

Practice Exam #1

1. The Constitution as ratified in 1788 most clearly reflects the framers'
 - a. the idea of direct democracy
 - b. the principle of limited government
 - c. the abolition of slavery
 - d. protecting the rights of the accused
 - e. maintaining the primacy of the states

2. A Supreme Court that demonstrates a willingness to change public policy and alter judicial precedent is said to be engaging in
 - a. judicial activism
 - b. due process
 - c. judicial restraint
 - d. ex post fact lawmaking
 - e. judicial review

3. A writ of *certiorari* from the Supreme Court indicates that the Court
 - a. will review lower court decision
 - b. has rendered a decision on a case
 - c. has decided not to hear an appeal
 - d. will recess until the end of the calendar year
 - e. plans to overturn one of its previous rulings

4. American foreign policy is directed primarily by the
 - a. House of Representatives
 - b. Senate
 - c. president
 - d. Supreme Court
 - e. federal bureaucracy

"We conclude that in the field of education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

5. The Supreme Court issued this opinion in its ruling on which of the following cases?
 - a. *Gideon v. Wainwright*
 - b. *Marbury v. Madison*
 - c. *Engel v. Vitale*
 - d. *Regents of University of California v. Bakke*
 - e. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*

6. Which of the following is the primary responsibility of Congress?
 - a. enforcing the administrative decisions of bureaucracy
 - b. selecting the head of the executive branch of government
 - c. policymaking
 - d. enforcing decisions made in the executive and judicial branches
 - e. cooperating with interest groups

7. The Rules Committee is considered among the most power full in the House of Representatives because it has great power over the
 - a. ethical conduct of House of members
 - b. selection of federal judges
 - c. number of subcommittees that a standing committee may establish at any given time
 - d. scheduling of votes and the conditions under which bills are debated and amended
 - e. regulations governing federal elections

8. The primary function of political action committees (PACs) is to
 - a. contribute money to candidates for election
 - b. coordinate local get-out-the-vote campaigns
 - c. promote the defeat of incumbents in the federal and state legislatures
 - d. organize protest demonstrations and other acts of civil disobedience
 - e. contact Congress to suggest legislation

9. Which of the following people would most likely be accused of influence peddling?
 - a. a congressperson who retires to take a position teaching political science at a university
 - b. a former president who advises a current president on a particular foreign policy issue
 - c. a voter who researches the positions of all candidates in a race before choosing whom to support
 - d. a judge who consistently hands down the maximum sentence to convicted felons
 - e. an official who leaves the State Department to work as a paid consultant to foreign governments

10. The line-item veto was found unconstitutional because
 - a. it gave executive powers to the legislature
 - b. it gave legislative powers to the bureaucracy
 - c. it gave powers to the president
 - d. it delegated too many powers to the states
 - e. it decided which bills went to committee

11. Among the executive branch's checks on the legislative branch is the president's power to
 - a. call special sessions of Congress
 - b. introduce bills to the floor of Congress
 - c. address Congress during its debate on bills
 - d. vote on acts of Congress
 - e. disband congressional committees

12. Unlike a treaty, an executive agreement
 - a. is not binding
 - b. does not involve international relations
 - c. does not require the Senate's approval
 - d. can be enforced by the military
 - e. automatically expires after one year

13. Successful candidates for the Republican presidential nomination tend to be more conservative than rank-and-file Republicans because
- moderate Republicans are less likely than conservative Republicans to gain widespread support in the general election
 - most moderate Republicans have approved of the Democratic presidential candidate
 - most rank-and-file Republicans do not care whether their party's nominee shares their political views
 - party activists, whose political participation is disproportionate to their numbers, tend to be very conservative
 - the Republican Party does not allow rank and file members to participate in the selection of the party's nominee
14. Which of the following accounts for the fact that the power and prestige of the presidency have grown since 1932?
- America's increased prominence in international affairs
 - Continually improved public confidence in the federal government
 - The New Deal and other programs that have expanded federal responsibility
 - The president's increased visibility, due to the development of mass media
- I only
 - I and IV only
 - I, III, and IV only
 - II and IV only
 - II, III, and IV only
15. Which of the following generally results when the Senate and House of Representatives pass different versions of the same bill?
- The president signs the version he prefers.
 - The bill goes back to each house's committee and restarts the legislative process.
 - All amendments to the bill are invalidated, and the original version of the bill is sent to the president to sign.
 - The Senate's version of the bill is sent to the president because the Senate is the higher legislative body.
 - The two legislative bodies form a conference committee.
16. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed to reinforce the
- presidential veto
 - system of checks and balances
 - states' power to challenge federal regulation
 - Fourteenth Amendment
 - Taft-Hartley Act of 1947
17. Which of the following best illustrates a use of the elastic-clause?
- The Supreme Court allows a lower court ruling to stand by refusing to hear an appeal.
 - A congressional committee prevents the full chamber from voting on legislation by delaying its report.
 - Congress passes legislation establishing a national speed limit
 - A member of the House of Representatives introduces a bill to increase federal income tax rates.
 - A governor issues an executive order requiring all state employees to submit to drug testing.

