The correct answer is “a.” Representative government is a form of government in which those in power represent the people and are subject to their control in varying degrees. The Constitution provides for representative government through its provisions for direct popular election (as in the case of members of the House of Representatives) and indirect popular election (as in the case of the president, chosen by electors). The Constitution does not compel government to take steps to ensure that citizens find it easy to vote. The Constitution stipulates only that states cannot have more stringent voting requirements for federal elections than are used for elections to the state legislature’s larger chamber.*

3. Which institution determines most of rules governing U.S. elections, including whether and when a primary will be held, most voter registration procedures, and how long polling places will stay open on Election Day?

a. president  
b. House  
c. Senate  
d. Congress as a whole  
e. state governments

*The correct answer is “e.” State governments determine most of the rules governing U.S. elections. States are not required, for example, to hold primary elections. Each state makes that decision on its own and, if it chooses to hold a primary, picks the date on which it will be held. States do not have complete discretion over election rules. For example, the U.S. Constitution prohibits them from denying the vote on the basis of race or sex. Nevertheless, elections in the United States are administered by the states and they determine most of the rules.*

4. Which aspect of U.S. elections has proven to be the most susceptible to manipulation by lawmaking officials?

a. voter registration rules  
b. candidate eligibility rules  
c. primary election scheduling  
d. campaign spending reporting requirements

*The correct answer is “a.” Voter registration has been the aspect of U.S. elections most subject to manipulation by officials. After the Civil War, for example, the grandfather clause, poll taxes, and literacy tests were used by southern states to keep black Americans from registering to vote. Even today, states vary in the degree to which they make it easy for their residents to register. Some states require a government-issued ID as a condition of registration whereas others do not. Some states close their registration rolls a few weeks before Election Day whereas others allow registration even on Election Day. Some states allow residents to register by mail or online whereas others require them to register in person.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the original system for electing federal officials with the system of today, noting in each case whether voters have acquired a more direct voice in the election process than was originally the case. Then, compare the U.S. system of staggered and separate elections for House members, senators, and the president with a parliamentary system where all legislators are chosen in the same election. Which system provides a more direct form of majority rule?

**Answer:** *The original Constitution provided for election by popular vote of House members only. Senators were chosen by the state legislatures and the president was chosen by electors (each state having as many electors as it has members in Congress).*

*Senators are now chosen by popular vote, a change that occurred in 1913 through a constitutional amendment. The president is still chosen by electors, but voters have a direct voice in the process because states now tie their electoral votes to their popular vote outcomes. By winning a state’s popular vote, a presidential candidate also wins its electoral votes. This change came about in the early 1800s.*

*As a means of guarding against majority tyranny, the framers of the Constitution staggered the terms of office of federal officials. House members would be elected to a two-year term, the president to a four-year term, and senators to a six-year term (a third of the senators chosen every two years). The thinking behind this arrangement is that it would make it difficult for an unreasoning majority to capture full power in a single election. The time between one election and the next one might be sufficient for that majority to come to its senses.*

*The U.S. system differs from a parliamentary system in which all elected officials are elected at the same time and for the same term of office. A parliamentary system is a more direct form of majority rule. In a single election, a voting majority can determine in full who will be in power—not only in the legislature but in the executive. The prime minister, chosen by the majority party, is head of the legislature as well as being chief executive.*

*In the U.S. system, majority rule is more difficult to achieve. The president, senators, and House members are all separately elected and to different terms of office, and power is divided between the executive and legislative branches. At times, power has been split between the political parties, with one party controlling one or both houses of Congress and the other party controlling the presidency.*

**Short Answer**

Why are voting rates in the United States lower than in Europe? Which demographic groups are most disadvantaged by U.S. voting laws? Why?

**Answer:** *There are a number of reasons why U.S. voting rates are lower than those in Europe. One reason is that Election Day in many European countries is a holiday or takes place on a weekend; this timing is designed to make it easy for people to get to the polls. In contrast, U.S. elections are held on a Tuesday, which is a day when most people are at work.*

*The major reason for the difference, however, is voter registration. Among registered voters only, the voting rate in the U.S. is roughly equal to that in Europe. However, the overall voting rate in the U.S. is lower because it has a much higher percentage of unregistered voters; such citizens are not allowed to vote.*

*In most European democracies, government takes responsibility for registration. If an eligible voter moves to a new address, the postal service will notify registration officials, who will update the individual’s registration. As a result, over 90 percent of eligible voters in Europe are registered to vote. In contrast, registration in the United States is the individual’s responsibility. Eligible citizens have to take the initiative in order to register. That’s not always easy to do. In some states, it can require locating and traveling to a registration office during working hours and being able to show clear proof of citizenship. Only about 75 percent of eligible Americans are registered to vote.*

*The groups most disadvantaged by the U.S. system are those that are poor and have minimal schooling. Such individuals are less likely to have a driver’s license or passport or have on hand a certified copy of their birth certificate, which some states require as proof of citizenship as a condition of registration. Such individuals are also less likely to have the transportation necessary to travel to a registration office. In addition, they are less likely to know where to go to register, and when. And they are more likely to change residency; a change of residency requires an individual to reregister. For such reasons, voter registration in the United States is substantially lower among those of lower income and education than among those with higher income and education.*

**4TH SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS   
Federalism**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which of the following statements best describes how the Constitution provides for a federal system of government?

a. The Constitution defines the powers of government and then expressly indicates which powers are assigned to the federal government and which are assigned to the states.  
b. The Constitution defines the powers of the federal government and reserves the unlisted powers for the states.  
c. The Constitution gives Congress the authority to define the powers it and the states will have.

*The correct answer is “b.” The U.S. Constitution is dedicated to defining the federal institutions (Congress, the president, and the judiciary) and their powers. The Constitution does not list the powers of the state governments. This arrangement led the states to insist on an amendment to the Constitution aimed at clarifying their status. That amendment is the Tenth Amendment, which says that powers not granted to the federal government are “reserved” for the states.*

2. During U.S. history, which of the following constitutional clauses has played the least significant role in the expansion of federal authority?

a. necessary and proper clause  
 b. supremacy clause  
 c. commerce clause  
 d. naturalization clause  
 e. taxing and spending clause  
  
*The correct answer is “d.” Several clauses of the Constitution have played major roles in the expansion of federal power as a result of how the they have been interpreted by Supreme Court: the necessary and proper clause (the Court has held that it allows Congress to go beyond its listed powers as long as such action is “implied” by those powers); the supremacy clause (that valid federal law supersedes conflicting state law); the commerce clause (that Congress has broad authority to regulate commerce); and the taxing and spending clause (that Congress has broad authority to tax and spend for the purpose of promoting “the general welfare’). The naturalization clause (also called the citizenship clause) is part of the 14th Amendment. The clause grants naturalized citizens (those not born in the U.S. but have qualified to become citizens) the same rights of citizenship as those who born in America. It’s an important clause in its own right but has not played as large a role in the expansion of federal power as have the other clauses.*

3. Over the course of U.S. history, the federal system has become increasingly “nationalized” in the sense that the federal government’s authority has expanded relative to the power of the states. Which factor has been least important in this development?

a. Heightened levels of industrialization and urbanization have resulted in an economy and a people that are interdependent, with the result that policy problems have increasingly required national policy solutions.   
b. Supreme Court rulings that have broadly interpreted the federal government’s constitutional powers.  
c. The states’ desire to cede power to the national government to rid themselves of some of their policy authority.  
d. The use of federal grants-in-aid as a means of exerting federal authority in policy areas traditionally reserved for the states.

*The correct answer is “c.” Economic and social interdependency, Supreme Court rulings in favor of federal power, and federal grants-in-aid have all contributed substantially to the “nationalization” of the American federal system. States have generally opposed expansions of federal power that intrude on their authority. The one area where states have sometimes welcomed federal intrusion is federal grants-in-aid. States have welcomed federal money but, even here, have fought to reduce as much as possible federal restrictions on use of the money. States also have the option of not accepting federal grants. An example is the 2010 Affordable Care Act which makes money available to states if they expand the number of residents eligible for Medicaid, which is federally provided health insurance for those of low income. A significant number of states have turned down the money rather than expanding the eligibility criteria.*

4. In comparing the Supreme Court rulings upholding the New Deal programs with the Supreme Court ruling upholding the 2010 health care reform act, which statement is true?

a. Both the New Deal rulings and the health care ruling hinged on the Court’s interpretation of the necessary and proper clause.  
b. Many of the New Deal rulings centered on the commerce clause while the Court’s upholding of the health care act was based on the taxing clause.  
c. Both the New Deal rulings and the health care ruling centered on the supremacy clause.  
d. Both the New Deal rulings and the health care ruling rested on the Court’s interpretation of the Tenth Amendment.

*The correct answer is “b.” During the early years of the 1930s New Deal, the Supreme Court struck down numerous laws on grounds that Congress had exceeded its authority under the commerce clause. The Court then switched its stance, ruling that the commerce clause grants Congress broad authority to regulate commerce. Many observers thought that the commerce clause would be the basis on which the Supreme Court would uphold the 2010 health care act. Instead, the Court based its decision on the taxing clause, holding that the “penalty” on individuals who fail to obtain health insurance is effectively a “tax,” and therefore within the lawful power of Congress to impose.*

**Short Answer**

What role have federal grants-in-aid played in the expansion of federal authority? What is the justification for allowing Congress to determine how states and localities can use federal grants-in-aid?

***Answer:*** *The Constitution “reserves” to the states the power to decide policy in areas such as health, education, and welfare. Accordingly, the federal government does not have the power to dictate, for example, how states will operate their public schools. However, the Supreme Court has held that Congress can tax and spend to promote “the general welfare.” That authority has allowed Congress to establish grants-in-aid programs to the states in areas such as health, education, and welfare. States are not compelled to accept such grants. But, if they take a federal grant, they are bound by the spending conditions attached to the money. For example, a federal grant aimed at providing free lunch to children of lower-income families cannot be used to raise teachers’ salaries. Federal grants now account for about a fifth of the budgets of state governments, meaning that a significant part of their policy activity is conducted within the context of rules set down by the federal government through its grants-in-aid.*

*The justification for allowing Congress to set the conditions for federal grants to states is the simple fact that the money is raised by the federal government and can be spent as Congress sees fit. It is not the states’ money but rather money granted to them by Congress. If states could somehow dictate to Congress the terms of federal grants, they would be intruding on a power granted to Congress by the U.S. Constitution, which would violate the Constitution’s supremacy clause (which says that state law cannot infringe on valid federal authority).*

**Short Answer**

In *National Federation of Independent Business v*. *Sebelius* (2012), the justices on the Supreme Court were divided in their views on whether the Constitution’s taxing clause and commerce clause gave Congress the authority to impose an individual insurance mandate. What were the pro- and con-arguments in regard to each of these clauses? What decision would you have reached on each clause if you had been on the Supreme Court? Why?

**Answer:** *The Sebelius case arose when roughly two dozen states challenged the provision of the 2010 Affordable Care Act that requires individuals to acquire health insurance or pay a penalty when they file their taxes.*

*In terms of the commerce clause, the pro argument was that health care is a component of interstate commerce, which is within the power of Congress to regulate. Proponents argued that individuals without health insurance place a burden on interstate commerce. When they get sick, they go to an emergency room for treatment but are unable to pay the bill. That cost then gets passed along to others, raising the cost of their insurance and burdening commerce. Opponents of this argument conceded that Congress has the power to regulate commerce but argued that the individual insurance mandate penalizes people for not engaging in commerce, which is not within Congress’s commerce power. If Congress had that power, they argued, it could compel people to engage in all sorts of activities, forcing them, for example, to eat healthy foods rather than junk foods. In its ruling, the Supreme Court divided 5-4 in favor of the argument that the commerce clause does not empower Congress to force people to engage in a commercial activity.*

*The Supreme Court also divided 5-4 on whether the taxing clause of the Constitution permits Congress to impose a penalty on those who fail to obtain health insurance. In this case, the Court’s majority sided with Congress, saying that the penalty was effectively a tax on individuals who don’t obtain insurance and, as a tax, is within Congress’s authority. Opponents of this argument pointed out that both President Obama, who pushed for enactment of the health care reform law, and the Democratic majority in Congress that passed it into law, refrained from calling the penalty a “tax.” They repeatedly referred to it as a “penalty.” Reasoning from this fact, opponents of the law said that Congress’s intended the penalty as a penalty and not as a tax, and that it was therefore inaccurate to interpret as a valid act under Congress’s taxing power.*

**5TH SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS   
Civil Liberties**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which constitutional amendment, as interpreted by the Supreme Court after 1925, protects individual rights from action by state and local governments?

a. Fourteenth  
b. Tenth  
c. Fifth  
d. Fourth  
e. First

*The correct answer is “a.” The first ten amendments, known as the Bill of Rights, applied only to action by the federal government. In contrast, the 14th Amendment, ratified in the aftermath of the Civil War, prohibits state governments (and local governments, which are agents of the state governments) from denying due process and equal protection to their residents. The Supreme Court has interpreted the 14th Amendment to prohibit states and localities from abridging such individual rights as freedom of speech and the right to an attorney.*

2. Which of the following statements is not true?

a. The news media have nearly an unrestricted right to publish what they want about government.   
b. Citizens have nearly an unrestricted right to say what they want about government.   
c. Speech that fosters imminent lawless action can be limited by government.  
d. Government can regulate the time and place of public rallies and demonstrations as long as the regulations are reasonable and do not discriminate against groups that express views objectionable to authorities.  
e. all of the above are true

*The correct answer is “e.” All of the statements are true. The Supreme Court has broadly protected the right to free expression, ruling that citizens and the news media are nearly (not totally) free to express themselves in ways of their choosing. Nevertheless, the Court has held that the right of free expression is not unlimited. Government can regulate in reasonable ways the time and place of public demonstrations—for example, it can stop demonstrators from blocking traffic on a busy road at rush hour. Government can also prevent expression that provokes imminent lawless action—speech that is so provocative that it directly leads people to take lawless action, such as destroying property or assaulting others.*

3. The exclusionary rule holds that

a. people who are biased against the defendant may be excluded from serving on a jury.  
b. a judge can uphold an attorney’s objection to a question asked by the opposing party’s attorney.  
c. evidence obtained by unconstitutional means ordinarily cannot be used as evidence in a trial.  
d. “fighting words” can be excluded from constitutional protection.  
e. non-political speech is excluded for protection by the First Amendment.

*The correct answer is “c.” The exclusionary rule was developed by the Supreme Court as a way to handle evidence obtained by law enforcement officials through unconstitutional means (such as interrogating a suspect without informing the suspect of the right to remain silent and have an attorney). Evidence obtained by such means is ordinarily inadmissible in the trial of the accused. There are some exceptions. For example, evidence that authorities would have discovered anyway by lawful means is sometimes admissible even if discovered first by unconstitutional means.*

4. Assume that police arrest a suspect in the process of committing a crime. Which of the following actions would constitute an “unreasonable search and seizure” under the Constitution?

a. handcuffing the accused  
 b. searching the accused’s pockets for weapons  
 c. searching the accused’s pockets for evidence related to the crime  
 d. searching the accused’s cell phone for information that might be incriminating  
 e. none of the above constitutes an “unreasonable search and seizure”

*The correct answer is “d.” The 4th and 14th amendments do not prohibit all searches and seizures of a suspect, only those that are “unreasonable.” The Supreme Court has held that it is reasonable for police to search and seize someone caught in the act of a crime. It would be reasonable to handcuff the suspect and search the individual for weapons and evidence relating to the crime. On the other hand, in a key 2014 case, the Supreme Court ruled that reasonable search does not ordinarily extend to examining the contents of a suspect’s cell phone. The Court argued that a cell phone or similar devices, such as an individual’s computer, can contain a great amount of personal information. Such a search, the Court ruled, is similar to searching through the possessions in a suspect’s home. To lawfully conduct such a search, police must ordinarily go before a judge to provide evidence for why they believe a search is justified. If the judge agrees that the evidence is strong enough, a search warrant is granted. If not, the warrant will be denied and police cannot lawfully conduct the search.*

**Short Answer**

What is the process of selective incorporation, and why is it important to the rights Americans enjoy today?

***Answer:*** *Selective incorporation is the process whereby the Supreme Court, through use of the 14th Amendment, has protected most of the rights in the Bill of Rights from action by state and local governments. When it was enacted, the Bill of Rights applied only to action by the federal government. Thus, for example, Congress was prohibited by the First Amendment for infringing on free speech but state and local governments were not. Today, they are prohibited from doing so, and the reason is selective incorporation through the 14th Amendment.*

*Ratified in the aftermath of the Civil War, the 14th Amendment prohibits state governments (and local governments, which are agents of the states) from denying their residents “due process” of law. The 14th Amendment does not specify what is covered by “due process.” Starting in 1925, the Supreme Court in a series of rulings made that determination, holding that a range of individual rights contained in the Bill of Rights are protected from action by state and local governments.*

*This process, whereby specific rights contained in the Bill of Rights are extended to the state and local governments, is called selective incorporation. It is selective because only particular rights in the Bill of Rights are given protection. And it’s called incorporation because the process involves incorporating (or bringing) into the 14th Amendment some of the rights contained in the Bill of Rights, thus protecting them from state or local action.*

*The Gideon case, which was discussed in the lecture, provides an example. In that case, the 6th Amendment right to an attorney—which applies in federal court cases—was incorporated into the 14th Amendment, thereby extending the right to an attorney to cases heard in state and local courts.*

*Selective incorporation has been extraordinarily important in securing Americans’ rights. In the U.S. system, state and local governments have primary responsibility for law enforcement and public safety, which are the activities where authorities are most likely to intrude on individuals’ rights. Because of selective incorporation, state and local officials are obligated to respect their residents’ constitutional rights.*

**Short Answer**

Assume that an individual has been arrested and is eventually brought to trial. Identify some of the procedural due process rights that the individual has at each step of the legal process. How might the exclusionary rule affect the trial proceedings?

