I. THE CONSTITUTION AND FEDERALISM

1. MAJORITY RULE
   A fundamental democratic principle requiring that the
   majority’s view be respected. Nonetheless, the Constitution
   originally contained a number of provisions designed to limit
   majority rule, including the electoral college, life tenure for
   Supreme Court justices, and the selection of senators by state
   legislators.

2. CHECKS AND BALANCES
   System in which each branch of government can limit the
   power of the other two branches. For example, the Senate
   has the power to approve or reject presidential appointments
   to the Supreme Court.

3. UNITARY SYSTEM
   System of government in which all power is invested in a
   central government.

4. FEDERALISM
   A system of government in which power is divided by a
   written constitution between a central government and
   regional governments. As a result, two or more levels of
   government have formal authority over the same geographic
   area and people.

5. EXPRESSED POWERS
   Powers specifically granted to the federal government by the
   Constitution. For example, the Constitution gives Congress
   the power to coin money, impose taxes, and regulate
   interstate commerce. Expressed powers are also called
   enumerated powers.
6. IMPLIED POWERS
   Powers of the federal government that go beyond those enumerated in the Constitution. Implied powers are derived from the elastic or necessary and proper clause.

7. RESERVED POWERS
   Powers not specifically granted to the national government or denied to the states. Reserved powers are held by the states through the Tenth Amendment.

8. COOPERATIVE FEDERALISM
   Situations in which the national and state governments work together to complete projects. Also called fiscal federalism.

9. CATEGORICAL GRANT
   Funds provided for a specific and clearly defined purpose.

10. BLOCK GRANT
    Funds granted to the states for a broadly defined purpose. Because block grants shift resources from the federal government to the states, they contribute to the growing number of state and local government employees.

11. MANDATES
    Rules telling states what they must do to comply with federal guidelines. Unfunded mandates require state and local governments to provide services or comply with regulations without the provision of funds.

12. DEVOLUTION
    A movement to transfer the responsibilities of governing from the federal government to state and local governments.

II. POLITICAL BELIEFS, PUBLIC OPINION, AND VOTING

13. POLITICAL CULTURE
    A set of widely shared political beliefs and values. America’s political culture is characterized by strong support for individual liberty, political equality, legal equality, the rule of law, and limited government.

14. POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION
    The process by which political values are formed and passed from one generation to the next. The family is the most important agent of political socialization.
Key Terms

15. PUBLIC OPINION
   Attitudes about institutions, leaders, political issues, and events.

16. POLITICAL IDEOLOGY
   A cohesive set of beliefs about politics, public policy, and the role of government.

17. POLITICAL EFFICACY
   The belief that one’s political participation makes a difference.

18. SPLIT-TICKET VOTING
   Voting for candidates of different parties for different offices in the same election. Recent elections have witnessed a significant increase in split-ticket voting as the number of voters who identify themselves as independents increases.

III. POLITICAL PARTIES, INTEREST GROUPS, AND MASS MEDIA

19. POLITICAL PARTY
   A group of citizens who organize to win elections, hold public offices, operate governments and determine public policy.

20. PLURALITY ELECTION
   The winning candidate is the person who receives more votes than anyone else, but less than half the total.

21. SINGLE-MEMBER DISTRICT
   An electoral district from which one person is chosen by the voters for each elected office. This type of electoral system typically leads to legislatures dominated by two political parties.

22. PARTY ERA
   An historical period dominated by one political party.

23. CRITICAL ELECTION
   An election when significant groups of voters change their traditional patterns of party loyalty.

24. PARTY REALIGNMENT
   The majority party is displaced by the minority party, thus ushering in a new party era. For example, in 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) led the New Deal coalition of
blue-collar workers, racial minorities, Southerners, and farm laborers to a sweeping electoral victory.

25. DIVIDED GOVERNMENT
A government in which one party controls the presidency while another party controls Congress. The pattern of divided government has dominated U.S. politics since the early 1970s.

26. INTEREST GROUP
An organization of people whose members share views on specific interests and attempt to influence public policy to their benefit. Unlike political parties, interest groups do not elect people to office.

27. POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)
A committee formed by business, labor, or other interest groups to raise money and make contributions to the campaigns of political candidates whom they support.