18. According to the *Federalist Papers*, federalism has which of the following effects on political factions?
- It provides a structured environment in which factions may flourish
 - It limits the dangers of factionalism by diluting political power.
 - It allows factions to dominate on the national level while limiting their influence on state governments.
 - It eliminates any opportunity for factions to form.
 - It prevents factions by declaring them illegal.
19. The Constitution, as originally ratified, addressed all of the following weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation **EXCEPT** the
- lack of a chief executive office
 - national government's inability to levy taxes effectively
 - absence of a central authority to regulate interstate trade
 - insufficiency of the government's power to raise an army
 - omission of a universal suffrage clause
20. The boundary lines of congressional districts must be redrawn every ten years to
- reflect population shifts indicated by the national census
 - guarantee the turnover of the majority of congressional seats
 - make sure each state's congressional delegation exactly mirrors its residents' party affiliations
 - determine which party's leader will be named Speaker of the House
 - increase the number of female and minority members of Congress
21. A constitutional amendment would be required to ban flag burning because that activity is currently protected by the right to
- due process
 - assembly
 - free exercise of religion
 - protection against confiscation of private property
 - free speech
22. The greatest number of American voters identify themselves as
- liberal
 - conservative
 - progressive
 - reactionary
 - moderate
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24. The largest portion of the federal budget covers the costs of
- national defense
 - social welfare programs
 - interest on the national debt
 - entitlement programs
 - tax collection
25. The primary goal of the Gramm-Rudman Acts of 1985 and 1987 was to
- strengthen the military
 - increase funding for social programs
 - reduce the federal deficit
 - limit the president's ability to conduct foreign policy
 - allow citizens easier access to government records
26. Which of the following most accurately describes the right of American citizens to privacy
- The right to privacy is determined entirely by the states on a case-by-case basis
 - The right to privacy is explicitly granted in the Preamble to the Constitution
 - The Supreme Court has ruled that the right to privacy is implied by the Bill of Rights
 - Common law requires the government to respect citizens' right to privacy
 - Americans have no right to privacy, but the government rarely violates individuals' privacy because to do so is not in the government's interest.
27. The difference between a pardon and a reprieve is
- a pardon lasts ten years, a reprieve lasts one year
 - a reprieve grants a release from legal punishment, while a pardon postpones it
 - a pardon grants a release from legal punishment while a reprieve postpones it
 - only state governors can issue pardons
 - only state governors can issue reprieves
28. The government promotes preferential treatment for members of groups that have historically suffered from discrimination by means of
- the New Federalism
 - affirmative action programs
 - Social Security benefits
 - bills of attainder
 - gerrymandering
29. To which characteristic of American government does the term "federalism" refer?
- The system of checks and balances within the national government
 - The power of the Supreme Court to review the constitutionality of laws
 - The Bill of Rights protection of the rights of the accused
 - The process by which the size of a state's delegation to the House is determined
 - The division and sharing of power between the national and state governments
30. The swift adoption of the Bill of Rights in the years following ratification of the Constitution demonstrates the
- framers' unqualified commitment to individual rights
 - small states' determination to receive equal representation in the legislature
 - Northern states' support for abolitionism
 - states' fears of an overpowered national government
 - Federalists' concerns that checks and balances would weaken the national government

