American Government Final Exam Study Guide

TOPICS COVERED
Unit 1 - Foundations of Government
   Unit 2 - Constitution
   Unit 3 - Legislative Branch
   Unit 4 - Executive Branch
   Unit 5 - Judicial Branch and Citizenship

TEST FORMAT
100 Multiple Choice Questions (Cumulative)

Unit 1 – Foundations of Government + American Beginnings

What is popular sovereignty?
*Rule by the people*

Democracy – basic idea?
*Consent of the governed; for the people by the people*

Social Contract Theory – what did this say?
*Leader has to govern justly, and if not the people can vote him/her out of office*

True or False – the term “suffrage” means to suffer for a great cause. If False, put the correct answer below.
*False. It is the right to vote.*

Federalism – what characterizes this form of government?
*Powers are divided between the Federal and State government*

In general, what does a constitution do for a country?
*It provides the rules for government*

What form of government does the United States have?
*Democracy*

If a country has sovereignty, what does this mean?
*It governs itself*

What does FORCE THEORY state?
*When all the people of an area are brought under the authority of one person or group.*

First battles of the American Revolution were fought where?
*Lexington and Concord*
What were the major contributions of all of the following men?

a. Baron de Montesquieu - Separation of powers

b. Jean Jacque Rousseau - Philosopher.....social contract
c. John Locke - Believed people had the right to life, liberty, and property

Know the BASIC premise/ideas of the following:

a. Magna Carta - Limit the power of the king

b. English Bill of Rights - Set the limits on what a ruler could and could not do.
c. Bill of Rights - First 10 Amendments outlining the basic freedom of American citizens

What is the difference between libel and slander?
Libel is written and slander isn’t (false material, rumor)

Unit 2 - U.S. Constitution

KNOW THESE AMENDMENTS!--See Attached Sheet for Amendments

Bill of Rights

a. 1st
b. 2nd
c. 3rd
d. 4th
e. 5th
f. 6th
g. 7th
h. 8th
i. 9th
j. 10th

Civil War Era
k. 13th
l. 14th
m. 15th

Prohibition
n. 18th

Women’s Rights
p. 19th

Voting Age
q. 26th

Constitutional amendment process – what happens in Congress to allow for this?
They vote on amendments for the states to approve

Three-Fifth’s Compromise (3/5) dealt with what during the Constitutional period?
Slavery; 3/5 of a states slave population

What is a unicameral legislature? Bicameral legislature?
Only 1 chamber; 2 chambers

What is a reserved power, as set forth in the Constitution? What is an enumerated power?
The constitution reserves certain powers strictly to the states; expressed powers of congress
What served as the government during the Revolutionary War?  
*The Continental Congress*

Constitution – “law of the land”, what does this mean?  
*The law in every state*

Plans for the Constitution – New Jersey Plan and the Virginia Plan – what were the major differences of these two plans?  
*Favor small states; Virginia Plan favors larger states*

*Equal one vote for every state, based on population of state*

Constitution – know the topic of each article i.e. Article 1? Article 2? Article 3?  

1) *The Legislative Branch*  
2) *The Executive Branch*  
3) *The Judicial Branch*  
4) *Relations among states*  
5) *The Amending Process*  
6) *National Supremacy*  
7) *Ratification of the constitution*

**Unit 3 – Legislative Branch**

Terms and Qualifications of a Senator? Terms and Qualifications of a Representative?  
*(Senate)* 30 years old, citizen for 9 years  
*(House)* 25 years old, citizen for 7 years

“Necessary and Proper Clause”/Elastic Clause – what does this mean? Purpose?

Who is the President of the Senate?  
*Vice President of the USA*

How is representation determined in the U.S. House of Representatives determined?  
*By population*

How many House of Representatives members are there? How many Senators?  
*House: 435*  
*Senate: 100*

What is the purpose of a tactic called a “filibuster”?  
*To stall the vote on a bill*

What is the main purpose of a Congressional Committee?  
*To represent all the representatives by doing work on specific bills*

How often is a national census taken in this country? What is the census data used in determining’
Know the process of how a bill becomes a law – STUDY THE DIAGRAM!

**Unit 4 – Executive Branch**

Presidential Qualifications - Age/Requirements

*At least 35 years of age*

Who calls a special session of Congress?

President

What group actually ends up elected the President of the United States?

*Electoral College*

What determines how most people end up voting in national elections?

*Who they want to be president*

What are the two major political parties in this country today?

*Republican and Democratic*

Know the seven roles of the President!

1) *Chief of State*
2) *Commander and Chief*
3) *Chief Diplomat*
4) *Chief Executive*
5) *Chief Legislature*
6) *Chief of Party*
7) *Chief Guardian of the Economy*

States with the most representation in the Electoral College? States with the least representation in the Electoral College?

*Florida, California, Texas, New York, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota*

How many electors are there in the Electoral College? What is the number needed to have a majority and win the election?

*538; 270*

What happens if there is a tie between both candidates in the Electoral College?

*Goes to the House*

Presidential Succession – Vice-President, Speaker of the House, President Pro Tempore, Secretary of State

Presidential Powers – Pardon(a person), Amnesty(a group), Reprieve
National Convention – purpose? What is the last thing that is decided at the national convention?

To nominate for president; parties presidential nominee

What is the President’s Cabinet? What role does it serve?

Advisors to the President; Does what the president wants

Unit 5 – Judicial Branch and Citizenship

Head of the Supreme Court?

Chief Justice

Major Court Cases
1) Roe v. Wade: Abortion (Women’s Rights)
2) Marbury v. Madison
3) Miranda v. Arizona

What does “due process” of law mean?

Process that the law outlines as being fair

What is a bench trial?

Trial without a jury

Which amendment will not allow a judge to set bail at an unjust price?

8th

Original and Appellate Jurisdiction – which court has both?

Supreme Court

Justice Decisions – Majority Opinion (winning), Dissenting Opinion (losing), Concurring Opinion (agree with prior opinion but not for the same reason)

Justices – Qualifications/Terms? Who elects them?

Appointed by president for life term, senate elects them

Dual Court System – what does this mean?

State and Federal court system

What is it called when a person voluntarily gives up United States citizenship?

Denaturalization

What group was formally prohibited from immigrating to this country in the late 1800’s?

Chinese

How can a person become a citizen of the United States?

Birth and Naturalization