28. FREE RIDERS
People who benefit from an interest group without making any contributions. Labor unions and public interest groups often have a free-rider problem because people can benefit from the group’s activities without joining.

29. POWER ELITE THEORY
The theory that a small number of very wealthy individuals, powerful corporate interest groups, and large financial institutions dominate key policy areas.

30. PLURALIST THEORY
The theory that many interest groups compete for power in a large number of policy areas.

31. HYPERPLURALIST THEORY
The theory that government policy is weakened and often contradictory because there are so many competing interest groups.

32. MASS MEDIA
Means of communication such as newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet that can reach large, widely dispersed audiences.
33. **LINKAGE INSTITUTIONS**
   Institutions that connect citizens to government. The mass media, interest groups, and political parties are the three main linkage institutions.

34. **HORSE-RACE JOURNALISM**
   The tendency of the media to cover campaigns by emphasizing how candidates stand in the polls instead of where they stand on the issues.

### III. **CONGRESS**

35. **CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING**
   The reallocation of the number of representatives each state has in the House of Representatives.

36. **GERRYMANDERING**
   The legislative process by which the majority party in each state legislature redraws congressional districts to ensure the maximum number of seats for its candidates.

37. **INCUMBENT**
   An officeholder who is seeking reelection. Incumbency is the single most important factor in determining the outcome of congressional elections.

38. **FRANKING PRIVILEGE**
   The right of members of Congress to mail newsletters to their constituents at the government’s expense.

39. **STANDING COMMITTEES**
   Permanent subject-matter congressional committees that handle legislation and oversee the bureaucracy.

40. **CONFERENCE COMMITTEES**
   Temporary bodies that are formed to resolve differences between House and Senate versions of a bill.

41. **HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE**
   The House Rules Committee sets the guidelines for floor debate. It gives each bill a rule that places the bill on the legislative calendar, limits time for debate, and determines the type of amendments that will be allowed.
42. HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
   House committee that handles tax bills.
43. SENIORITY
   Unwritten rule in both houses of Congress reserving committee chairs to members of the committee with the longest records of continuous service.
44. FILIBUSTER
   A way of delaying or preventing action on a bill by using long speeches and unlimited debate to “talk a bill to death.”
45. CLOTURE
   A Senate motion to end a filibuster. Cloture requires a three-fifths vote.
46. LOGROLLING
   Tactic of mutual aid and vote trading among legislators.
47. OVERSIGHT
   Congressional review of the activities of an executive agency, department, or office.
48. DELEGATE ROLE OF REPRESENTATION
   When members of Congress cast votes based on the wishes of their constituents.

II. PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, THE PRESIDENCY, AND THE BUREAUCRACY

49. CLOSED PRIMARY
   A primary in which voters are required to identify a party preference before the election and are not allowed to split their ticket.
50. FRONTLOADING
   The recent pattern of states holding primaries early in order to maximize their media attention and political influence. Three-fourths of the presidential primaries are now held between February and mid-March.
51. SOFT MONEY
   Contributions to political parties for party-building activities. Soft money contributions are used to circumvent limits on hard money.
52. 527 GROUP
A tax-exempt organization created to influence the political process; 527 groups are not regulated by the Federal Election Commission because they do not coordinate their activities with a candidate or party.

53. VETO
The president's constitutional power to reject a bill passed by Congress. Congress may override the veto with a two-thirds vote in each chamber.

54. LINE-ITEM VETO
The power to veto specific dollar amounts or line items from major congressional spending bills. The Supreme Court struck down the line-item veto as an unconstitutional expansion of the president's veto power.

55. EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT
A pact between the president and a head of a foreign state. Executive agreements do not have to be approved by the Senate. However, unlike treaties, executive agreements are not part of U.S. law and are not binding on future presidents.

56. EXECUTIVE PRIVILEGE
The president's power to refuse to disclose confidential information. In United States v. Nixon (1974), the Supreme Court ruled that there is no constitutional guarantee of unqualified executive privilege.

57. LAME-DUCK PERIOD
The period of time in which the president's term is about to come to an end. Presidents typically have less influence during a lame-duck period.