31. The legislative successes of the National Rifles Association, antiabortion activists, and other powerful interest groups demonstrate that
- United States domestic policy has grown more conservative in the 1990s
 - the influence of political action committees has weakened in recent years
 - the power of interest groups depends on the degree of support for their positions in the White House
 - majority opinion on an issue can sometimes be overridden by the intensity of a minority's commitment to activism
 - the most powerful interest groups in the United States are generally those that support uncontroversial positions
32. The national and state governments share all of the following powers **EXCEPT** the power to
- administer elections
 - impose taxes
 - establish courts
 - borrow money
 - enact laws
33. Which group most frequently benefits from political action committee (PAC) donations?
- Charitable organizations
 - Federal judges
 - Political interest groups
 - Research institutes
 - Incumbents running for reelection
34. The president executes a "pocket veto" by doing which of the following?
- Publicly expressing refection of a bill
 - Issuing an executive order invalidating a recently passed bill
 - Failing to sign a bill after Congress has adjourned
 - Recalling ambassadors from a peace negotiation
 - Refusing to seat a federal judge whom the Senate has confirmed
35. In *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the Supreme Court ruled that criminal defendants in state cases have the right
- to representation by an attorney
 - not to incriminate themselves
 - to a speedy trial
 - not to be punished excessively
 - to a jury trial

Questions 36-37 refer to Amendment X to the constitution.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution nor prohibited to the states, are reserved to the sates respectively, or to the people.

36. The Tenth Amendment most often comes into conflict with which section of the Constitution?
- The “full faith and credit” clause
 - The “necessary and proper” clause
 - The provisions for the impeachment of a president
 - The clause prohibiting states from coining money and entering into treaties
 - The provisions for constitutional amendment
37. People who interpret the Tenth Amendment as greatly restricting the powers of the national government are often referred to as
- Federalists
 - Isolationists
 - Laissez-faire capitalists
 - Loose constructionists
 - States’ rights advocates
38. Which committee in the House of Representatives determines the procedure by which bills are debated and amended?
- Ways and Means
 - Judiciary
 - Ethics
 - Rules
 - Government Reform
39. The government often finds it difficult to make substantive changes in entitlement programs for which of the following reasons?
- Most such programs were established by constitutional amendment.
 - These programs are extremely popular among their numerous beneficiaries
 - Such programs are vital to national defense.
 - Most such programs primarily benefit the wealthy, a powerful political bloc.
 - These programs’ budgets are determined by nonelected bureaucrats, not by the Congress.
40. Uncertainty over the limits to presidential power is caused primarily by the fact that
- The constitutional definition of those powers is broad and unspecific.
 - Most people agree that the Constitution places too many limits on presidential power
 - The Supreme Court consistently refuses to rule on cases concerning presidential powers
 - Constitutional amendments have greatly increased presidential powers
 - Some states cede more power to their governors than the national government cedes to the president.
41. Which of the following most accurately describes *The Federalist Papers*?
- The Federalist party platform during the presidency of John Adams, the first Federalist President
 - A popular anti-British booklet of the pre-Revolutionary era.
 - A collection of essays arguing the merits of the Constitution
 - A series of congressional acts defining the relationship between the federal and state governments
 - The laws under which the South was governed during Reconstruction

42. Under which of the following circumstances is Congress **LEAST** likely to pass a bill the president has threatened to veto?
- The president's public approval rating is extremely high.
 - A failed attempt has been made to develop a compromise bill with the White House
 - The party controlling Congress is not the president's party.
 - The president has also expressed the possibility that he might not veto the bill.
 - Congressional leaders believe they have the votes necessary to override the veto.
43. Which of the following best describes the practice of "ticket splitting?"
- A presidential nominee selects a running mate who can appeal to voter groups whose support of he nominee is weak.
 - A voter chooses the presidential nominee of one major party, but chooses congressional nominees of the other major party.
 - A mayor orders the local police force to hand out fewer parking violations in the weeks leading up to the general election.
 - A delegate to a national party convention supports the front-runner but remains uncommitted on the party platform.
 - A member of Congress votes against legislation proposed by his or her party leader.
44. Compared with political parties in countries such as England and Israel, both of which have multiparty systems, American political parties are...
- Less interested in influencing the outcomes of elections.
 - Less clearly identified with consistent political ideologies.
 - Less effective at raising money from political supporters.
 - Better able to reflect the goals of their entire constituencies.
 - More likely to organize around a single issue or goal.
45. The responsibilities of the secretary of state are most likely to overlap with those of
- The Secretary of the interior.
 - The secretary of the treasury
 - The speaker of the House
 - The president's chief of staff
 - The national security advisor
46. The Supreme Court holds original jurisdiction in all of the following types of cases **EXCEPT**
- If the United States is a party in the case.
 - In controversies in criminal law between a citizen and a state.
 - In controversies under the Constitution, federal laws or treaties.
 - If a case is between citizens from different states.
 - If cases arise under admiralty and maritime laws.
47. Which of the following correctly states the relationship between the federal and state judiciaries?
- Federal courts are higher courts than state courts and may overturn state decisions on most grounds.
 - The two are entirely autonomous, and neither ever hears cases that originate in the other.
 - The two are generally autonomous, although federal courts may rule on the constitutionality of state court decisions.
 - State courts are trial courts; federal courts are appeals courts.
 - State courts try all cases except those that involve conflicts between two states, which are tried in federal courts.