***Answer:*** *There are a fairly large number of due process protections for the accused, many of which (such as the right to a trial by an impartial jury, as opposed to a jury biased against the defendant from the start) were not discussed in the lecture. But the lecture did highlight several key due process rights:*

*The 4th Amendment protection against “unreasonable searches and seizures” by authorities.*

*The 5th Amendment protection against self-incrimination—which in practice means that a suspect has the right to remain silent.*

*The 5th Amendment protection against double jeopardy—which means that the accused cannot be tried a second time for the same crime if found innocent in the first trial.*

*The 6th Amendment right to an attorney. This right can be invoked by a suspect at the time of arrest and, if so, police cannot question the suspect until the attorney is present. This right also gives the accused the right to attorney at trial and, if too poor to afford an attorney, to be provided one at government expense.*

*The exclusionary rule was developed by the Supreme Court as a way to handle evidence obtained by law enforcement officials through unconstitutional means (such as interrogating a suspect without informing the suspect of the right to remain silent and have an attorney). Evidence obtained by such means is ordinarily inadmissible in the trial of the accused. There are some exceptions. For example, evidence that authorities would have discovered anyway by lawful means is sometimes admissible even if initially discovered by unconstitutional means.*

**6TH SESSION**

**CONSTITIONAL FOUNDATIONS  
Civil Rights**

**Multiple Choice**

1. As acted upon by the Supreme Court, the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause

a. has always been applied in ways aimed at giving black Americans the same legal rights as white Americans.  
b. was the basis for declaring that separate public schools for black and white children are unconstitutional.  
c. was used to outlaw discrimination in hotels, restaurants, and other public accommodations.  
d. was used to force the federal government to create affirmative action programs.  
e. all of the above

*The correct answer is “a.” The 14th Amendment’s equal protection clause was the basis for the Supreme Court’s landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision, which declared that separate public schools for black and white children are unconstitutional. The 14th Amendment did not apply to discrimination in hotels, restaurants, and other public accommodations because it applies only to action by state and local government, not by private parties. The 1964 Civil Rights Act addressed this form of discrimination; it prohibits discrimination in the area of public accommodations. For their part, affirmative action programs came about through executive orders issued by Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon.*

2. Which statement best describes the efforts of disadvantaged groups to attain a greater degree of equality?

a. They’ve had to work long and hard to gain a fuller measure of their rights.  
b. All their major gains have been achieved through action by the Supreme Court.  
c. More privileged groups have consistently and willingly extended to disadvantaged groups the same rights and opportunities they enjoy.  
d. All disadvantaged groups have made nearly equal gains in terms of rights and opportunities; today, there is not much practical difference in the rights and opportunities these various groups enjoy.

*The correct answer is “a.” Disadvantaged groups have had to struggle to attain a fuller measure of their rights. The black civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s is an example. Such efforts have typically been opposed by many who hold more privileged positions (for example, most men for a long period opposed granting women the right to vote). Supreme Court action has been important to the gains of disadvantaged groups but the Court has not been the sole source of these gains; the 1964 Civil Rights Act, passed by Congress, prohibits discrimination in restaurants, hotels, and other public accommodations. Although most disadvantaged groups today are theoretically equal in law with historically more privileged groups, differences remain. For example, studies indicate that black Americans do not in practice have opportunities and rights equal to those of white Americans.*

3. Which of the following is not true of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

a. It was a response to the black civil rights movement.  
b. When it finally came up for a vote in Congress, it had nearly unanimous support in the House and Senate.  
c. It built on the momentum generated by the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).  
d. It prohibited discrimination in hotels, restaurants, and other public accommodations.  
e. It prohibited discrimination in employment.

*The correct answer is “b.” The Civil Rights Act provoked one of the most drawn out fights in the history of Congress, with southern members strongly opposed at every stage, including the final vote. The Civil Rights Act includes provisions banning discrimination in public accommodations and employment. The legislation was also the culmination of the black civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which gained momentum from the Supreme Court’s Brown v. Board of Education decision.*

4. Which statement best describes the current Supreme Court position on affirmative action?

a. It is lawful if it is serves a compelling government interest and is narrowly tailored to fit the circumstances of the situation to which it is being applied.  
b. It is unconstitutional in virtually every instance.  
c. It is constitutionally protected from ballot initiatives designed to limit its application.  
d. It can be used to create opportunities for black Americans but not for other groups.  
e. Quotas are legal as long as applicants know in advance that a quota system is being used.

**Answer:** The correct answer is “a.” Over time, the Supreme Court has gradually reduced the use of affirmative action (for example, outlawing the use of quotas) but has not declared it to be unconstitutional. However, to be constitutional, it must serve a compelling government interest (such as promoting diversity in a university program) and must be narrowly tailored to fit the circumstances of the situation to which it is being applied (for example, it cannot be used to help a minority-owned firm get a government contract if that firm has not itself been the victim of racial discrimination). The Court has not ruled that affirmative action applies only to black Americans, but has ruled that a state’s voters in a referendum can prohibit discrimination (for or against a minority group) in access to the state’s opportunities, such as government jobs and admission to its public colleges.

**Short Answer**

Based on what you know from this session and the previous one on civil liberties, contrast the Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause with its equal protection clause. What level of government in America’s federal system is governed by the two clauses? Provide examples of Supreme Court decisions based on each clause.

***Answer:*** *The Fourteenth Amendment’s due process clause says that state governments (and by extension local governments, which are agents of the state) cannot deprive individuals of their life, liberty, or property without “due process of law.” For its part, the equal protection clause says that states cannot deny individuals equal protection of the laws, which means they cannot arbitrarily discriminate against members of a particular group. An example of a decision based on the equal protection clause is Brown v. Board of Education (1954), where the Supreme Court invalidated public school systems that by law separate students based on their race. An example of a decision based on the due process clause is Gideon v. Wainwright (1963). In that decision, the Court held that defendants are denied due process if they forced to defend themselves in court because they are too poor to hire a lawyer. In the Gideon case, the Court directed states and localities, at their expense, to provide poor defendants with a lawyer.*

**Short Answer**

Distinguish between de jure discrimination and de facto discrimination. What laws or policies apply to each form of discrimination? Why is de facto discrimination more difficult to overcome?

***Answer:*** *De jure discrimination refers to discrimination through law. An example is the state laws that forbid black children from attending the same public schools as whites. De facto discrimination refers to discrimination in fact, the situation in which certain groups of individuals—for reason of race, ethnicity, religion or other attribute—face discrimination when they seek out opportunities, such as jobs. De facto discrimination can also result from situational factors. An example is the fact that poor neighborhoods tend to have weaker schools than wealthy neighborhoods. The fact that black Americans tend to live in poorer neighborhoods than white Americans means that the black children in poorer neighborhoods are less likely to have access to high quality education. They are discriminated against in fact. A clear example of a policy aimed at addressing de facto discrimination is affirmative action. It requires those receiving government grants to take steps to ensure that members of traditionally disadvantaged groups receive equal opportunity when it comes to jobs, college admissions, and the like.*

*In terms of de jure discrimination, the 14th Amendment is the clearest example. Its equal protection clause requires states and localities to give individuals equal treatment under the law. The 14th Amendment has nearly eliminated laws that distinguish between individuals on the basis of attributes such as race, ethnicity, religion, and gender.*

*De facto discrimination is tougher to root out in that it is embedded in prejudices resulting from customs, habits, family influences and the like. Government can create programs like affirmative action to reduce the prejudicial effect of these influences, but it is hard in the single instance for someone who is discriminated against to prove that their race, ethnicity, religion, or gender was the reason they were denied an opportunity. De jure discrimination is easier to root out, as in the case of school discrimination. Public schools that were racially segregated by law were once common in parts of the United States but were eliminated completely in the aftermath of the Brown v. Board of Education decision.*

**7TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
Public Opinion**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which statement about sampling error is inaccurate?

a. Sampling error is a measure of degree to which a sample accurately estimates what the population is thinking.   
b. Sampling error decreases as the size of the sample increases.   
c. Sampling error is largely a function of the size of the population being sampled—for example, a much larger sample is required to obtain the same sampling error for a state than for a city within that state.   
d. Sampling error results from the fact that a sample is being used to estimate what the entire population is thinking.

*The correct answer is “c.” Sampling error results from the fact that, instead of surveying an entire population, only a sample of that population is surveyed. The purpose of sampling is to estimate what the full population is like, and a sample of that population can only approximate what the population is like. Thus, with any sample, there will be sampling error—the difference between the actual population and the estimate of that population provided by a sample of it.*

*Sampling error is affected far more by the size of the sample than by the size of the population. The larger the sample, the more accurate the population estimate is likely to be, regardless of whether the population is the whole state or a city within it. Think, for example, of a huge jar full of marbles, half of them red and half of them blue. If you randomly selected 1000 of them (a large sample), the odds would be that roughly half would be blue in color and half would be red in color. It wouldn’t matter whether there were a half-million marbles (the size of a city) in the jar or ten million (the size of a state). The same expectation of drawing at random about half blue and half red marbles would hold in both cases. On the other hand, if you only randomly selected 10 marbles (a small sample), the chances of drawing five of each color are less than half, whatever the number of marbles in the jar.*

2. Which statement about the attributes of public opinion is correct?

a. A survey (poll) question that asked Americans whether they favor or oppose extending the eligibility period for unemployment benefits to those without jobs would be measuring the salience of the issue.  
b. A survey (poll) question that asked Americans whether they think the issue of unemployment benefits is the nation’s top issue would be measuring the salience of the issue.  
c. A survey (poll) questions that asked Americans whether they feel strongly enough about the unemployment benefits issue to base their vote on it would be measuring the salience of the issue.

*The correct answer is “b.” Salience (of an opinion) refers to the importance of an issue relative to other issues. In polls, issue salience is often measured by asking respondents what they regard as the country’s most important problem. In contrast, direction (of an opinion) refers to whether people favor or oppose something; thus “a” refers to direction rather than salience. As regards intensity (of an opinion), it’s a reference to how strongly people feel about an issue; thus “c” refers to intensity rather than salience.*

3. Which conclusion about the influence of public opinion on policy is most fully supported by the study of gun control legislation since the 1990s?

a. Public opinion has almost no influence on the policy choices of public officials.   
b. The direction of gun control opinion is constant—even mass killings do not change people’s minds about whether there should be more controls on guns.   
c. The salience of gun control is constant—even mass killings do not alter the importance of gun control in the minds of Americans.   
d. Opponents of gun control tend to have more intense opinions on the issue than do supporters of gun control, which accounts in part for lawmakers’ inaction on the issue.

*The correct answer is “d.” Since the 1990s, no significant laws to control guns have been enacted by Congress. In terms of public opinion, the best explanation for this development is the intensity of opinion among those opposed to gun control. They are far more likely than proponents of gun control to contact lawmakers, contribute money to gun-related groups, and to base their vote on the gun-control issue. Because officials respond to opinion intensity, “a” is inaccurate. The other two options—“b” and “c”—are not supported by poll data. Mass killings do create some change in opinion direction and salience.*

2. Studies of the influence of public opinion on policy have found that:

a. public opinion is nearly always the result of manipulation by public officials.  
b. most citizens are highly informed on the issues on which they have opinions.   
c. in making their policy decisions, elected officials are particularly likely to follow public opinion on issues where people’s opinions are intense and clearly favor one option over the others.  
d. politicians have almost no choice in developing policy but to base their policy choices on public opinion.

*The correct answer is “c.” When making policy choices, elected officials (who depend on voter support to stay in office) are particularly likely to follow public opinion on issues where people’s opinions are intense and clearly favor one option over the others. In such cases, officials risk the loss of votes by going against public opinion. On the other hand, there are many issues where the general public is unaware or uncaring of what government does. In these instances, politicians have wide latitude in the policies they adopt (thus making “d” incorrect). Now, it is true that public officials have some ability to influence opinions but studies show that officials are more likely to follow public opinion on major issues than to try to change it (thus making “a” incorrect). Finally, studies have shown that most citizens are not well informed on policy issues (thus making “b” incorrect).*

**Short Answer**

Direction, intensity, and salience are attributes of public opinion. Explain each attribute and how it can affect the response of public officials. How do these attributes help to explain gun control policy in the United States?

***Answer:*** *Direction (of an opinion) refers to whether people favor or oppose something—for example, whether they favor or oppose stricter controls on guns. Intensity (of an opinion) refers to how strongly people feel about an issue—for example, whether they feel strongly about their position on gun control. Salience (of an opinion) refers to the importance of an issue relative to other issues—for example, how high people rank gun control relative to other issues such as unemployment or health care.*

*Each attribute can affect the response of public officials, particularly those who hold elective office and depend upon voter support to stay in office. When voters overwhelmingly favor one position on an issue (direction), officials are more likely to embrace that position. Officials are particularly sensitive to issue positions that are strongly held (intensity). Voters who feel strongly about an issue position are more likely to base their vote on it than voters who feel less strongly. Finally, officials are more likely to respond to high-profile (salience) issues than to issues that voters don’t much care about.*

*In the case of gun control, which was discussed in the lecture, direction is divided with a significant number of Americans on each side of the question of whether there should be stricter controls on guns. On the other, intensity on the issue is not equal on both sides. On average, those opposed to gun control hold more intense opinions than those favoring stricter control. Over the past two decades, lawmakers have not enacted any significant new controls on guns—a development attributable in part to the intensity of anti-gun control advocates. As well, gun control tends not to be a high salience issue, even though its salience rises somewhat when a mass killing takes place. The relatively low salience of the issue gives lawmakers some freedom to avoid the issue without taking great risk that it will hurt them in the next election.*

**Short Answer**

Describe in general terms the influence of public opinion on the policy decisions of public officials. What factors limit this influence?

***Answer:*** *The influence of public opinion on policy is difficult to describe precisely, largely because policy decisions are a response to many factors. Nevertheless, considerable research has been done on the impact of public opinion, and the findings support some clear conclusions. One is that public opinion constrains officials. It limits their choices. Officials operate within the boundaries of what the public will find acceptable. An example is the social security program, which has such broad public support that it’s been called “the third rail” of American politics—a metaphor for a policy that’s likely to hurt any politician that tries to change the program.*

*Studies have also shown that officials are responsive to public opinion on highly salient issues where the direction of opinion is clear. These studies have examined trends in policy and opinion over time, seeking to determine whether changes in public opinion on major issues are followed by corresponding changes in public policy. These studies have found that when public opinion changes on a major issue, public policy tends to change in a way corresponding with the direction of the opinion change. Such changes are particularly likely when people have intense opinions on an issue.*

*On the other hand, there’s a wide range of policy decisions—most of them, in fact—where public opinion doesn’t even come into play. Most policy decisions take place outside the public eye. In the area of foreign affairs, for example, there are hundreds of policies of which the public is not remotely aware of the issue. In these cases, lawmakers are more likely to be responsive to special interests (interest groups) than to public opinion. The effect of public opinion is also limited by the fact that most citizens don’t know much about even the more salient policy issues. These features of public opinion allow policymakers to exercise discretion in the policy choices they make.*

**8TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
Political Parties**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Competitive political parties typically emerge when a country adopts a democratic form of government. What’s the primary reason for this tendency?

a. The establishment of democracy is accompanied by the writing of a new constitution that mandates the establishment of parties.   
b. Ethnic groups within a country have a natural power base that leads each group to form its party once free to do so.  
c. Parties serve people’s need to act collectively—by providing people a means of concentrating their votes, parties enable ordinary citizens to influence government.  
d. Election campaigns would be uninteresting if there were no parties competing for power.

*The correct answer is “c.” Although the other options might come into play in some situations, the role of parties in enabling citizens to concentrate their votes is the main reason they are a mainstay of the democratic form of government. Individually, citizens are largely powerless. Only by combining their voices are they reliably positioned to influence government. Political parties enable people to act together by casting their votes for the party of their choice.*

2. U.S. and European election campaigns differ in which of the following ways?

a. The U.S. has primary elections whereas most European democracies do not.  
b. The U.S. has a single-member plurality district system of election whereas most European democracies have a proportional representation system.  
c. The U.S. system of financing election campaigns differs from that of most European democracies.  
d. Candidates for public office in the U.S. bear primary responsibility for organizing their campaigns whereas the political parties have that responsibility in most European democracies.  
e. All of the above.

*The correct answer is “e.” U.S. elections include primaries, which few European democracies employ; U.S. elections are based on single-member districts, while most European democracies employ proportional representation; and U.S. campaigns operate under different finance rules (fewer constraints on fundraising and spending) than European campaigns. Finally, U.S. elections are centered on candidates; they have primary responsibility for organizing their campaigns, raising the necessary funds, and choosing the issues on which they will run. In most European democracies, the political parties have a larger role than do the candidates in organizing and running the campaign. One reason for this is that European parties control the nominating process. They choose the party nominees. In the United States, voters make the choice through primary elections.*

3. A major change in party activity in the South since the 1960s is

a. the emergence of a viable third party.   
b. a steep decline in voter turnout.   
c. a decline in the level of two-party competition in state and local elections.  
d. a switch from support of Democratic candidates to support of Republican candidates in presidential and congressional elections.