58. BUREAUCRACY
A large, complex organization of appointed officials.

59. EXECUTIVE ORDER
A directive, order, or regulation issued by the president. Executive orders are based on constitutional or statutory authority and have the force of law.

60. IRON TRIANGLE
An alliance among an administrative agency, an interest group, and a congressional committee. Each member of the iron triangle provides key services, information, or policy for the others.
61. ISSUE NETWORK
A network that includes policy experts, media pundits, congressional staff members, and interest groups who regularly debate an issue.

62. POLICY AGENDA
A set of issues and problems that policy makers consider important. The mass media play an important role in influencing the issues which receive public attention.

III. THE SUPREME COURT

63. APPELLATE JURISDICTION
The authority of a court to hear an appeal from a lower court.

64. SENATORIAL COURTESY
An unwritten tradition whereby the Senate will not confirm nominations for lower court positions that are opposed by a senator of the president’s own party from the state in which the nominee is to serve.

65. WRIT OF CERTIORARI
An order by the Supreme Court directing a lower court to send up the record in a given case for its review.

66. RULE OF FOUR
The Supreme Court will hear a case if four justices agree to do so.

67. SOLICITOR GENERAL
The solicitor general is responsible for handling all appeals on behalf of the United States government to the Supreme Court.

68. AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF
A friend of the court brief filed by an interest group or interested party to influence a Supreme Court decision.

69. STARE DECISIS
Stare decisis is a Latin phrase meaning “let the decision stand.” The vast majority of Supreme Court decisions are based on precedents established in earlier cases.

70. JUDICIAL RESTRAINT
Philosophy that the Supreme Court should use precedent and the Framers’ original intent to decide cases.
71. JUDICIAL ACTIVISM
   Philosophy that the Supreme Court must correct injustices when other branches of government or the states refuse to do so.

VII. THE FEDERAL BUDGET

72. MONETARY POLICY
   Monetary policy involves regulating the money supply, controlling inflation, and adjusting interest rates. Monetary policy is controlled by the Federal Reserve Board.

73. FISCAL POLICY
   Raising and lowering taxes and government spending programs. Fiscal policy is controlled by the executive and legislative branches.

74. ENTITLEMENT PROGRAM
   A government-sponsored program that provides mandated benefits to those who meet eligibility requirements. Social Security and Medicare are the government’s largest entitlement programs.

75. OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB)
   The OMB is responsible for preparing the budget that the president submits to Congress.

VIII. CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

76. CIVIL LIBERTIES
   Legal and constitutional rights that protect individuals from arbitrary acts of government. Civil liberties include freedom of speech and guarantees of a fair trial.

77. CIVIL RIGHTS
   Policies designed to protect people against arbitrary or discriminatory treatment by government officials or individuals. Civil rights include laws prohibiting racial and gender discrimination.

78. SELECTIVE INCORPORATION
   The case-by-case process by which liberties listed in the Bill of Rights have been applied to the states using the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.
79. ESTABLISHMENT CLAUSE
A provision of the First Amendment that prohibits Congress from establishing an official government-sponsored religion.

80. FREE EXERCISE CLAUSE
A provision of the First Amendment that guarantees each person the right to believe what he or she wants. However, a religion cannot make an act legal that would otherwise be illegal.

81. CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER TEST
Judicial interpretation of the First Amendment that government may not ban speech unless it poses an imminent threat to society.

82. WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS
A court order directing that a prisoner be brought before a court and that the court officers show cause why the prisoner should not be released.

83. BILL OF ATTAINDER
A legislative act that provides for the punishment of a person without a court trial.

84. EX POST FACTO LAW
A law applied to an act committed before the law was enacted.

85. EXCLUSIONARY RULE
Supreme Court guideline that prohibits evidence obtained by illegal searches or seizures from being admitted in court.

86. MIRANDA WARNINGS
Warnings that police must read to suspects prior to questioning that advises them of their rights.

87. STRICT SCRUTINY
Supreme Court rule that classification by race and ethnic background is inherently suspect and must be justified by a "compelling public interest."

88. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
A policy requiring federal agencies, universities, and most employers to take positive steps to remedy the effects of past discrimination.