48. The amount of access cabinet secretaries have to the president is most likely to be controlled by the
- Vice President
 - President's chief of staff
 - National security advisor
 - Chair of the Federal Reserve Board
 - President's press secretary
49. Those who argue that the House of Representatives is the government institution most responsive to the will of the public are most likely to cite as evidence the fact that
- Congressional reelection campaigns are extremely costly.
 - Term limits may soon restrict the number of years a congressperson may serve.
 - Congress has oversight power over many executive agencies.
 - Average citizens may, on occasion, be called to testify before a congressional committee.
 - Representatives must run for reelection every two years.
50. Which of the following is the most accurate statement about the voting behavior of Americans between 50-65?
- They are as, or more, likely to vote than are members of other age groups because they have received the highest level of formal education of all age groups.
 - They are as, or more, likely to vote than are members of other age groups because they believe they have a personal stake in government policy.
 - They are less likely to vote than are members of other age groups because it is difficult for them to get to the polls.
 - They are less likely to vote than are members of other age groups because they are less likely to be aware of election schedules.
 - They are less likely to vote than are members of other age groups because very few senior citizens run for political office.
51. A member of which of the following demographic groups is most likely to support a Republican presidential candidate?
- White male
 - White female
 - African American, male or female
 - Youths under the age of 25, male or female
 - Individuals earning below poverty-level wages, male or female
52. Congress's power to determine national policy...
- Usually increases as a president's popularity decreases, and vice versa
 - Has declined steadily since the ratification of the Constitution
 - Is severely limited by the "elastic clause" of the Constitution
 - Increases during times of war
 - Stems primarily from its control over the judicial branch
53. In recent years, presidents have come to rely most heavily on the advice of...
- The full cabinet
 - The vice president
 - Congressional delegations
 - The White House staff
 - Foreign ambassadors

54. Which of the following statements about the electoral college is correct?
- Each state may split its electoral votes among as many candidates as it wishes.
 - Each state is equally represented in the electoral college.
 - The electoral college was created by an amendment to the Constitution.
 - The results of electoral college voting tend to distort the winner's margin of victory, when compared with the popular vote for president.
 - Each state's delegation to the electoral college consists of that state's U.S. senators and representatives.
55. Which of the following statements is true of congressional incumbents who run for reelection?
- Incumbent senators are more likely to be reelected than are incumbent members of the House of Representatives.
 - Incumbents are prohibited by law from spending more on their reelection campaigns than their challengers spend.
 - Incumbents have a great advantage over challengers because they are better known and can raise campaign funds more easily.
 - Ever since the 1994 election, the majority of congressional incumbents have failed in their reelection attempts.
 - Most incumbents who run for reelection are unopposed in the general election.
56. Before serving in the House of Representatives or Senate, the greatest number of federal legislators.
- Own and operate small businesses
 - Are professional athletes
 - Teach political science at the college level
 - Work as journalists
 - Earn law degrees
57. A member of the House of Representatives wishing to influence tax policy would most likely try to serve on which of the following committees?
- Commerce
 - Ways and Means
 - Education and the Workforce
 - Resources
 - Judiciary
58. The spoils system of awarding civil service jobs was replaced by the merit system as a result of the
- Truman Doctrine
 - Fair Labor Standards Act of 1961
 - National Industrial Recovery Act
 - Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - Pendleton Act of 1883
59. Interest groups representing businesspeople and investors are often among the most successful lobbying groups in Washington, D.C., for all of the following reasons **EXCEPT**
- Such groups have the financial resources to mount sustained campaigns on their own behalf.
 - Many such groups have been in existence for several decades or more, allowing them both to master the legislative system and to develop close ties with legislators.
 - In many districts, these groups' constituents make up the majority of voters.

- d. These groups' constituents contribute heavily to many legislators' campaigns, and, in so doing, gain greater access to legislators.
- e. Economic lobbyists often campaign for obscure or minute changes to tax law about which the public knows little, and therefore frequently meet little opposition.

60. Of the following groups that have traditionally supported the Democratic Party, which would **LEAST** likely be cited by someone arguing that the Democrats represented only liberal constituencies?

- a. White Southerners
- b. Labor union members
- c. African Americans
- d. Northern ethnic minorities
- e. Environmentalists