*The correct answer is “d.” The South, which was solidly Democratic through the 1950s, is now a solidly Republican region. There is no strong third party in the South (or any other U.S. region). Although today’s South has relatively low voter turnout and weak party competition, southern politics also had these features in the pre-1960s period.*

4. The most recent party realignment is a result of the reinforcing effect of racial, social, and federal power issues. One effect is party polarization. How has this polarization affected candidates’ election strategies?

a. Republican and Democratic candidates tend to position themselves farther from the political center than they did during the pre-polarization period.  
b. Republican and Democratic candidates tend to position themselves closer to the political center than they did during the pre-polarization period.  
c. Republican and Democratic candidates tend to position themselves in virtually the same way as they did during the pre-polarization period.

*The correct answer is “a.” Party polarization describes the widening of the difference in opinion between Republicans and Democrats. Compared with the pre-polarization period, Republicans today are more uniformly conservative, and Democrats today are more uniformly liberal. As a result, candidates have moved away from the political center to appeal to their party’s core voters. In the pre-polarization period, candidates tended to stay near the political center to appeal to moderate voters. There are fewer such voters today.*

**Short Answer**

Explain the difference between a proportional representation system and a single-member plurality district system as methods of electing candidates to office. Why is a single-member system more likely than a proportional system to foster a two-party system?

***Answer:*** *Under a proportional representation system of election, legislative seats are allocated to each party in rough proportion to its share of the popular vote. A party that wins 35 percent of the vote gets roughly 35 percent of the legislative seats, one that wins 20 percent of the vote gets roughly 20 percent of the seats, and so on. This system enables smaller parties to compete. A party that gets 10 percent of the vote in a proportional representation system ends up with roughly 10 percent of the legislative seats. The effect is to give those who might run as the party nominees and those who might vote for the party an incentive to do so. Their party has a chance to win legislative seats and, with that, a voice inside the legislature.*

*In contrast, in a single-member plurality district system (also called a “first past the post” system), each elected official is chosen singly from a separate district. Each member of the U.S. House of Representatives, for example, is elected by getting the most votes in his or her congressional district. This system favors big parties. To win a legislative seat, a party must have enough voter support for its candidate to place first in a district. A party with a relatively small following in a district has no chance of winning. A third party that receives 10 percent of the vote in every congressional district would not win any seats. It would lose each time to whichever major party candidate received the larger share of the remaining 90 percent of the vote. This situation makes it difficult for a small party to build a loyal following of voters.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the pattern of earlier political party realignments (such as the realignment brought about by the Great Depression) with the pattern of the most recent party realignment. (OPTIONAL: Do you think immigration, which has become a major issue of American politics, is reinforcing the recent realignment, or disrupting it?)

***Answer:*** *Party realignment is a term that refers to lasting and fundamental changes in the the parties’ coalitions, governing philosophies, and chances of success in future elections. Historically, party realignments have been brought about by catastrophic developments, such as the Civil War and the Great Depression.*

*. The Civil War produced realignment favorable to the Republican Party, which developed a base in the more populous North. For its part, the Democratic Party’s stronghold was the less populous South. This division enabled the Republican Party to dominate party politics for a lengthy period.*

*The realignment sparked by the Great Depression worked to the Democrats’ advantage. Republicans were in power when the Depression began, and Americans blamed the Republican Party and its business allies for the crisis. The Depression was so severe that Americans changed their view of which party they wanted to place in charge of government. The Democratic Party gained enough followers, particularly among younger voters, to dominate U.S. politics for several decades. The Depression realignment also prompted a change in the Democratic Party’s ideology—the use of the power of the federal government to offset the power of private wealth and markets. That ideology found its way into policy initiatives such as social security, high taxes on the rich, the minimum wage, collective bargaining for workers, and the regulation of the stock markets. Consistent with that ideology, the Democratic Party was made up largely of low- and modest-income groups—blue-collar workers, inner city dwellers, welfare recipients, small farmers, and the like.*

*The most recent realignment has followed a different pattern than the earlier ones. Rather than happening suddenly in response to a catastrophic event, it took place in stages beginning with civil rights in the 1960s (which had the effect of shifting the South toward the Republican Party) and continuing with the rise of social issues (such as the abortion issue) in the 1970s and the crystallization of the “big government” issue (federal taxing and spending programs) in the 1980s. Although it took place in stages, it had the effect of remaking the parties. The larger change was in the Republican Party, which developed a stronghold in the South and gained support among social and economic conservatives elsewhere. As it did so, it increasingly became the party of states’ rights—a position the Democratic Party had held after the Civil War. Unlike past realignments, however, the most recent one has not worked to the overwhelming advantage of one party. As the Republican Party made gains in the more politically conservative parts of the country, it lost support in the less conservative areas, such as New England and the West Coast.*

**9TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
Campaigns & Elections**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Some of the factors that affect the outcome of the presidential general election are largely beyond the candidates’ control. Which of the following is the clearest exception?

a. The vote choice of party identifiers—those who think of themselves as Republicans or Democrats.  
b. The issues that are uppermost in voters’ minds.   
c. The allocation of resources among various activities, such as spending on TV ads and the targeting of particular groups.   
d. The level of voter turnout on Election Day.

*The correct answer is “c.” Candidates make their own allocation decisions; they decide how and for what their funds will be spent. In contrast, candidates don’t have much ability to change the minds of party identifiers—Republicans vote overwhelmingly for the Republican nominee and Democrats vote overwhelmingly for the Democratic nominee. It’s also the case that candidates don’t have a great amount of control over voter turnout; the choice of whether to vote or not is driven largely by factors other than the candidates’ efforts. Finally, the issues that are usually uppermost in voters’ minds, such as the condition of the economy or war abroad, are mostly a response to real-world conditions rather than the candidates’ efforts to shape the issue agenda.*

2. The current system of selecting presidential nominees, which was adopted in 1972, differs from the previous system in that:

a. national convention delegates are now chosen on a state-by-state basis  
b. candidates must now appeal directly to the voters rather than seeking to win nomination through the support of party leaders  
c. national convention delegates are now chosen on different dates as opposed to the same date, which was the method prior to 1972.  
d. money is now less important in the nominating phase of the campaign than it was before 1972.

*The correct answer is “b.” Before 1972, many of the states chose their national convention delegates (the people who formally select the party’s presidential nominee) in state conventions controlled by the leaders of the party organizations. The reform of 1972 required states to use either a primary or open caucus as the means of picking the convention delegates, which meant the voters would be doing the choosing. This change required candidates to appeal directly to the voters if they hoped to gain nomination. The “a” and “b” options were features of the pre-1972 system and still are. As for “d,” money has become more important in presidential nominating campaigns, not less. In the era when a candidate could win nomination through the support of party leaders, it was not necessary to mount an expensive 50-state campaign aimed at the voters.*

3. Which activity is not part of the invisible primary?

a. Candidates’ efforts to raise campaign funds.  
b. Candidates’ efforts to attract media attention.  
c. Candidates’ efforts to accumulate convention delegates through victories in state primaries and caucuses.   
d. Candidates’ efforts to boost their standing in candidate preference polls.  
e. Candidates’ efforts to gain the backing of party leaders and activists.

*The correct answer is “c.” The invisible primary refers to the period before any primary or caucus is held. No delegates are awarded to the candidates during this period. The other options refer to activities that are part of the invisible primary.*

4. In the presidential general election, which states are the targets of the candidates’ campaign efforts?

a. States that have the largest populations.  
b. States that have the largest media markets.  
c. States where polls show the candidates are most closely matched.  
d. States that the candidate’s party has usually won.

*The correct answer is “c.” The president is formally elected through the Electoral College, a system in which each state has electoral votes equal to its representation in the House and Senate combined. This makes the large population states important in the outcome. However, because nearly every state uses the “unit rule” for allocating its electoral votes (meaning that the state’s popular vote winner gets all of its electoral votes), the key states in terms of campaign effort are those that could conceivably be won by either candidate. Such states are where candidates spend the overwhelming amount of their time and money. Highly populated states that are not competitive (California, which is heavily Democratic, being an example) are largely ignored.*

**Short Answer**

Discuss what’s meant by the invisible primary and explain its dynamics. Why is this early stage of the presidential campaign important to the outcome of the nominating races?

***Answer:*** *The invisible primary refers to the period before any primary or caucus is held. It is a critical time in the presidential nominating campaign because what the candidates accomplish or fail to accomplish in this period has a major impact on whether they’re likely to succeed when the primaries and caucuses are held.*

*One objective of candidates during this early period is to acquire name recognition. If voters are unaware of a candidate, they will not consider that candidate when deciding who to support. As a result, the candidates vie for media attention during the period. Media exposure is the only proven way for a presidential candidate to get the public’s attention on a scale that will result in widespread name recognition. Fundraising is also a critical part of the invisible primary. A successful presidential nominating campaign requires tens of millions of dollars. The money is particularly important after the first four contests, which are single-state contests. A candidate can sometimes succeed in a state like Iowa or New Hampshire on a limited budget but, later on, the state contests are clustered. Accordingly, candidates need money to have a presence through televised political advertising in a lot of states simultaneously.*

*Although there have been a few exceptions, the winners of the nominating race have typically been candidates who also “win” the invisible primary by raising the most money and by ranking highest in the national opinion polls before the first votes are cast.*

**Short Answer**

Describe how electoral votes are allocated to the states and how they are allocated to the presidential candidates based on the outcome of the popular vote in a state. Explain how this system affects candidates’ strategies in the general election. What are the arguments for and against this system of electing the president?

***Answer:*** *The president is formally elected through the Electoral College, a system in which each state has electoral votes equal to its representation in the House and Senate combined. This makes the large population states important in the outcome. However, because nearly every state uses the “unit rule” for allocating its electoral votes (meaning that the state’s popular vote winner gets all of its electoral votes), the key states in terms of campaign effort are those that could conceivably be won by either candidate. Such states are where candidates spend the overwhelming amount of their time and money. Highly populated states that are not competitive (California, which is heavily Democratic, being an example) are largely ignored.*

*A major argument in favor of the Electoral College is that it reflects the fact that the United States has a federal system of government. The Electoral College is a state-based system. Each state has its set of electoral votes and each state casts its electoral votes independent of what the other states do.*

*The major argument against the Electoral College is that it violates the principle of one person-one vote. That principle would require the direct election of the president, with the winner being the candidate who receives the most popular votes. Some candidates have won the presidency (George W. Bush in 2000 being the most recent example) even though their opponent received a larger number of popular votes nationwide. To critics of the Electoral College, that outcome violates the idea that, in a democracy, the choice of the many should decide who will hold office.*

**10TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
Political Movements**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Of the following, which is least associated with political movements?

a. A sense of relative deprivation on the part of those involved in the movement.  
b. A strategic plan that emphasizes established institutions, such as the lobbying of legislators and the contesting of elections.  
c. A willingness to engage in protest.  
d. A recognition that success might not come quickly.

*The correct answer is “b.” A political movement is a sustained effort to achieve social and political change by people who feel government is unresponsive to their interests. As a result, those involved in social movements work outside the confines of established institutions, such as the legislature. A political movement’s strategy is an “outside” strategy that emphasis unconventional means, such as protest marches and rallies. A driving force behind most social movements is a sense of relative deprivation—the sense that a group is disadvantaged relative to another group or groups. Because social movements are challenges to established interests, the likelihood of immediate success is small. Most successful movements have sustained their effort over a long period before achieving their goals.*

2. In comparing the U.S. political movements that had a substantial amount of success with those that did not, the key difference has been whether

a. they had educated leaders  
b. they had dedicated followers  
c. their objective was consistent with America’s cultural ideals  
d. they had the backing of the nation’s established interests

*The correct answer is “c.” Established interests (option “d”) are the target of social movements. It is the failure of such interests to accommodate change that sparks the start of a political movement. Political movements of all types in some cases have had a well-educated leadership and in some cases have had a not-so-well-educated leadership, so the leadership’s education level is not very predictive of whether a movement will succeed or fail. A variable that is related to success is whether the movement’s goal is aligned with America’s cultural ideals. When it is, the movement has a chance of gaining support from the broader public, as in the case of the black civil rights movement. When a movement’s goal is not aligned with cultural ideals, it struggles to broaden its support beyond its core followers, as was the case with the communist movement of the 1920s-1950s period.*

3. Which factor is associated with the success of a political movement?

a. The movement’s ability to attract the resources needed to sustain the movement.   
b. The movement’s ability to acquire legitimacy.  
c. The movement’s ability to institutionalize its goals.  
d. All of the above.

*The correct answer is “d.” All three factors are important to a political movement’s success. Unless a movement can attract resources, it has difficult sustaining its effort. If it fails to acquire legitimacy, it will have difficulty attracting a broad following and a high level of public support. And if it fails to institutionalize its goals, its gains will be temporary. Institutionalization, such as passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act as a response to the black civil rights movement, can solidify a movement’s goals.*

4. Occupy Wall Street and the Tea Party Movement differed most substantially in

a. their influence on the policy agenda.  
b. the degree to which they were able to institutionalize their goals.  
c. their ability in the early weeks to attract the attention of the news media.   
d. the degree to which their followers believed in the movement’s goal.

*The correct answer is “b.” Both movements had dedicated followers, got a lot of early media attention, and had a major impact on the policy agenda—the Tea Party by elevating taxation and the size of the federal government on the agenda and Occupy Wall Street by elevating income inequality and taxes on the wealthy. Where they differed was that the Tea Party institutionalized itself through affiliation with the Republican Party and by sponsoring Republican candidates while Occupy Wall Street basically rejected opportunities to institutionalize itself. The effect can be seen today. The Tea Party is entrenched in Congress while Occupy Wall Street has almost no public visibility.*

**Short Answer**

How does a political movement differ from a political party or an interest group? How might the motivation of the typical participant in a political movement differ from the motivation of the typical participant in a political party or an interest group?

***Answer:*** *A political movement is a sustained effort to achieve social and political change by people who feel government is unresponsive to their interests. As a result, those involved in social movements work outside the confines of established institutions. A political movement’s strategy is an “outside” strategy that emphasis unconventional means, such as protest marches and rallies.*

*In contrast, political parties and interest groups work within the confines of established institutions. Political parties contest elections and are involved in organizing the work of political institutions—for example, the top leaders of the House and Senate are party leaders. For their part, interest groups focus their efforts on policymakers, seeking to influence their decisions. They do so through the lobbying of established institutions, such as Congress and the bureaucracy, and by contributing to the election effort of candidates that can help them achieve their policy goals.*

*A driving force behind many political movements is a sense of relative deprivation—the sense that a group is disadvantaged relative to another group or groups. A sense of deprivation is the motivation for many of the people who get involved in a political movement. They see themselves as part of a disadvantaged group and seek to change the situation.*

*In contrast, most people involved in political parties and interest groups are satisfied enough with the political system to work through it to achieve their goals. One thing they have in common is that they believe in the values or goals of their party or group—otherwise, they’d be committed to a different party or group. Yet, they’re likely to have a diverse set of motivations. Some will participate because of the monetary rewards, some because they think their involvement makes a difference, some because they find politics enjoyable, and so on.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the Tea Party movement and Occupy Wall Street movement in terms of resources, legitimacy, and institutionalization. What lessons would you draw from these movements in terms of what is required for a highly successful political movement?

***Answer:*** *Both movements had difficulty establishing their legitimacy with the general public. Although a large share of Republicans identified with the Tea Party’s goal of reducing the federal government and a large share of Democrats identified with Occupy’s goal of raising taxes on the wealthy, the two movements’ tactics impeded their efforts to attract majority support. The Tea Party’s unwillingness to compromise—in one case, even to the point of shutting down the government—was for many Americans a reason not to back it. Occupy’s clashes with police when its encampments were disbanded similarly turned many Americans against it.*

*The two movements differed, however, in terms of resources and institutionalization. As regards resources, the Tea Party was in a much stronger position. It received millions of dollars in support from conservative donors and aligned itself with sympathetic Republican Party leaders. In contrast, Occupy Wall Street refused to accept large donations and rejected political alliances. It had few resources beyond the news coverage its early activities generated.*

*Where they also differed was that the Tea Party institutionalized itself through affiliation with the Republican Party and by sponsoring Republican candidates while Occupy Wall Street basically rejected opportunities to institutionalize itself. The effect can be seen today. The Tea Party is entrenched in Congress while Occupy Wall Street has almost no public visibility.*

*The lesson from these two movements is essentially the lesson from political movements generally. For a movement to succeed at a high level, it needs to attract resources, attain legitimacy, and find ways to institutionalize itself.*

**11TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
Interest Groups**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Economic interests have an advantage over other interests in regard to organizing and lobbying because they

a. have more potential members.  
b. are better at training lobbyists.  
c. seek to promote the broad interests of the American people.  
d. have greater access to the financial resources required for effective organizing and lobbying.

*The correct answer is “d.” Through their economic activity, economic interests such as business firms and labor unions have access to financial resources that can be used for organizing and lobbying purposes. As a result, they find it relatively easy to organize and to engage in lobbying. For one reason or another, the other options are false or secondary. The training of lobbyists is less important than the question of what interest is being represented and the level of resources an interest is able to devote to lobbying efforts. Economic groups tend to pursue their self-interest rather than the collective interest. Finally, economic groups tend to have fewer potential members than non-economic groups. Although the hospital industry, for example, is extensive, those involved in it are vastly outnumbered by the number of hospital patients, who themselves constitute an interest.*

2. Why is “policy-relevant information” a key component of lobbying?

a. lobbying groups are often the best source of information about their policy needs.   
b. most elected officials are policy “generalists” and lack detailed information on the policy issues they address.  
c. information is “power” in the making of policy decisions.   
d. all of the above.

*The correct answer is “d.” It’s been noted at several points in the course that information is “power” in the making of policy decisions. To decide, a policymaker first has to know the issue. Elected officials tend to be policy “generalists” in the sense that they deal with a lot of issues and don’t have the time to become an expert on all of them. Accordingly, they’re dependent to a considerable degree on information provided by others. Lobbying groups are a source of much of this information. They know their policy needs as a result of firsthand experience and are positioned to provide this information to policymakers.*

3. Political Action Committees (PACs)

a. raise money for election campaigns by soliciting voluntary contributions from members or employees.  
b. have declined sharply in number because of Supreme Court decisions affecting the raising and spending of election funds.  
c. can give unlimited amounts of money to candidates for federal office.  
d. are an insignificant source of funds for congressional candidates.

*The correct answer is “a.” PACs are regulated by law in terms of how they raise and spend their money. A PAC is not permitted to use organizational funds for its campaign contributions. Instead, it must raise the money through voluntary contributions. In turn, that money can be given to candidates for federal office but not in unlimited amounts. A PAC is limited in its contribution to any particular candidate to $5000 in the primary election and $5000 in the general election. PAC contributions are an important source of funds for congressional candidates. Most of these candidates raise the large share of their money through contributions from individuals and also get funding from their political party. But PAC contributions also constitute a significant share of the campaign funds raised by congressional candidates.*

4. What larger point about the interest group system is illustrated by the efforts of the financial lobby to influence the enactment and implementation of Dodd-Frank?

a. The group system is a balanced one—economic interests and non-economic interests are almost equally positioned to influence policy.   
b. The group system is biased in favor of non-economic interests; they have a larger influence on policy decisions than do economic interests.  
c. The group system is biased in favor of economic interests; they have a larger influence on policy decisions than do non-economic interests.

*The correct answer is “c.” The group system is biased in favor of economic interests. Relative to non-economic interests, they tend to have more financial resources to devote to group organization and lobbying. This advantage was apparent in the Dodd-Frank case. Although financial firms were unable to block the legislation, they were able to weaken its provisions and, in the case of auto loans, to gain an exemption. Then, when the legislation was being implementation by executive agencies, the financial lobby had greater access and leverage with federal administrators than did the consumer lobby.*

**Short Answer**

Why are there so many more organized interests in the United States than in other Western democracies?

***Answer:*** *The presence of so many organized interests in the United States is partly due to the nation’s great size and its tradition of free association and expression. A more important reason, however, is the structure of the American political system. Federalism and the separation of powers create multiple points of access for groups to exert influence. Each state, with its three branches of government, provides numerous entry points for groups to influence policymakers. The national government is a particularly inviting target. Its two chambers of Congress, large bureaucracy, and extensive court system provide literally hundreds upon hundreds of entry points. Consider just the Congress. Lobbying groups can gain access through its two chambers, scores of committees and subcommittees, and hundreds of members, each of whom has authority to introduce legislation.*

*In contrast, nations with parliamentary systems combine executive and legislative power and concentrate it in the top leadership of the governing party, limiting the access points available to groups. And most nations have a unitary system as opposed to a federal system. In a unitary system, sovereignty is vested solely in the national government. Sub-national governments do not have the degree of policy authority that the American states enjoy and therefore are less attractive targets of lobbying activity.*

**Short Answer**

Why are so many of America’s lobbying groups organized around economic interests, particularly business firms? What is the free rider problem? Why do non-economic interest groups face this problem as a result of the type of policy goals they pursue?

***Answer:*** *Economic interests have key advantages when it comes to organizing for lobbying purposes. Through their economic activity, business firms and labor unions have access to financial resources that can be used for lobbying purposes. As a result, they find it relatively easy to organize and to engage in lobbying. In addition, economic interests have an attractive incentive—the prospect of a job—to offer potential members. A job is a individual (private) good in that it can be given to or withheld from a particular individual. Private goods are powerful incentives. The offer of a job gives individuals a strong reason to join the group, whether a firm or a union.*

*Non-economic groups do not have these inherent advantages. They rely on voluntary contributions for the financial resources needed to organize and lobby. Moreover, they pursue what are called collective (public) goods, which are goods that cannot be allocated on an individual basis. An example of a collective good is the air we breathe. If an environmental group succeeds in getting government to adopt policies that reduce air pollution, the resulting good—cleaner air—is available to everyone, those who joined the group and contributed to its lobbying effort and those who did not. The air we breathe is not an individual good. It cannot be given to some and withheld from others.*

*This situation creates the free-rider problem. It arises when an individual can get the benefit of group activity without joining the group. Such individuals are free riders; they benefit from the efforts of others. It’s a problem faced by groups that seek collective goods. If such a group succeeds in its policy goal, the benefit is available to all. An individual could choose not to contribute to the group—free riding on the efforts of those who do. The result is that such groups have more difficulty attracting contributing members than do groups that offer individual goods as an incentive to join the group.*

**12TH SESSION**

**MASS POLITICS   
News Media**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Over the course of U.S. history, the news system has changed significantly. Which of the following is not one of the changes?

a. a gradual expansion in the size of the news audience during the 1800s.   
b. a substantial increase in the size of the news audience after broadcast television was introduced.  
c. a decline in attention to news after the introduction of cable TV.  
d. a gradual rise in the level of the public’s information such that today’s public is more informed on the issues than was the public at previous times.

*The correct answer is “d.” The first three options are accurate characterizations of the changes that have taken place over time in the news system. On the other hand, the decline in news attention after the introduction of cable (which provided Americans with a choice of a wider array of media content) has been accompanied by a decline in the level of public information. News is the main source of the public’s information about current issues, and the drop-off in attention to news has been matched by a drop-off in the public’s information level.*

2. The news media are charged with informing the public but at the same they need to attract an audience in order to make a profit and fund their news operation. Which of the following is the primary consequence of the news media’s need to attract an audience?

a. news that concentrates on public affairs and politics  
b. news that is designed to be entertaining  
c. a more politically informed public  
d. a more politically engaged public

*The correct answer is “b.” In order to attract an audience, news outlets have developed a form of news that is meant to be entertaining enough to attract those who might otherwise not be interested in news. That form includes, for example, an emphasis on the sensational and the negative (the “bad news is good news” formula). A result to some extent is the downplaying of news coverage of public affairs and the sacrificing of the opportunity to politically engage and inform the public.*

3. Young adults differ somewhat from older adults in their news habits. Which statement is true of the news habits of young adults?

a. Compared with older adults, young adult tend to be more interested in news because they find it novel and thereby more engaging.   
b. Compared with older adults, young adults tend to prefer traditional news outlets, such as the daily newspaper and network television news.  
c. Compared with young adults of a few decades ago, today’s young adults consume less news.  
d. Compared with young adults of a few decades ago, today’s young adults are better informed about politics as a result of the way they consume news.

*The correct answer is “c.” Today’s young adults consume substantially less news than their counterparts of a few decades ago and are correspondingly less informed about politics. Compared with older adults, young adults consume substantially less news and are more likely to rely on non-traditional outlets, such as social media and comedy-based talk shows.*

4. Partisan news outlets are now part of the U.S. news system. Which of the following statements is true of these outlets?

a. They have contributed to the increased level of party polarization.   
b. Their audiences consists largely of individuals who identify with the party that the partisan news outlet is promoting.  
c. They exercise their partisan leaning primarily by selecting facts and sources that support the partisan view they are promoting.  
d. all of the above

*The correct answer is “d.” Studies indicate that partisan news outlets contribute to party polarization, appeal primarily to partisans who share their partisan bias, and (as opposed to complete fabrications) rely on the selective use of facts and sources as a means of promoting their partisan agendas.*

**Short Answer**

Describe the difference between today’s high-choice media system and the earlier media system dominated by the broadcast networks and local newspapers. How does a high-choice system contribute to a less-informed public? How does it contribute to a more partisan public?

***Answer:*** *The media system of a few decades ago was a low-choice system. In most communities, residents had access to only a single newspaper and three television networks—ABC, CBS, and NBC. At the dinner hour, all three networks broadcast a news program. Individuals who were intent on watching television at this time had no choice but to watch news. As a result, large numbers of Americans were regularly exposed to news. Moreover, the news they were reading and seeing was balanced in its treatment of the two parties.*

*That system has been replaced by the high-choice media system of today. Through cable and the Internet, Americans can access scores of news outlets and an even larger number of entertainment outlets. To a large degree, they control the content to which they will be exposed. Many Americans do not have enough interest in news to consume it on a regular basis and accordingly are relatively uninformed about public affairs. Other Americans have a preference for partisan news outlets. Exposure to such content tends to solidify and intensity partisanship.*

**Short Answer**

Compare the type of news provided by traditional news outlets, such as the typical daily newspaper or broadcast news program, with the type of news provided by partisan news outlets. What audience effects are associated with exposure to traditional news? With partisan news?

***Answer:*** *Most traditional news outlets abide by what’s called objective journalism. The objective model requires that they report the facts rather than their opinions and that they treat both political parties by the same standard. The audience for such news is accordingly exposed to reporting that concentrates on factual developments and that provides information, good and bad, about both parties.*

*Studies show exposure to this type of information can increase people’s awareness of current events and issues, resulting in a heightened level of information. Studies also show that exposure to this type of news reduces party polarization in that people are hearing positive things (as well as negative things) about the opposing party and negative things (as well as positive things) about their own party.*

*Partisan news outlets, such as Fox on the right and MSNBC on the left, use a different journalism model. While they adhere to the facts in a narrow sense (their journalists are not encouraged to lie or fabricate), they are selective in their use of facts and in their choice of sources for quotes and comments. They tend to choose the facts, issues, and sources that are likely to promote the party they support.*

*Studies show exposure to this type of news can result in misinformation. Whereas the audience for partisan news can have a relatively accurate understanding of the favored party, it tends to have a distorted view of what the other party stands for. In addition, because the partisan news audience is hearing overwhelming positive things about one party and overwhelmingly negative things about the other party, this type of news fosters polarized views of the parties.*

**13TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS  
Congress and Constituency**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Congress differs in significant ways from the national legislatures of most democracies. Which of the following is not one of these differences?

a. Congress has two co-equal chambers whereas most national legislatures do not.  
b. Congress operates in a system of constitutionally divided executive and legislative power whereas most national legislatures operate in a system where executive and legislative power is not constitutionally divided.  
c. Congress chooses its top leaders on a non-partisan basis whereas most national legislatures chose their top leaders on the basis of the political party they represent.  
d. Members of Congress are relatively free to vote as they chose on legislative bills whereas members of most national legislatures are required in most instances to support their political party’s position on legislative bills.

*The correct answer is “c.” Top congressional leaders, such as the Speaker of the House and the Senate minority leader, are chosen on the basis of their party. Each party picks its top leaders—for instance, the Senate majority leader is chosen by members of the majority party while the Senate minority leader is chosen by members of the minority party. That type of arrangement also typifies other national legislatures. On the other hand, Congress differs from most national legislatures by having two co-equal chambers, members who are free agents to a considerable degree, and by operating in a system where executive and legislative power are divided.*

2. Which factor best predicts the reelection of members of Congress?

a. incumbency  
 b. members’ positions on legislative issues  
 c. closeness of members’ ties to the president  
 d. members’ committee assignments

*The correct answer is “a.” Incumbency is highly predictive of reelection. Roughly 90 percent of congressional incumbents seeking reelection are victorious in their campaigns. The other listed factors are much less predictive of reelection rates.*

3. Much of the work in Congress takes place in its standing committees. Which of the following statements about these committees is not true?

a. Members of Congress tend to be assigned to a standing committee that handles policy issues important to their constituency.  
b. Each standing committee has a defined jurisdiction (the policy area in which it is authorized to act).  
c. Standing committees have the power to alter (“mark up”) the bills they handle.  
d. Once a standing committee finishes its work on a bill, the bill is automatically referred to the full House or Senate for a vote.

*The correct answer is “d.” In addition to having the power to mark up bills, committees have the power to decide whether a bill should be submitted to the full chamber for a vote. Committee members can vote to withhold a bill, which normally means the bill will not come up for a vote by the full chamber. Committee power is also evident in each committee’s jurisdiction. Bills dealing with a particular policy area in most cases must be referred to the committee that has jurisdiction over that policy area.*

4. Assume that Congress is considering a bill that would authorize development of a new weapons system for the U.S. Army. Which statement about that bill is most likely to be true?

a. The bill would have originated in the House before being taken up by the Senate.  
b. The bill would have had its strongest support among members of Congress from states and districts whose economies depend heavily on U.S. Army installations or weapons contractors.   
c. The bill would have been delegated to the House and Senate appropriations committees for consideration because a new weapons program requires funding.  
d. all of the above

*The correct answer is “b.” Because they depend for reelection on the voters in their district or state, members of Congress tend to support legislation that helps their constituencies. A bill dealing with the authorization of a new weapons system could originate in either the House or Senate (or in both at the same time) and would be delegated to the chamber’s armed services committee, which has jurisdiction over such policies. (If the weapons systems program is authorized by Congress, a separate bill appropriating the money would then be submitted for consideration. That bill would be handled by the appropriations committees.)*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the advantages and disadvantages that incumbents have in seeking reelection. How might these advantages and disadvantages differ for senators and House members?

***Answer:*** *Incumbents have major advantages over their election challengers. Members of Congress have large personal staffs that can be devoted to publicizing the member; they sit on committees that handle issues affecting their constituents and can seek through a committee to promote constituency interests; and they find it easier than their challengers to raise campaign funds—many groups prefer to contribute to incumbents (knowing that they stand a good chance of reelection).*

*The main disadvantage that incumbents have is that their position in Congress requires them to vote on bills. Some bills deal with controversial issues on which people have intense opinions. Members of Congress can anger important interests within their constituency by the positions they take on such bills. (Because of their visibility, incumbents’ reelection chances can also suffer if they get caught up in a scandal. Over the years, most of these scandals have involved sexual or financial impropriety.)*

*House members have one disadvantage that senators don’t have. Every ten years, after the population census, House seats are redistricted to reflect population change within the state. The boundaries of the new congressional district can be less favorable to the incumbent than the old boundaries. Senators don’t face this problem in that they are elected from the state as a whole. The boundaries of their district is the state, which does not change from one election to the next.*

*The main disadvantage senators have is that they are more likely to face a strong opponent. Governors, for example, sometimes decide to run for the Senate and are formidable opponents. A House seat is less attractive to high-ranking officials than is a Senate seat, so House members often face relatively weak opponents, which is a reason their reelection rate is somewhat higher than that of senators.*

**Short Answer**

From the perspective of a member of Congress, explain the political calculus of voting in support of a bill using the categories described in the lecture: whether the bill provides a concentrated benefit or a diffuse benefit and whether it entails a concentrated cost or a diffuse cost. Why is a bill that involves a concentrated benefit and a diffuse cost the type of bill that members of Congress generally find easiest to support?

***Answer:*** *From the perspective of a member of Congress, bills can be thought of as having a concentrated benefit (a benefit aimed at helping a particular group or interest) or a diffuse benefit (a benefit that is spread across the entire public). Generally, members of Congress prefer the first type of bill. Recipients of the benefit will be aware of it and might be grateful enough to support the member in the next election.*

*On the cost side, a bill can impose a concentrated cost (a cost imposed on a particular group or interest) or a diffuse cost (one that is spread across the entire taxpaying public). Generally, members of Congress prefer a bill that diffuses the cost. Such a cost is less noticeable and thereby less likely to anger those who pay the cost, diminishing the likelihood that they will vote against the member.*

*Policies that have a concentrated benefit and a diffuse cost are distributive in nature (they distribute a benefit to a particular group while spreading the cost among all taxpayers). Such bills tend to pose little risk to a member’s reelection while holding out the possibility of being a source of additional votes.*

**14TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS  
Congress and Party**

1. In Congress, the role of political parties is illustrated by all of the following except:

a. selection of top Senate and House leaders  
 b. importance that members of Congress place on pork-barrel legislation  
 c. Republicans aligned against Democrats on votes in committee   
 d. Republicans aligned against Democrats on votes in the full chamber  
  
*The correct answer is “b.” Pork-barrel legislation refers to a bill aimed at helping a district or state, such as a bill that provides funding for the construction of a new bridge in a particular congressional district. Such legislation is pursued by members of both parties and does not have an large partisan element. The other answers—the choice of top leaders and the alignment on votes in committee and in the chamber as whole—refer to aspects of Congress where partisanship is a major element.*

2. Which statement is not true of congressional parties?

a. At one time, congressional Democrats included a substantial number of conservatives.  
b. At one time, congressional Republicans included a substantial number of progressives.  
c. Shared partisanship (Republicans aligning with other Republicans, Democrats aligning with other Democrats) is the primary source of unity in today’s Congress.  
d. Committee chair positions are rotated between the parties.  
e. The majority party holds majority of seats on each standing committee.

*The correct answer is “d.” Committee chair positions are not rotated among the parties. Instead, the majority party picks the chair of each standing committee and also holds a majority of seats on each committee. Regarding the other choices, all are true of congressional parties. A half century ago, both parties had a substantial conservative wing and a substantial progressive wing. Today, nearly all Republican lawmakers are conservatives and nearly all Democratic lawmakers are liberal. As a result, there is a high level of party unity in today’s Congress, with Republicans typically lining up against Democrats on divisive policy issues.*

3. Which of the following is not a consequence of the higher level of party polarization in the U.S. Congress?

a. higher level of party unity on legislative votes  
b. higher likelihood of deadlock on legislative issues  
c. higher likelihood that members of Congress will support the president’s policy initiatives   
d. higher likelihood that party members will support the policy initiatives of their party’s legislative leader (e.g., Speaker, majority leader)  
e. higher likelihood that incumbents will face a primary election challenger

*The correct answer is “c.” The higher level of party polarization has decreased the likelihood that members of Congress will support the president’s legislative initiatives. In recent years, members of Congress from the opposite party have typically opposed presidential initiatives on controversial issues. On the other hand, the members have increasingly lined up behind the initiatives of their party’s legislative leaders and increasingly have voted in line with other members of their party (a high level of party unity). Partisan differences have also been at the root of the legislative deadlock that has occurred with increasing frequency in recent years. Finally, as Republicans in Congress have become more uniformly conservative and Democrats have become more uniformly liberal, members of Congress who deviate from their party’s dominant ideology have more often faced a primary challenger who espouses that ideology.*  
4. The 2013 government shutdown that resulted from the inability of Congress to reach agreement on the federal budget was caused by:

a. rivalry between the House and Senate over control of the budget.  
b. failure of President Obama to exercise leadership during budget negotiations.  
c. starkly opposing views of congressional Republicans and congressional Democrats on issues of taxing and spending.  
d. failure of House and Senate leaders to properly manage the congressional schedule; they did not allow sufficient time for floor debate in the lead-up to the budget deadline.  
e. disagreements between the chair of the House Budget Committee and the chair of the House Appropriations Committee.

*The correct answer is “c.” The 2013 government shutdown resulted from the starkly opposing views on the budget of congressional Republicans and congressional Democrats. Congressional Republicans were seeking deep cuts in federal spending, which congressional Democrats opposed. For their part, congressional Democrats were seeking a large tax increase on upper incomes, which congressional Republicans opposed. None of the other alternatives played a major part in the shutdown.*

**Short Answer**

How does the structure of Congress—for example, its two chambers and committee system—affect its role in the making of policy on broad national issues, as compared with its role on narrower group-centered issues? Does the widening ideological gap in Congress—the fact that Democrats are now more uniformly liberal and Republicans are now more uniformly conservative—make it easier or harder for Congress to take the lead on broad issues of national policy? Why?

***Answer:*** *Structurally, Congress is a fragmented institution. It has two chambers and, within each chamber, more than a dozen standing committees, each with its own leadership and policy jurisdiction. This feature of Congress makes it difficult for Congress to take the lead on major policy initiatives. No single member of Congress is positioned to speak for Congress as a whole and to propose major initiatives on its behalf. As well, members of Congress are free agents to a considerable degree. They cannot be forced by party leaders to vote with others in their party on legislative bills.*

*When there is substantial disagreement within Congress on the nature of such an initiative, which is often the case, it is difficult even to develop major initiatives that will have broad support in both chambers. For this reason, such initiatives have tended to come from the president, who has sole executive authority and finds it easier to craft such initiatives and propose them to Congress. This presidential advantage does not mean that Congress will automatically support what the president proposes, but such initiatives at least provide Congress a starting point for its work on the legislation.*

*On the other hand, Congress is ideally suited through its committee system to deal with narrower group-centered issues. Each standing committee has jurisdiction over bills in its policy area and operates somewhat independently of the other standing committees. As a result, these committees can handle numerous smaller initiatives simultaneously, each working on the bills within its jurisdiction. In sum, the committee system enables Congress to handle a large number of such bills because they are delegated to the various committees, each of which has the authority to alter (“mark up”) a bill and to determine whether to recommend it for passage by the full chamber.*

*The widening ideological gap in Congress—the fact that congressional Republicans are now more uniformly conservative and congressional Democrats are now more uniformly liberal—has increased to some extent Congress’s ability to take the lead on national issues. Party polarization in Congress has increased the level of conflict between the congressional parties but diminished the level of conflict within each party—the party’s members are more likely to hold similar views on major legislative issues. As a result, party leaders in Congress have found it easier to develop major legislative initiatives that nearly all the party’s members will support. However, the capacity of Congress to be a source of major policy initiatives is contingent on one party having solid control of both the House and Senate. If control of the two chambers is divided between the parties, Congress cannot easily lead on major policy issues. In that situation, the Senate and the House majorities are likely to hold opposing positions, resulting in policy deadlock.*

**Short Answer**

In the previous session (Congress and constituency), we indicated that members of Congress typically prefer distributive policies—those that bestow a discrete benefit on a particular interest while spreading the cost across the taxpaying public. Such policies involve a concentrated benefit and a diffuse cost. In this session, we described the rising level of polarization in Congress—with Democrats and Republicans increasingly at odds ideologically. Do you think this development has made it easier for Congress to take up bills that are not of the distributive type? Might the 2010 health care reform bill be an example? In terms of costs and benefits, how would you describe that bill?

**Answer:** From the perspective of a member of Congress, bills can be thought of as having a concentrated benefit (a benefit aimed at helping a particular group or interest) or a diffuse benefit (a benefit that is spread across the entire public). Generally, members of Congress prefer the first type of bill. Recipients of the benefit will be aware of it and might support the member in the next election.

On the cost side, a bill can impose a concentrated cost (a cost imposed on a particular group or interest) or a diffuse cost (one that is spread across the entire taxpaying public). Generally, members of Congress prefer a bill that diffuses the cost. Such a cost is less noticeable and thereby less likely to anger those who pay the cost, diminishing the likelihood that they will vote against the member for that reason.

Policies that have a concentrated benefit and a diffuse cost are distributive in nature (they distribute a benefit to a particular group while spreading the cost among all taxpayers).

As a result of heightened polarization in Congress, it has become easier for members of Congress to take up issues that are not distributive. The reason is that each party more fully represents a number of interests that are in opposition to a number of interests in the other party, such as business versus labor, upper-incomes versus lower-incomes, and so on. Accordingly, each party is better positioned to seek policies that provide a benefit for one of its core groups (e.g., business) while imposing the cost on a core group of the opposite party (e.g., labor). Rather than being distributive, such policies are redistributive—they provide a benefit to one group while imposing the cost on another group.

In part, the 2010 Health Care Reform bill fits this description. For example, it requires business firms of a certain size to provide their employees with health insurance or pay a penalty. The cost is imposed on the firms and the benefit goes to the workers. The bill also provides subsidies to lower-income Americans for the purchase of health insurance. They get the benefit while the cost is imposed on higher-income taxpayers.

Democratic and Republican lawmakers were cognizant of the bill’s costs and benefits. Nearly every congressional Democrat voted for the bill (workers and lower-income groups are a large part of the Democratic coalition) and every congressional Republican, without exception, voted against the bill (business firms and upper-income groups are a large part of the Republican coalition).

**15TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS   
Presidents & Domestic Policy**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Presidents’ constitutional authority in the area of domestic policy includes

a. authority to execute the laws  
b. authority to spend funds appropriated by Congress in any way the president chooses  
c. authority to create the programs, such as social security, carried out by the various executive departments and agencies  
d. all of the above

*The correct answer is “a.” Under the Constitution, the president has the authority to “faithfully executive the laws”—meaning, that the president is responsible for carrying out the laws enacted by Congress. On the hand, Congress has authority over how funds are allocated across the various federal programs and over the creation of federal programs such as social security.*

2. Which statement about executive orders is not true?

a. They are subject to override by a succeeding president.  
 b. They are based on existing law.  
 c. They refer to orders presidents give to members of the Cabinet.  
 d. They are rooted in the president’s constitutional authority to “execute the laws.”

*The correct answer is “c.” Although a president can instruct a cabinet member to take a particular action, such a directive is not what is meant by an executive order. Executive orders refer to orders that presidents issue pursuant to their constitutional authority to “execute the laws.” As such, an executive order must be rooted in existing law—an order directed at how that law is to be carried out. A succeeding president can rescind an executive order, having the authority to do as a result of being constitutionally empowered to “execute the laws.”*

3. Which factor best explains the president’s success with Congress?

a. Whether the president has just won election by a wide margin  
b. Whether the president is highly popular with the American public  
c. Whether the president’s party has a congressional majority  
d. Whether the lobbying groups supporting the presidents’ proposals are more powerful than opposing groups

*The correct answer is “c.” Although the other factors affect a president’s success with Congress, no factor is as consistently and substantially related to that success as whether the president’s party has a congressional majority. The reason is straightforward. Members of Congress from the president’s party are more likely than those of the other party to share the president’s policy goals. When faced with a Congress controlled by the other party, presidents have often found themselves in the situation where what they are seeking is different from what the congressional majority wants. In such situations, presidential initiatives are often ignored or rejected by Congress.*

4. The president’s advantage over Congress when it comes to developing legislative initiatives on major policy issues includes all but which of the following?

a. Greater access to policy experts and information  
b. Ability to veto legislation.  
c. The public’s tendency, because the president is nationally elected, to look to the president for leadership on major policy issues.  
d. The fact that the president has sole final executive authority whereas legislative authority is divided between Congress’s two chambers and its many members.

*The correct answer is “b.” The veto doesn’t come into play in the early (initiating) stage of developing a major legislative proposal. The veto comes into play at the end when a president disagrees with what Congress has done or intends to do. On the other hand, the other three factors are instrumental in giving the president an edge over Congress when it comes to major legislative initiatives. Such initiatives are often complex and require access to experts and information in their preparation. The president has literally hundreds of experts within the executive branch to call upon when drafting legislation. In contrast, members of Congress have relatively small staffs and less access to experts and information. In addition, the public looks to the president, more so than Congress, for leadership on major national issues as a result of the fact that the president is chosen by the electorate as a whole, whereas members of Congress are chosen by voters within a particular state or district. Finally, the president has sole final authority to make executive decisions, including the nature of legislative proposals. No member of Congress has the authority to make such decisions for the legislative branch. Decision-making authority is divided between the House and Senate and, within each chamber, among its members. When there is substantial disagreement within Congress over the best course of legislative action, it is difficult for Congress to take the lead on a major policy issue.*

**Short Answer**

How did the increase in the federal government’s policy responsibilities contribute to the emergence of a more powerful presidency?

**Answer:** Modern government consists of thousands of programs and hundreds of agencies. Congress is ill suited to directing and coordinating them. Congress is a fragmented institution that acts through negotiation, bargaining, and compromise. It simply is not structured in a way that would enable it to oversee government activity and develop comprehensive policies on an ongoing basis.

In contrast, the presidency is structured in a way that enable it to do so. Final executive authority rests with a single individual, the president, who is thereby able to direct the actions of others and to undertake large-scale planning. Presidents also have greater access than Congress to the information and expertise that are necessary in developing the complex policies and programs that typify modern government. In fact, as the size of government has increased, all democracies have seen a shift in power from their legislature to their executive. In Britain, for example, the prime minister has taken on policy responsibilities that once belonged to the cabinet or the Parliament as a whole.

The presidency has also been strengthened by the expanded scope of foreign policy. For a long period in American history, foreign affairs was not a large part of federal policy. Today, the United States is a global super power with diplomatic and trade relations with nearly every country in the world. Because of the president’s constitutional authority as chief diplomat and military commander, and the special demands of foreign policy action (such as the need for a united voice and, at times, a need for fast action), the president, not Congress, has had the lead role in the realm of foreign affairs.

**Short Answer**

Why is presidential power “conditional”—that is, why is it affected so substantially by circumstance, the nature of the issue, the makeup of Congress, and the president’s popular support?

**Answer:** Although Americans expect decisive action from a president, the president operates within a system of separated institutions sharing power (see session 2 of the course). Significant presidential action often depends on the approval of Congress, and sometimes the cooperation of the bureaucracy and the judiciary. Because other officials have their own priorities, presidents do not have full power. Congress in particular holds the key to presidential success. Without congressional authorization and funding, most presidential proposals are nothing but ideas. They simply don’t materialize because presidents lack the authority on their own to put them into law.

That’s why presidential power is “conditional.” The president is more powerful under some conditions than under others. Presidents tend to be more powerful when they have strong public backing and when there is a compelling national need for policy action. In that case, Congress is more likely to look to, and accept, presidential leadership.

However, no factor is as consistently and substantially related to presidential success as whether the president’s party has a congressional majority. The reason is straightforward. Members of Congress from the president’s party are more likely than those of the other party to share the president’s policy goals. When faced with a Congress controlled by the other party, presidents have often found themselves in the situation where what they want are seeking is different from what the congressional majority wants. In such situations, presidential initiatives are often ignored or rejected by Congress.

**16TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS  
Presidents & Foreign Policy**

**Multiple Choice**

1. As contained in the Constitution, the president’s war powers include:

a. the power to declare war.  
b. commander in chief of the military.  
c. the authority to fund the military.  
d. all of the above

*The correct answer is “b.” The Constitution grants the president the power of commander-in-chief. Under the Constitution, Congress holds the power to declare war and the power to fund the military.*

2. In contrast to treaties, executive agreements

a. are negotiated more frequently.  
b. do not require Senate approval.  
c. can be canceled or changed by order of a succeeding president.  
d. all of the above.

*The correct answer is “d.” All of the listed items are features of executive agreements, which are agreements between the United States and another country (or countries) that are based solely on the president’s diplomatic authority. Since World War Ii, presidents have negotiated roughly ten times as many executive agreements as they have treaties. Unlike treaties, which require a two-thirds majority in Senate for ratification, executive agreements do not require Senate approval. A subsequent president can cancel or change an executive agreement at will, whereas treaties are binding on future presidents, at least in theory and normally in practice.*

3. Most U.S. military conflicts since World War II have taken place through

a. congressional authorization.  
 b. United Nations authorization  
 c. NATO authorization  
 d. presidential authorization

*The correct answer is “d.” The large majority of U.S. military conflicts since World War II—more than 80 percent of them—have been conducted solely on the basis of presidential authorization. Only a minority of such conflicts have been conducted through congressional authorization (e.g., the 2003 Iraq invasion), NATO authorization (e.g., the Balkans conflict in the 1990s), and UN authorization (e.g., the Korean War of the early 1950s).*

4. Over the course of U.S. history, power over war has shifted from Congress to the president. The main reason for this is

a. Congress’s reluctance to vigorously assert its constitutional authority over war.  
b. Presidents’ defiance of Supreme Court decisions restricting their war power.  
c. Changes in the world and in technology have changed the nature of threats to national security in a way that has favored presidential action.  
d. Supreme Court decisions that have effectively shifted many of Congress’s war-related powers to the president.  
e. The news media’s tendency to defer to presidents’ judgment on the need for military action.

*The correct answer is “c.” Until the early twentieth century, threats to America’s national security were remote. The nation was an ocean away from Europe and Asia and far stronger than its closest neighbors. That situation changed with advances in transportation, communication, and weaponry. It was not simply that the threats were more substantial. They were also more immediate, which worked to the president’s advantage because the president, as a result of having sole final executive authority, is positioned to respond quickly to threats to American interests. Congress, on the other hand, is a slow acting institution where authority is divided. Fast action is not one of Congress’s strengths. In addition, the United States has developed the military capacity to act quickly and decisively, which gives force to presidential decisions to engage in military action.*

*The president’s control over war is enhanced by other developments, including the media’s tendency (initially at least) to defer to president’s decision on the need for war and the Supreme Court’s acceptance of executive action in modern warfare. Nevertheless, such factors are secondary to the fact that technological and global change have resulted in conditions—a need for the fast action and the capacity to take it—favorable to presidential control over war.*

**Short Answer**

What advantages over Congress does the president have in the realm of foreign policy?

***Answer:*** *One advantage is that presidents have more control over the information that goes into the making of foreign policy. When it comes to foreign policy, much of the policy-related information is held by the State and Defense departments, as well as intelligence agencies such as the CIA. They brief the president each day, which is not the case for members of Congress, who unlike the president also do not have regular and full access to classified intelligence reports.*

*Secrecy, however, is less Congress’s information problem than is easy access to it in the formative stage of foreign policy. The presidency permits a level of policy planning that is beyond Congress’s scope. Often, when Congress is brought into a foreign policy decision, the policy has already been shaped in large part in the executive branch. That doesn’t preclude Congress from a role, but can have the effect of limiting Congress’s influence to adjustments in what the president has decided.*

*Even in areas where Congress has relatively full access to foreign affairs information, presidents have the edge because of their leadership advantage. This advantage rests on the fact that foreign relations are based on government-to-government contact. Someone in each government must have the authority to act on its behalf. No member of Congress is positioned to do that. Congress is an institution where authority is divided among its members and between its two chambers. Congress has no single leader that can act authoritatively on behalf of the legislative branch. In contrast, the executive branch is unified. Executive authority is not divided—the president alone has the final authority over executive action. Accordingly, the president has the unquestioned lead when the United States negotiates with other countries.*

*A third presidential advantage in the foreign policy area rests on the fact that presidents have substantial opportunities to act on their own. For example, although the Senate must approve any treaty that a president negotiates, presidents can make treaty-like agreements (executive agreements) with foreign countries without Senate approval. And in their role as commander-in-chief, presidents have authority on their own to order U.S. military forces into combat. In theory, Congress could withhold funding for such military action; in practice, Congress was rarely done so, in part because doing so could put the troops at risk.*

**Short Answer**

What steps did President George W. Bush take to build support for the Iraq invasion? How might other actors in the American system deter a president who is determined to initiate war?

***Answer:*** *After the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, the United States invaded Afghanistan. President Bush then wanted to extend the war on terrorism to Iraq. That country, however, had not been involved in the terrorist attacks, so Bush had to build a case for attacking it if he hoped to get congressional and public backing for invading it.*

*The first public indication that Iraq was being targeted came in Bush’s 2002 State of Union address, when he lumped Iraq with Iran and North Korea in what he called the “axis of evil.” Five months later, speaking at West Point, Bush announced a new doctrine—the preemptive war doctrine. The doctrine declared that the United States would not wait for a threat to fully materialize before taking military action. In the speech, Bush didn’t identify Iraq as the target of a preemptive strike, but two months later he asked Congress to authorize an attack on Iraq if it refused to turn over its weapons of mass destruction.*

*To justify an American attack on Iraq, President Bush cited intelligence reports that claimed Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was preparing to use them. Congress lacked persuasive evidence to the contrary and voted strongly in favor of authorizing an attack on Iraq if it did not voluntarily hand over the weapons.*

*Throughout this period, the news media’s attention was focused on the White House. Skeptics and opponents of the war received relatively little media attention compared with that given the Bush administration. As a result, the Bush administration was able to control the message. It repeatedly claimed that an invasion of Iraq was necessary to preserve America’s security.*

*Gradually, public opinion fell into line with the president’s message. When Bush first indicated the possibility of an invasion, opinion polls indicated that less than half the public thought it was a good idea. But by the time of the invasion, public opinion had swung strongly in Bush’s favor. As it turned out, the Bush Administration’s claim that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction was faulty. Although U.S. weapons inspectors searched high and low in Iraq for such weapons, they found none of consequence.*

*In this case and generally, Congress can try to stop a war by withholding funds for military operations. Such action has rarely occurred and virtually never at the outset of conflict, in part because doing so might endanger the troops and in part because public opinion has usually supported the president’s decision to go to war. Theoretically, the Supreme Court might order a halt to hostilities on grounds that Congress has not officially issued a declaration of war. However, the Supreme Court has never done so, ruling that the judiciary is not equipped to make decisions on the need for war.*

*In practice, public opinion has been the major constraint on the president’s war power. Intense opposition to a war can be costly to the election prospects of the president and the president’s party. Faced with the choice between election defeat and continuing a war, presidents have sometimes decided to withdraw U.S. troops. Public opinion can also act as a constraint on a president’s ability to initiate war. For a period after the Vietnam War, for example, the public was strongly opposed to committing troops to war in a situation where America’s interests were not substantially and directly at risk. That outlook served as a restraint on presidential action for more than a decade after the Vietnam conflict ended.*

**17TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS   
Federal Bureaucracy**

**Multiple Choice**

1. The strength of bureaucracy as a form of organization is that it

a. leads to flexibility in the completion of tasks.  
b. is effective only in the public sector; private corporations rely on a different form of organization.  
c. is the most efficient means of getting large numbers of people to work together on large tasks.  
d. allows individuals wide latitude when making decisions  
e. places leadership at the bottom of the organization, thereby expanding the amount of leadership available to the organization.

*The correct answer is “c.” As a form of organization, bureaucracy is characterized by “hierarchy”—those at the top have authority over those below them (which makes “e” incorrect); a division of labor; and formal rules—decisions based on pre-set guidelines (which makes “a” and “d” incorrect). These characteristics are what makes the bureaucratic form of organization the most efficient means of getting large numbers of people to work together on large tasks (which makes “c” the correct answer). The advantages of the bureaucratic form have led both public institutions (such as the federal government) and private organizations (such as corporations) to adopt it.*

2. The primary function of the federal bureaucracy is  
 a. oversight of the executive branch.  
 b. developing laws for review by Congress.  
 c. implementing the policies of Congress and the president.  
 d. advising the president on issues of policy.

*The correct answer is “b.” The bureaucracy does not have oversight of the executive branch (option “a”); that function is carried out by Congress. The bureaucracy does develop laws for review by Congress (option “b”) and advises the president on policy (option “d”), but they are not its primary function. The bureaucracy’s main job is to implement congressional and presidential policies, as in the case of delivering the mail, sending out monthly social security checks, and carrying out farm programs.*

3. An iron triangle consists of all the following except:

a. the president who initiates the program.  
 b. an interest group that benefits from the program.  
 c. members of the committee or subcommittee that oversees the program.  
 d. the federal agency that runs the program.

*The correct answer is “a.” The president deals with lots of policy simultaneously. The three actors (interest group, committee/subcommittee members, federal agency) that constitute an iron triangle have a common interest in a particular policy. An example is a defense contractor with a stake in a particular weapons system, the members of Congress on the armed services committee from locations where the system is or will be built, and the agency within the defense department that will use the weapons system. Their triangular relationship is “ironclad” in that each has a stake in the policy or program, and each has something to offer the other two, which creates an incentive for them to work together. A defense contractor, for example, can provide lobbying support for the executive agency and campaign support for the members of Congress.*

4. The clearest lesson of the case involving the F-22 Raptor fight jet is that

a. all government spending is wasteful.  
b. the passage of time renders programs obsolete.  
c. presidents have more control over government spending programs than does Congress.  
d. once initiated, government programs are difficult to terminate because they benefit particular interests that will fight to keep them.  
e. inter-service rivalries between the Army, Navy, and Air Force are the main determinations of national security policy.

*The correct answer is “d.” The point of the Raptor case was to illustrate the power of the bureaucracy when it comes to protecting its programs. Once in place, the bureaucracy can protect its programs through its expertise, its friends in Congress and the White House, and the groups that benefit from its programs. With the Raptor, the Department of the Air Force was able to keep the program alive for more than a decade after it had become clear that the fighter jet was not aligned with contemporary national security needs.*

**Short Answer**

Define what is meant by “agency point of view.” Why do bureaucrats tend to have an agency point of view? What are the consequences of this outlook?

***Answer:*** *Agency point of view refers to the tendency of bureaucrats to adopt their agency’s perspective and try to protect its programs and budget. Bureaucrats are biased—not in a partisan sense—but in a vocational sense. They believe in the importance of their agency’s work and will seek to promote that interest even if it’s not aligned with what the Congress, president, or public would prefer.*

*An agency point of view comes naturally to bureaucrats. Most of them spend their career working in the same agency and come to see its programs as important and worth keeping. In addition, a significant number of bureaucrats have specialized training in the area their agency addresses. An example is the physicians and research scientists who work in the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). They naturally tend to believe in the important of programs aimed at protecting public health. Finally, bureaucrats have a self-interest in protecting and promoting their agency’s programs because their jobs and influence over policy depend on it.*

*The consequence of the agency point of view is that bureaucrats will seek to protect and promote their agencies policies and programs. And they have resources that can help them to achieve this goal. They can use their expertise to make arguments on the significance of their agency’s work and they can rely on support from the groups that benefit from their programs and from friends in Congress and the White House who want to maintain or expand these programs.*

**Short Answer**

What are the major sources of bureaucrats’ power? What mechanisms for controlling that power are available to the president and Congress? What are the practical limits on the effectiveness of these mechanisms as a control on bureaucratic power?

***Answer:*** *Bureaucrats’ power derives from a number of sources. One is the power inherent in implementing the law. The policies of Congress and the president are often expressed in general language and broad provisions. The bureaucracy then has the task of determining how these policies will actually be carried out. As well, many policies are not self-executing but must be decided on a case-by-case basis. For example, the National Park Service has responsibility for managing the various uses of the national parks, including recreation, logging, mining, and grazing. How those various interests are balanced within a particular national park is decided by National Park Service personnel.*

*Bureaucrats also have power through their expertise. Many modern policy issues are complex and require specialized knowledge to resolve. Much of the expertise in the federal government is provided by bureaucrats as a result of their career-long familiarity with agency programs and specialized training, as in the case of the physicians who work in the Centers for Disease Control.*

*Finally, bureaucrats have power because they have allies: the interest groups that benefit from their programs and will lobby to protect them, and the members of Congress (and sometimes White House appointees) whose constituents benefit from the programs.*

*Because bureaucrats are not elected and yet wield considerable power, the issue of bureaucratic accountability is an important one. Both the president and Congress have means of holding the bureaucracy to account. Presidents, for example, appoint the top managers of each agency and, through the Office of Management and Budget, have influence over agency budgets and proposals. Congress, for example, has final say over agency programs and budgets. No program can be implemented and no money can be spent by an agency unless authorized by Congress. Congress also has the power to require bureaucrats to appear before congressional hearings to testify on their actions. If displeased with how an agency has implemented a program, Congress can pass a law instructing the agency to do it in a different way.*

*Although these various forms of accountability are substantial, they also have limits. Presidential appointees in the agencies, for example, typically know less about its policies and programs than the career bureaucrats they supervise, which can put them in a weak position. And given the size of the federal bureaucracy—with its hundreds of units and thousands of programs—both the president and Congress are limited in just how much they can oversee. During the annual budgetary process, for example, the president and Congress normally look carefully only at requests for new spending and programs. They and their staffs don’t have the time, information, or resources to review everything that the bureaucracy does.*

**18TH SESSION**

**POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS   
Judiciary & Supreme Court**

**Multiple Choice**

1. What’s the relationship in the United States between state court systems and the federal court system?

a. State courts are administrative units of the federal court system and their decisions can be overridden at will by a federal court.  
b. State courts are completely independent of the federal courts; a case heard in state court cannot be appealed to a federal court.  
c. State courts are supervised by U.S. circuit courts (U.S. Courts of Appeals): each circuit court has jurisdiction over a particular set of state courts.  
d. State courts constitute a separate judicial system and a state case can ordinarily be appealed to the federal system only if it involves a federal issue.

*The correct answer is “d.” Because the United States has a federal system, the states have sovereignty, which means they have final legal authority in areas not under the legal authority of the federal government. Accordingly, states have separate judiciaries that decide cases that arise under their laws and local ordinances (local governments are agents of the state in which they’re located). The decisions of state courts are final unless the case involves a federal issue (such as a claim by the accused that police violated his or her rights under the U.S. Constitution). In such instances, if the accused is convicted, he or she can appeal the conviction to a federal court for a determination of whether the constitutional right was in fact violated.*

2. Which type of Supreme Court opinion are lower-court judges obliged to follow in deciding cases of a similar nature?

a. majority opinion  
b. plurality opinion  
c. concurring opinion  
d. dissenting opinion  
e. all of the above

*The correct answer is “a.” A majority opinion occurs when a majority of the justices agree on the decision and on the legal basis for it. In that instance, the opinion becomes “the law of the land” and lower courts are expected to follow the precedent set by it when deciding cases of a similar nature. Only in the case of a majority opinion can it be said that the Court is speaking as an “institution,” which makes its judgment binding on lower courts. With the other types of opinions, the opinion is that of a single justice or a minority of justices and doesn’t have the authority of the Court as an institution behind it.*

4. Judicial review is

a. the power of a court to decide whether another government institution has acted within its constitutional powers and, if not, to nullify its actions.  
b. the power of a court to hear cases of a particular type.  
c. the power of a court to review cases heard previously in a lower court.  
d. the power of a court to issue a judgment in the case before it.  
e. the power of the Senate to review the president’s judicial nominees and to confirm or reject a nominee.

*The correct answer is “a.” Judicial review is a precise term. It refers specifically to the power of a court to decide whether another government institution has acted within its constitutional powers and, if not, to nullify its actions. The “b” and “d” answers—the power of a court to hear cases of a particular type and to issue a judgment—refer to a court’s “jurisdiction.” The “c” answer—the power of a court to review cases heard previously in a lower court—is a reference to “appellate jurisdiction.” The “e” answer refers to the confirmation process by which an individual is appointed to a federal judgeship.*

4. The Supreme Court has been called “the world’s most powerful court.” Even if the claim is exaggerated, the Supreme Court is more powerful than the high courts of nearly all countries. What’s the main reason the Supreme Court is extraordinarily powerful?

a. The Supreme Court’s justices hold lifetime terms whereas judges in most countries hold office for a limited period of time.  
b. Because of the nation’s extensive system of divided and limited powers, constitutional disputes over the boundaries of these powers occur frequently; the U.S. Supreme Court has the power to decide what these boundaries will be and thus to decide what powers the branches and levels of government can lawfully exercise.  
c. The Supreme Court has only nine members where the highest court in most countries has a larger number of members.  
d. The Supreme Court picks the cases it hears and selects only the important ones whereas the high court in most countries is required to hear cases of particular types.

*The correct answer is “b.” Although the other alternatives refer to sources of Supreme Court power, the constitutional design of the U.S. political system is what makes the Court so powerful. The system’s separation of power between the branches and between the federal government and the states produces disputes over each institution’s powers in both absolute terms and relative to the power of others. The Supreme Court decides such disputes and, in doing so, determines what powers each institution is allowed. In addition, through the Bill of Rights and other provisions, the Constitution limits government infringement on people’s liberty—for example, government is prohibited from abridging the right to free speech. Here again, when disputes arise over the extent of these limits, the Supreme Court makes the decision. In the words of a former Supreme Court justice: “We are under a Constitution, but the Constitution is what the judges say it is.”*

**Short Answer**

Explain the influence of politics on the selection of Supreme Court justices and the decisions they make. In comparison with lower court judges, why do the political beliefs of Supreme Court justices have a larger influence on the decisions they make?

***Answer:*** *Supreme Court justices are selected through a political process. They are nominated by the president and then confirmed or rejected by majority vote in the Senate. Presidents seek to appoint justices who share their views on legal issues, which invariably differ from the views of some senators, resulting in conflict over judicial appointments, particularly when the Senate is controlled by the opposite political party.*

*Once on the bench, Supreme Court justices typically behave in the way their political background would predict—for example, in legal disputes between business and labor, Republican appointees are more likely than Democratic appointees to side with business. The tendency is not absolute. Supreme Court decisions are a product of both law and politics and, in applying the law, justices with different partisan backgrounds sometimes reach a common conclusion. An example is a 2014 decision in which the justices unanimously ruled that police ordinarily cannot search the contents of a suspect’s cell phone without first obtaining a search warrant.*

*However, partisan background plays a larger role in the decisions of Supreme Court justices than it does in the decisions of lower court judges. The primary reason is that the Supreme Court hears the “tough” cases—those where the meaning of the law is somewhat unclear and where each side in a case has a strong argument. That situation gives the justices discretionary power in deciding how the law should be applied. In lower-court cases, the law is more likely to be clear cut in its application, which limits judges’ discretion.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the doctrines of judicial restraint and judicial activism. Why is the Supreme Court’s decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* an example of an activist decision? Why is the Supreme Court’s ruling in *National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius* an example of judicial restraint? (The latter case, which upheld the constitutionality of the 2010 Affordable Care Act, was discussed in the session on federalism. To understand why it’s an example of judicial restraint, consider the basis on which the Court upheld the legislation.)

***Answer:*** *Judicial restraint holds that courts should act with restraint, deferring to precedent and the policies enacted by the people’s elected officials except when they clearly overstep the limits on their authority. Judicial restraint advocates say that the Supreme Court, because it’s an unelected body operating in a system based on majority rule, should give Congress or the president the benefit of the doubt when it’s unclear whether their actions are constitutional.*

*An opposing school of thought is judicial activism. It holds that courts should promote fundamental constitutional principles even when such action conflicts with precedent or the policies of elected officials. It holds that judges should actively interpret the Constitution in light of the fundamental principles it embodies and, although courts should not go out of their way to overturn the decisions of elected institutions, they also should not hesitate to act when elected officials fail to uphold fundamental principles.*

*The Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (2010) decision is a clear-cut case of judicial activism. In ruling that corporations and unions can spend freely on campaigns, the Supreme Court overturned an act of Congress, thereby placing its judgment ahead of that of the people’s representatives. In addition, the Court overturned precedent, repudiating previous Supreme Court rulings that had upheld Congress’s power to regulate campaign finance.*

*In contrast, the Supreme Court’s ruling in National Federation of Independent Business v. Sebelius (2012), a case involving a challenge to the federal requirement that people without health insurance pay a penalty, is an example of judicial restraint. In Sebelius, the Court’s majority upheld a law enacted by the Congress. Although Congress had used the term “penalty” rather than the term “tax” to describe the payment that uninsured individuals must pay, the Court’s majority concluded that the payment was a “tax” and therefore within Congress’s constitutional power to impose. In this case, the Court found a way (the Constitution’s taxing clause) to defer to action by elected officials.*

**PART IV. PUBLIC POLICY**

**19TH SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY  
Social Issues**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Compared with Europeans, Americans are substantially more likely to form political opinions based on their

1. religious beliefs.
2. economic class.
3. education level.
4. age group.

*The correct answer is “a.” Although economic class (option “d”) and education level (option “c”) are correlated with political opinions in the United States, they are correlated as highly or higher in most European countries. The same is true of age (option “d”). Religion is the factor more closely related to political opinions in the United States than in Europe. Americans are more religious than Europeans (for example, they attend church more regularly and are more likely to say that religion is important in their daily lives) and they are more likely than Europeans to base their political views on religious beliefs.*

2. Which statement about the role of religion in the period before the 1930s Great Depression is not true?

a. Religion had a strong influence on the abolitionist (anti-slavery) movement.  
b. Mainline Protestants tended to support the Democratic Party while Evangelical Protestants tended to support the Republican Party.   
c. The large influx of Catholic immigrants in the 19th and early 20th centuries sparked a Protestant backlash that made religion a large issue of American politics.   
d. In terms of the alignment of religion and the political parties, the South was the exception—southern Protestants had a different voting pattern than Protestants elsewhere.

*The correct answer is “b.” Most Protestants, regardless of their denomination, voted Republican. Each of the other options is true. Churches were a strong force in the abolitionist movement; religion as a partisan issue emerged when large numbers of Catholics started coming to the U.S., which had been overwhelmingly Protestant; and the South, where race was the overriding issue, had the atypical voting pattern—its Protestants tended to vote Democratic rather than Republican.*

3. Which development was not a large factor in the revival of religion as a political influence that began in the 1960s and 1970s?

a. Renewed conflict between Protestants and Catholics.   
b. Supreme Court decisions on issues such as school prayer and abortion.   
c. Changing social norms about contraception, the role of women, and media content.   
d. An influx of religious conservatives into the Republican Party.  
e. An influx of seculars and religious liberals into the Democratic Party.

*The correct answer is “a.” Although religious conflict in the pre-1930s period centered on the Protestant-Catholic divide, that division has not figured prominently in the recent revival of religion as a political influence. Each of the other options contributed to the revival, resulting in partisan divisions around issues such as abortion. The religious divide today is marked less by people’s religious denomination than by the strength of their religious beliefs and practices. For example, church-going Americans are substantially more Republican than irregular attendees or non-attendees.*

4. Which statement about religion’s relationship to politics is not true today?

a. Evangelicals vote heavily Republican.  
b. The Catholic vote is heavily Democratic.   
c. Level of church attendance is a predictor of whether people are likely to vote Republican.   
d. Opinions on abortion are a predictor of whether people are likely to vote Republican.  
e. Opinions on same-sex marriage are a predictor of whether people are likely to vote Republican.

*The correct answer is “b.” Catholics were once heavily Democratic but, today, they divide their vote almost equally between the parties. On the other hand, Evangelicals (option “a”) are one-sided in their partisan preference—they vote heavily Republican. So do Americans who attend church regularly and who oppose abortion. Although both Republicans and Democrats have become more supportive of same-sex marriage, sharp differences of opinion remain. Democrats have a substantially more favorable opinion of same-sex marriage than do Republicans.*

**Short Answer**

Contrast the Republican and Democratic strategies since the 1960s on the religious issue.

***Answer:*** *In the 1960s, the Supreme Court banned prayer and Bible readings in the public schools and, in 1973, ruled that abortion was legal during the first trimester of pregnancy. Religious conservatives were dismayed by these rulings and also upset by the women’s rights movement and by the counter-culture movement, with its emphasis on drugs and sexual liberation. A political fault line emerged—secularists and the more liberal religious denominations on one side of the culture debate and the more conservative religious denominations on the other side.*

*Religious conservatives are concentrated most heavily in the South, which began shifting toward the Republican Party in the 1960s over the race issue. Religious sentiments reinforced that shift, and religious conservatives became an ever larger voice in the Republican Party, which encouraged that development. For example, every Republican Party platform since the 1976 election has included a plank calling for a ban on abortion.*

*For its part, the Democratic Party has taken the opposing stand on the abortion issue. Every Democratic Party platform since 1976 has had a plank endorsing a woman’s right to choose. Democratic Party leaders have also been more likely than Republican leaders to support same-sex marriage.*

*These opposing party strategies have helped shape the party coalitions. Women vote disproportionally Democratic, as do members of the LGBT community. Meanwhile, secularists and liberal mainline Protestants vote heavily Democratic while Evangelicals and regular church-goers vote heavily Republicans. These tendencies have had a reinforcing effect. In order to retain the support of the groups aligned with their side, Republican and Democratic leaders have regularly taken issue positions consistent with group preferences.*

**Short Answer**

What tendencies suggest that the influence of religion on American politics might be weakening? What tendencies suggest that, even if religion is weakening as political force, it will continue to affect the nation’s politics in a substantial way?

***Answer:*** *There are some signs that religious-based conflict could be weakening. Some prominent evangelical leaders believe it was a mistake to tie religion to politics, particularly in light of the fact that it has not produced many policy victories. They would refocus the Christian right on its evangelical mission, contending that its identification with the Republican Party has made it harder to preach the Gospel to Democratic-leaning Americans, Hispanics particularly.*

*Some observers also point to the same-sex marriage issue as a possible sign of religion’s weakening influence. In the entire history of polling, there have been few issues where public opinion has changed so dramatically in so few years as have Americans’ opinions on gay marriage. Today, a majority of Americans support same-sex marriage and, although here’s a wide partisan gap on the issue, support has increased among Republicans as well as among Democrats.*

*There’s a final reason for thinking that the power of religion in politics is declining—a growing secular trend in American society. Church attendance is declining, particularly among young adults.*

*Even if religion is weakening as a political force, it’s not going away anytime soon. The abortion issue by itself virtually guarantees it. In the four decades since the Supreme Court legalized abortion, the difference of opinion on the issue between Republicans and Democrats has widened. Republicans and Democrats are now far apart—polarized—on the issue.*

*Moreover, party loyalties and religious beliefs are now interlocked, with secularists and liberal mainline Protestants aligned on the Democratic side and Evangelicals and regular church-goers aligned on the Republican side. Both parties have a stake in holding onto their followers, which means that, when opportunities arise, they will play up their side of the issue, reinforcing the religious divide.*

**20TH SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY   
Fiscal & Monetary Issues**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Supply side economic policy is based on

a. the Fed.  
b. business regulation.   
c. business tax cuts.  
d. government spending programs.  
e. all of the above.

*The correct answer is “c.” Supply side economic policy seeks to stimulate the economy through action aimed at stimulating production (supply). This policy includes tax cuts for business and high-income individuals. The assumption is that, if they have more money on hand (as they would if their taxes are cut), they will invest some of that money in production. Business regulation (option “b”) is not part of supply side economics, nor is government spending (option “d”), which is instead a component of demand side economic policy. The Fed (option “a”) is involved in monetary policy rather than supply side policy.*

2. Which institutions control fiscal policy?

a. Congress and the president  
b. the Fed and regulatory agencies  
c. the president and the cabinet agencies  
d. Congress and the Fed

*The correct answer is “a.” Fiscal policy is based on government taxing and spending, which are controlled by Congress and the president. The Fed (options “b” and “d”) is involved in monetary policy. Federal agencies do not have authority to enact fiscal policy.*

3. Which approach to stimulating the economy can be changed most quickly?

a. monetary policy  
b. fiscal policy.  
c. regulatory policy  
d. interior policy.

*The correct answer is “a.” Monetary policy includes, for example, adjusting the interest rate that the Fed charges its member banks. If the Fed decides on such an adjustment, it can do so simply by announcing the change. In contrast, change in fiscal policy (option “b”) requires two steps: Congress must enact legislation and the legislation must then be implemented (as in the case of federal construction projects). For their part, regulatory policy and interior policy (options “c” and “d”) are not tools for stimulating the economy.*

4. Which statement best describes quantitative easing?

a. An approach routinely used by central banks to stimulate the economy.  
b. A policy aimed at restricting the money supply.  
c. A financial accounting tool used by government.   
d. An increase in the money supply by creating (printing) more of it.   
e. The point where an economic downturn becomes an economic upturn.

*The correct answer is “d.” Quantitative easing is generally regarded as a monetary policy of last resort—one to be used when other monetary tools can no longer be used effectively. Basically, quantitative easing involves increasing the money supply through the process of creating (printing) money and inserting it in the economy by, for example, providing it to financial institutions.*

**Short Answer**

Discuss demand-side economics and supply-side economics as methods of stimulating a weak economy and explain why lawmakers of the two political parties differ in their preference between the two.

***Answer:*** *Demand-side economics calls for government to increase its spending during an economic downturn. By doing so, government puts money into consumers’ hands, which increases demand (consumer spending), resulting in job growth and increased production.*

*In contrast, supply-side economics centers on tax cuts for business and upper-income taxpayers. The logic is that, if business and the wealthy have more money at their disposal, they will invest some of it in production—the supply side of the economic equation. Increased production will require business to hire more workers. Their pay will then feed into the economy, stimulating further production and hiring.*

*Whether on the demand-side or supply-side, these policies require action by Congress and the president’s signature to become law.*

*Democratic lawmakers have typically preferred demand-side policies because the increase in government spending can be targeted at those at the lower end of the economic ladder—for example, providing unemployment benefits and government-funded jobs (e.g., construction projects) for the jobless. Lower-income individuals and the economically vulnerable tend to vote Democratic.*

*Republican lawmakers typically prefer supply-side policy. It fits their small-government philosophy because tax cuts are implemented through the tax code and don’t require new federal programs. Moreover, tax cuts for business firms and upper incomes go to those who typically side with the Republican Party.*

**Short Answer**

How can the tools of monetary policy be used as a means of stimulating the economy?

***Answer:*** *To deal with an economic downturn, the Fed typically employs a combination of three tools to increase the money supply. One thing the Fed can do is to lower the interest rate it charges member banks when they borrow from it. The lower the rate they pay for their loans, the lower the interest rate they can offer their customers. Cheaper rates stimulate borrowing, which pumps money into the economy—that is, it increases the money supply.*

*To deal with an economic downturn, the Fed can also lower the reserve rate (the percentage of their assets that member banks are required to keep on deposit). When the Fed lowers the rate, member banks can loan out more of their assets to customers, thereby putting more money into the economy, helping to stimulate it.*

*Third, the Fed can buy securities, which is a catch-all term for many kinds of investments—bonds, notes, Treasury bills, etc. When it buys a security, the Fed gives money to the seller, which the seller in turn can spend or invest, helping to stimulate the economy.*

*There is a fourth tool available to the Fed, quantitative easing, although it is regarded as a tool of last resort rather than one to be used routinely. Basically, quantitative easing involves increasing the money supply through the process of creating (printing) money and inserting it in the economy by, for example, providing it to financial institutions.*

**21st SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY   
Welfare & Income Issues**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which statement about poverty in America is true?

a. The U.S. has less poverty than do most Western democracies.  
b. The U.S. has a higher rate of child poverty than do most Western democracies.  
c. Poverty in the U.S. is highest among working-class whites.  
s. Men are more likely than women to live in poverty.

*The correct answer is “b.” The United States has a higher rate of poverty, including child poverty, than most Western democracies. The rate of U.S. poverty is higher among minority group members than white Americans and higher among women than men.*

2. America’s social welfare system includes both social insurance programs and public assistance programs. Which statement about these programs is not true?

a. Eligibility for social insurance benefits is based on payroll taxes that individuals pay during their working years.  
b. Eligibility for public assistance benefits is based on a means test (that is, individuals must prove their income is low enough to qualify for the benefit).  
c. The American public has a more favorable opinion of social insurance programs than of public assistance programs.  
d. The cost to administer public assistance programs is higher than the cost to administer social insurance programs.  
e. Democratic lawmakers and Republican lawmakers differ more in their support for social insurance programs than they do in their support for public assistance programs.

*The correct answer is “e.” Although both social insurance and public assistance programs are subject to partisan dispute, the dispute is greater for public assistance programs. Democratic lawmakers are substantially more supportive of such programs than are Republican lawmakers, many of whom believe such programs discourage people from finding jobs and cost too much. Public assistance programs are means tested (therefore “b” is true) while social insurance programs are funded through special payroll taxes (therefore “a” is true). The fact that public assistance programs are means tested (applicants’ eligibility must be checked and regularly monitored) makes them more administratively costly than social insurance programs (therefore “d” is true). Finally, because individuals must pay a special payroll tax to achieve eligibility for social insurance benefits, there is a widespread perception such benefits are “earned,” which leads them to have widespread public support; in contrast, public assistance benefits are paid from general tax revenues and are seen by some Americans as “handouts,” which weakens their level of public support.*

3. After World War II and through the end of the 1960s, the income of the average American increased substantially. Which of the following is not among the reasons?

a. G.I. Bill  
b. labor union membership  
c. the high tax rate on upper-income individuals.  
d. labor policy, including the minimum wage and collective bargaining  
e. the strength of the U.S. manufacturing sector

*The correct answer is “c.” While it’s true that there was a high tax rate on upper-income individuals during this period, it was not the reason why average incomes rose substantially during this period. All the other factors—the G.I. Bill, union membership, labor policy, and a strong manufacturing sector—contributed to the income growth.*

4. Which statement best describes the pattern of income growth in the United States since the 1970s?

a. a sharp rise in income among those with top incomes and stagnate income among those with middle and lower incomes  
b. a sharp rise in income among those with top and middle incomes and stagnate income among those with lower incomes  
c. slow income growth in all income categories  
d. moderate income growth in all income categories  
e. substantial income growth in all income categories

*The correct answer is “a.” Since the 1970s, the United States has seen a widening income gap—those at the top of the income ladder have seen their incomes rise sharply while those in the middle and lower income groups have seen their incomes stagnate.*

**Short Answer**

How has U.S. social welfare policy been influenced by Americans’ belief in individualism and the nation’s federal system of government?

***Answer:*** *The U.S. social welfare system includes social insurance programs and public assistance programs, both of which have been shaped by Americans’ belief in individualism.*

*Social insurance programs are financed by through special payroll taxes on workers, who acquire eligibility for the benefits by paying these taxes. Social security is an example. Workers who have paid social security taxes for a sufficient period of time receive social security benefits when they reach retirement age. Those who did not pay such taxes, or didn’t do so for the prescribed period of time, are ineligible for retirement benefits. In other words, the benefits go only to those who through their individual efforts “earned” the benefits—a reflection of America’s culture of individualism.*

*Individualism has affected the shape of public assistance programs in a different way. Such programs are funded through general taxation and eligibility is limited to those who can demonstrate that they are unable to fully take care of their economic needs. Such benefits are means tested, meaning that recipients must prove they are poor or incapacitated. The assumption underlying such programs is that individuals should be self-reliant. They have a responsibility for their own care (individualism) and are eligible for public assistance only if they can demonstrate they are unable to do so.*

*Traditionally, public assistance was the responsibility of state governments. During the Great Depression, when the state governments were too broke to meet that need, the federal government stepped in with social insurance (for example, social security) and public assistance (for example, aid for families with dependent children) programs.*

*Social insurance programs, such as social security and Medicare, are federal programs in their entirety. The state governments are not involved. On the other hand, public assistance programs are joint federal and state programs. The federal government provides much of the money in the form of grants-in-aid to the states but the states administer the programs directly and have some control over eligibility criteria and benefit levels. For example, TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) is administered by the states. They screen applicants for their eligibility and, within limits, determine how much financial support needy families will receive each month. The amount varies widely, with some states providing $300 or less each month and some states providing $600 or more.*

**Short Answer**

Since the 1970s the income of most Americans has stagnated while that of top earners has shot up, resulting in a high level of income inequality. What explains these two developments

***Answer:*** *More wealth at the top and stagnation in the middle and low income categories owe to largely different factors. Public policies in recent decades have contributed significantly to wealth accumulation at the top of the income ladder. After the 1970s, the tax rates on upper incomes were cut sharply. Although tax rates were also reduced for other income levels, the cuts were smaller and less meaningful—a small tax cut on a small amount of income is a small cut in absolute terms. In contrast, a large cut on a large amount of income can be a huge cut in absolute terms. Other factors have also contributed to the growth of disposable income at the top of the income ladder but, as a comparison of U.S. high earners with those in Europe reveals, U.S. high earners have done especially well in recent decades. The difference is that the tax rate on high incomes is substantially lower in the United States than in Europe.*

*Income stagnation among middle- and lower-income earners owes largely to changes in the economy. The strong manufacturing sector that anchored the U.S. economy after World War II was the source of high-paying factory jobs. Moreover, many of these workers were union members; their pay was substantially higher than that of their non-union counterparts. Public policies such as the minimum wage also served ordinary workers’ income needs.*

*America’s manufacturing sector weakened substantially when countries like Germany and Japan rebuilt their economies after World War II. As global competition intensified, many U.S. factory jobs were lost. Many of the newer jobs were in the service sector, where wages on average are lower and where union membership is less common. Meanwhile, the purchasing power of the minimum wage was reduced by inflation. Such factors contributed to income stagnation for many Americans.*

*Although income stagnation for the most part is not a direct result of public policy, it is the case that policymakers have not enacted that could have stimulated income growth. Such policies would include a significant increase in the minimum wage, reductions in the cost of college, and public works projects aimed at repairing the country’s infrastructure—its roadways, bridges, schools, etc.*

**22nd SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY   
Regulatory Issues**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Assume that the top executives of the major airlines meet and agree to reduce the number of flights as a means of reducing the supply of available seats, thereby allowing them to charge higher fares for those seats. What type of regulatory problem does this example most clearly represent?

a. restraint of trade  
b. inequity  
c. moral hazard  
d. negative externalities

*The correct answer is “a.” Restraint of trade refers to business practices designed to eliminate, restrict, or otherwise manipulate competition in order to charge artificially high prices. A coordinated effort by airlines to reduce the number of flights is an example. By reducing the number of seats, airlines would be manipulating the supply of seats in a way that would allow them to charge higher prices. People who need to travel by air would have little choice but to pay the higher fare.*

2. For years, the firms that make cigarettes marketed their product without telling cigarette users of the health hazards associated with smoking even though the firms’ research studies indicated that smoking is hazardous. What type of regulatory problem does this example most clearly represent?

a. restraint of trade  
b. inequity  
c. moral hazard  
d. negative externalities

*The correct answer is “b.” Economic equity refers to the situation in which outcome of economic transaction is fair to each party—for instance, if the seller knows a product is defective, the buyer should be told of the defect. Inequity results when one party knowing withholds information that could affect the other party’s willingness to engage in the transaction. The knowing sale of an unsafe or defective item—as in the case of cigarettes—would be an inequitable transaction unless the buyer was informed of the problem.*

3. Assume that a firm allows the byproduct of its production process to seep into a nearby stream, thereby polluting its water. What type of regulatory problem does this example most clearly represent?

a. restraint of trade  
b. inequity  
c. moral hazard  
d. negative externalities

*The correct answer is “d.” A negative externality (also called a spillover effect) results when firms or consumers fail to pay the full cost of producing a good or service. Production that results in air or water pollution is an example. The pollution is a result of the production process but the cost, rather than being borne directly by the producer or those that consume the product, is borne by those affected by the pollution.*

4. Assume that some automobile owners take risks while driving, knowing that the cost of that risk taking, if it results in an accident, will be borne by the insurance company. What type of regulatory problem does this example most clearly represent?

a. restraint of trade  
b. inequity  
c. moral hazard  
d. negative externalities

*The correct answer is “c.” In economics, moral hazard occurs when a party takes a risk knowing that the cost of that risk will be borne by another party if the situation turns out badly. Risky driving is an example. Insurance companies enter into transactions (sell insurance) to drivers on the assumption that drivers will behave responsibly. If a driver then decides to take unnecessary risks, and gets into an accident with another car, the cost is borne not by the risk-taker, the driver, but by the insurance company.*

**Short Answer**

In the early 1970s, Congress enacted clean air and clean water legislation that had backing from both Republican and Democratic lawmakers. In more recent years, Congress has deadlocked over legislation aimed at major reduction in carbon emissions as a means of dealing with climate change. What are some of the reasons for the difference?

***Answer:*** *One reason is party polarization. The parties are now so far apart, with so few lawmakers in the middle, that it’s hard for them to come together to settle their differences on difficult issues. That was not the situation in the 1970s. Lawmakers then were more likely to try to find common ground, engaging in the compromises that are often necessarily to pass legislation.*

*Another reason is that climate change touches multiple sectors of the economy. Whereas industrial pollution of air and water was largely an issue of particular industries, regulation of carbon emissions would affect the transportation sector, the energy sector, the housing sector, and many others. Policy disputes are invariably harder to resolve when a large number of conflicting interests are involved.*

*Another reason is that climate change is a global problem. No country by itself can fix the problem. And a country that takes on the issue, if others are not, places itself at a competitive disadvantage in global trade because of the added cost to its production. In contrast, the air and water pollution problems that were addressed in the 1970s were geographically limited. Legislation aimed at cleaning up or reducing the pollution directly benefitted those involved, giving lawmakers an incentive to address the problem.*

*Yet another reason is that climate change is hard to “see,” making it easy to deny the existence of the problem or its magnitude. That was much less true of the air and water pollution problem of the early 1970s. The air in some cities was so polluted that the sky had a yellow tint, and some bodies of water were so polluted that they were discolored or stank. Lawmakers could have chosen not to deal with the problem but it was hard for them to deny what they could see with their own eyes.*

**Short Answer**

From the perspective of an elected official, policies can be regarded as having a concentrated benefit (a benefit aimed at helping a particular group or interest) or a diffuse benefit (a benefit that is spread across the entire public). Policies can also be regarded as having a concentrated cost (a cost imposed on a specific interest) or a diffuse cost (a cost that is spread across the entire taxpaying public).

How do these distinctions help explain the reluctance of lawmakers to adopt policies that would reduce carbon emissions? How do they help explain their preference for policies that promote clean energy, such as subsidies for solar panels?

***Answer:*** *In general, lawmakers prefer policies that involve a concentrated benefit and a diffuse cost. Such policies attract support from the interest or interests getting the benefit while not angering other interests because the costs are spread so widely that they’re barely noticeable.*

*That situation typifies some energy policies, such as subsidies for those who install solar panels or wind turbines. They get the benefit (the subsidy) and are grateful for it, perhaps grateful enough to back a supportive lawmaker in the next election. Meanwhile, the costs of the subsidy are spread across the taxpaying public and don’t create much risk of a backlash from taxpayers.*

*In contrast, policies that would reduce carbon emissions pose a different benefit-cost situation. The benefit of reduced carbon emissions is diffuse. Most people would not recognize any difference in their air or local climate as a result of such a policy. They might benefit in the long run from such a policy but the short-run effect would not be tangible. On the other hand, those who would be required to reduce their carbon emissions—such as coal-fired power plant operators or auto manufacturers—would recognize the cost to them of the policy. They would have to make expensive adjustments in their production process. They could be expected to fight against such a policy and might campaign against lawmakers who promote such a policy. A policy that imposes a concentrated cost and a diffuse benefit is one that some lawmakers are reluctant to back. They don’t get much credit for backing it and risk a loss of support from doing so.*

**23TH SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY  
Foreign Policy**

**Multiple Choice**

1. Which factor contributed to the emergence of the United States after World War II as easily the world’s largest exporter?

a. Global investments by U.S. business firms  
 b. Marshall Plan  
 c. War damage suffered by other industrialized nations.  
 d. All of the above

*The correct answer is “d.” The emergence of the United States as the largest exporter was due to several factors, including all those listed. Whereas European and Japanese manufacturing was devastated by World War II, America’s industrial capacity was largely intact when the war ended. As a result, the United States was producing goods that other nations needed and wanted. For its part, the Marshall Plan, through which the United States provided money for rebuilding Europe, helped European economies recover and, as they did, so did their demand for American-made goods. Global investments by U.S. firms also contributed. Their investments gave the U.S. greater access to the raw materials needed for its factories while also creating overseas markets for U.S.-made goods.*

2. Which statement is true of U.S. military policy in the decades after World War II?

a. The United States engaged in a policy of “containment” toward the Soviet Union, seeking through military and economic action to contain its global influence.  
b. The war in Vietnam revealed the limits of U.S. military power, leading policymakers to change their approach to the Soviet Union and China.  
c. Since World War II, the United States has maintained a continuously large military establishment, such that its military expenditures far exceed those of any other nation.  
d. All of the above

*The correct answer is “d.” After World War II, the United States did not fully demobilize its military forces, instead maintaining a large force, including overseas bases. After the War, the United States also sought to combat Soviet communism by containing it—seeking to prevent its spread. The result was the Cold War. Finally, America’s defeat in Vietnam prompted policymakers to rethink the post-war strategy. President Nixon’s trips to the Soviet Union and China were part of that change. The goal was to reduce the level of superpower conflict (through, for example, agreements between the U.S. and the Soviet Union to reduce the number of nuclear weapons held by each side).*

3. Which of the following statements about free trade agreements is not true?

a. Republican lawmakers tend to be more supportive of free trade agreements than Democratic lawmakers.  
b. Most economists are advocates of free trade agreements.  
c. U.S.-based multinational corporations tend to be advocates of free trade agreements.  
d. Labor unions tend to be advocates of free trade agreements.  
e. Presidents typically have been advocates of free trade agreements.

*The correct answer is “d.” Labor unions have opposed many free trade policies on grounds that they hurt American workers—that free trade results in job loss to trading partners that have lower wage rates. Multinationals and Republican lawmakers (because of their pro-business orientation) tend to support free trade—free trade provides new markets for business firms. Presidents have also tended to support free trade because of their national policy perspective—free trade typically results in a net gain for the national economy. That net gain is also what inclines most economists to advocate for free trade*.

4. Which statement about China’s emerging power is not true?

a. China has become the world’s largest exporter of manufactured goods.  
b. China has invested heavily in other parts of the world as a means of extending its economic and political influence.  
c. China has been held back in its ambitions by being denied admission to the UN Security Council, the WTO, and other international institutions.  
d. China is spending heavily to modernize and enlarge its navy.  
e. All of the above are true.

*The correct answer is “c.” As a way to integrate China in the global community, other nations have worked to bring it into the leading international institutions, including granting it a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and membership in the WTO (World Trade Organization).*

**Short Answer**

Explain the process by which the United States went from being a net exporting country after World War II to the net importing country that it is today.

***Answer.*** *After World War II, the United States had a huge competitive advantage over other advanced industrialized nations. Its manufacturing sector had grown significantly during the war and was intact when the war ended, unlike those of Germany, Japan, and many other industrialized countries. Their factories had been largely destroyed by the war. As a result, the United States had manufactured goods to sell and other countries were in need of imported goods. However, as Germany, Japan, and other countries gradually rebuilt their manufacturing sectors, their firms began to compete with U.S. firms. Often, they had a competitive advantage—their wage rates were lower than those of the United States. By the end of the 1970s, the United States was a net importer—buying more goods from abroad than it was selling abroad, a tendency that has continued ever since. As a result of their competitive advantage and for other reasons, overseas manufacturers have captured an ever larger share of the global market, resulting in a decline in the American manufacturing sector.*

**Short Answer**

Distinguish between protectionism and free trade. Which interests in the United States tend to favor protectionism? Which favor free trade?

***Answer.*** *Protectionism is the idea that domestic firms should be protected from their foreign competitors. The classic protectionist measure is a tariff (tax) on a particular import, which raises the market price of the foreign-made product, thereby giving domestic producers of the same product a competitive advantage. In contrast, free trade holds that barriers to international trade should be kept to a minimum. Proponents of free trade claim that the long term economic interests of all countries are advanced when tariffs and other trade barriers are kept to a minimum.*

*Economic studies indicate that, although free trade is generally a net benefit to the U.S. economy, the costs and benefits are not equally distributed. Consumers benefit from free trade—products made in low-wage countries can be purchased for less than comparable products produced in the United States. Business also benefits—free trade opens up new markets to U.S. firms. The costs are borne largely by labor—U.S. jobs can be lost to foreign competitors.*

*The political lineup follows predictably from these tendencies. Labor unions have opposed many free trade policies on grounds that they hurt American workers—that free trade results in job loss to low-wage trading partners. Because they are aligned with labor, Democratic lawmakers tend also to be wary of free trade. Democratic lawmakers are also influenced by the stance of environmental groups, which tend to oppose free trade agreements because such agreements typically result in a shift of manufacturing to low-wage countries that also have weaker environmental regulations.*

*On the other hand, multinational firms and Republican lawmakers (because of their pro-business orientation) have tended to support free trade. An exception for Republican lawmakers is when a major producer within their state or district will be hurt by free trade; in that case, they tend toward protectionism. In general, presidents have been supporters of free trade because of their national policy perspective—free trade usually results in a net gain for the national economy. Donald Trump is an exception. One of his first actions as president was to withdraw the United States from free trade agreements that had not yet been instituted. It’s possible that Trump’s opposition could also prompt increased resistance among Republican lawmakers to free trade. If that should occur, the likelihood that the United States would enter into major multi-nation free trade agreements in the foreseeable future would diminish sharply.*

**24th SESSION**

**PUBLIC POLICY   
Review Session**

**Multiple Choice**

1. In comparison with a parliamentary system, the U.S. system of divided powers tends to do all of the following except:

a. heighten the power of interest groups.  
 b. create conditions that can result in legislative deadlock.  
 c. make it easier for an electoral majority to exert legislative influence.  
 d. distribute power among a larger number of elected officials.  
 e. All of the above are true.

*The correct answer is c. Relative to a parliamentary system, America’s system of divided power makes it harder for an electoral majority to exert legislative influence. In a parliamentary system, the voters choose the parliamentary majority, which then can decide policy. In the American system, the House, Senate, and president are separately elected and are not always controlled by the same party. Thus, the influence of the voters on legislative action is less direct and less certain in the America’s system of divided control than in a parliamentary system. On the other hand, America’s system of divided powers heightens the power of interest groups (more points of access through which they can exert influence), can result in legislative deadlock (particularly when control of the House, Senate, and presidency is split between the parties) and distributes power among a larger number of election officials (in a parliamentary system power is concentrated in the hands of the relatively few officials in the top leadership of the parliament).*

2. Over the course of U.S. history, the presidency has gained power relative to Congress. A reason for the trend is the:

a. increased complexity of policy issues.  
 b. growth in the size of the bureaucracy.  
 c. the speed with which threats from abroad can materialize.  
 d. All of the above.

*The correct answer is d. While Congress is a fragmented institution, the president has full executive authority under the Constitution. This feature enables the president to act more quickly and decisively than Congress, a feature that has worked to the president’s advantage as threats from abroad have materialized more quickly and more often require a speedy response. Growth in the bureaucracy has also served to strengthen the presidency. Congress is not organized to oversee the bureaucracy on a continuing basis. The president through the Executive Office of the President and agency appointees is better organized for that purpose. Finally, policy complexity has worked to presidents’ advantage; relative to Congress, the president has greater access to the expert knowledge that is required when addressing complex policy issues.*

3. Which of the following is not an example of the “power of ideas”?

a. The application of fiscal policy as a means of managing the economy.  
b. The application of monetary policy as a means of managing the economy.  
c. The requirement that recipients of social welfare benefits prove that they are too poor to meet their economic needs.  
d. The many political movements in American history that have sought to make the United States a more equal society.  
e. All of the above are examples of the power of ideas.

*The correct answer is e. Fiscal policy and monetary policy were developed as ideas and then instituted as means of managing the economy. Economist John Maynard Keynes was the main force in developing fiscal policy theory and economist Milton Friedman was the main thinker behind monetary policy theory. Options c and d reflect the power of cultural beliefs that date to the nation’s founding. Individualism, as an idea, holds that people should be self-reliant. It’s an idea that has affected the nation’s social welfare policies. People are expected to take care of their own needs with government stepping in only if they can demonstrate they need help. For its part, equality as an idea has helped fuel many of America’s major political movements, including the abolitionist movement, the women’s suffrage movement, the black civil rights movement, and the gay rights movement.*

4. The budgetary process includes several steps. Here are four of them: 1) The federal agencies work up their budgets in detail; 2) OMB works up agency guidelines including a budget ceiling for each agency; 3) The president combines the agency budgets into the Executive Budget; and 4) Congress reviews, alters, and votes on the agency budgets. In what order do these steps occur?

a. 1,2,3,4  
 b. 2,1,3,4  
 c. 1,3,2,4  
 d. 2,3,1,4

*The correct answer is “b.” The budgetary process begins when OMB, at the president’s direction, develops guidelines and a budget ceiling for each agency. The agencies then work up their budgets within these limits. Once the agencies have finished their work, OMB reviews what they have done and combines their budgets into the Executive Budget that the president submits to Congress. At that point, Congress begins its work on the budget.*

**Short Answer**

“Money is power” in the American system. Explain some of the ways that money is used to exert influence and who benefits as a result.

***Answer.*** *The influence of money in politics works primarily through lobbying and elections. The major beneficiary is business interests. Business firms and trade associations account for roughly two-thirds of all groups registered to lobby in Washington, D.C. And when it comes to spending, their predominance is even clearer. Nearly all of the top spenders on lobbying are business firms and trade associations. They also have a large role in campaign spending. One indicator is the number of PACs—Political Action Committees. PACs collect voluntary contributions and then donate them to candidates. Nearly two-thirds of all PACs are associated with corporations or trade associations. Such PACs are also the heaviest spenders. Nearly all of the top PAC spenders are business related. Super PACs tell pretty much the same story. Citizens United, the Supreme Court’s 2010 ruling on campaign finance laws, opened the door to unlimited campaign spending by corporations, unions, and independent expenditure groups, provided they do not coordinate their spending with that of their preferred candidate. Super PACS are the outlet for multi-million dollar contributors, nearly all of whom made their money in business and contribute to candidates who promise to promote business interests.*

**Short Answer**  
  
Citizens have several ways in which they exert power. Describe some of them.

***Answer.*** *The power of ordinary citizens is less that of influence over a particular policy decision than of influence over the general direction of government policy. One example is political movements, such as the civil rights and women’s rights movement. Such movements are driven, not by wealthy elites or business lobbies, but by ordinary people seeking a fair shake. And when they succeed, they bring about substantial changes in society and policy. Public opinion also affects policy, particularly in those cases where it’s intense and unmistakable, as in support for social security. The power of people is also apparent when, as in the 2010 midterm elections, they handed Republicans a huge victory, thereby ending the Democrats’ control of both the presidency and Congress—a development that changed the national policy agenda. Citizens’ power can also be seen in party realignments, which involve large and permanent changes in the party coalitions and platforms, as in the case of the New Deal realignment of the 1930s. It is the movement of voter support between the parties that fuels a realignment and it is the continuing attachment of these voters to the party of their choice that sustains a realignment. A final example of the power of people is constituency influence in Congress. Members of Congress are inordinately attentive to constituency opinion, given the fact that they depend on their constituents for reelection.*