

POLS 1101

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# Chapter 1

## Freedom, Order, or Equality

**State** a set of public organizations whose rules are enforced through its command of the means of violence.

**Government** the group of leaders directing the state.

### 1.1 Basic Purposes of Government

#### Maintaining Order

**Narrower Meaning of Order** Preserving life and protecting property.

**Social Order** Established patterns of authority in society and traditional modes of behaviors.

**Providing Public Goods** Benefits and services that are available to everyone.

#### Promoting Equality

**Hobbs** The Leviathan

**Lochte** Believes the government should give more than just security (comparative to Hobbs) and that the government should be limited.

#### 1.1.1 Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Government

##### Functional Objectives

- Freedom
- Order
- Equality

## Process

- Majoritarian
- Pluralist

### 1.1.2 Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Government in the United States

- Maintaining Order
- Protecting Freedom
  - Freedom *of* ...
  - Freedom *from* ...
- Promoting Equality

**Political Equality** Each citizen has only one vote.

**Social/Economic Equality** Equality of opportunity v. outcome.

### 1.1.3 Ideology of the Scope of Government

#### Totalitarianism

The belief that government should have unlimited power.

- Object to produce a “perfect” society.

#### Socialism

An economic theory that lies on a spectrum.

**Communism** Seeks common ownership of the means of production and property in general.

**Democratic-Socialism** Seeks a democratic-welfare state, through it affirms political rights (e.g., rights to vote and free expression)

**Christian Socialism** Socialism *can* align with various ideologies

Etc., etc.

Having a totalitarian government does not require a socialist economy but they do tend to coincide.

## Capitalism

Embraces free enterprise Private businesses operating for profit, without government regulations.

**Classical Economics** Operation of the free market is similar to the process of natural selection.

The *narrow* pursuit of profits the *broad* interests of society.

### 1.1.4 Libertarianism

Political ideology that opposes all government action except what is necessary to protect life and property (*laissez faire*)

Both socially- and economically-liberal.

### 1.1.5 Questioning the Liberal-Conservative Continuum

- Only a minority think ideologically
- Many do not understand the continuum and select “moderate” by default
- No longer useful
  - Many “liberals” no longer favor government activism in general.
  - Many “conservatives” no longer oppose it in principle.
- An alternative dimensional framework may be useful...

### 1.1.6 If Not Ideology, Then What?

#### Political Knowledge

- Half or more of the public knows the government’s basic institution and procedures.
  - But knowledge is not equally distributed.
- *Education is the single-most important predictor?*
  - No meaningful relationship between education and self-placement on the liberal-conservative continuum.
    - \* Individuals with strong beliefs may be impervious to new information that challenges these beliefs.

#### The Self-Interest Principle

People choose what benefits them personally.

## Heuristics

- Examples
  - Voting by party label.
  - Going by the options of religious authorities.

### 1.1.7 Procedural Democratic Theory

Describes the *procedures* followed in making government policies. Addresses 4 questions:

1. *Who* should participate in decision-making?  
Universal participation
2. *How much* should each participant's vote count?  
Political equality
3. *How many* votes are needed to reach a decision?  
Majority (sometimes plurality) rule
4. What happens *after* elections?  
Responsiveness

## Complication: Direct v. Indirect Democracy

**Participatory Democracy** Where citizens, themselves (rather than representatives), practice politics.

- Neighborhood governments

**Representative Democracy** Where citizens elect public officials to practice politics on their behalf.

## Problems with Procedural Theory

- Can clash with minority rights.

### 1.1.8 Substantive Democracy

Focus of the *substance* of government policies. Argues that certain principles must be incorporated into govt policies.

## Problems with Substantive Theory

- Not clear on the *desired* substance
  - A government is “truly” democratic if it proves  $x$ ,  $y$ , and/or  $z$ .

## 1.2 Models of Democracy

### 1.2.1 Majoritarian Model

Interprets “government by the people” to mean government by the *majority* of people.

- Popular election of government officials
- Referenda
- Initiatives
- Recalls

#### Key Assertions

- Citizens can control their government if they have adequate mechanisms for popular participation.
- Citizens are politically knowledgeable and capable of making rational decisions.

### 1.2.2 Pluralist Model

Interprets “government by the people” to mean government by people operating through interest groups competing for influence in a decentralized political structure.

**Interest groups** An organized group seeking to influence government policy.

Originated in the recognition of America’s limited political knowledge/participation.

### 1.2.3 Elite Theory

A small group (a power elite) makes most important government decisions. Power derived from wealth and business connections (e.g., Dick Cheney). Thus, the U.S. is only superficially democratic, and is really an oligarchy.



# Chapter 2

## The Constitution

### 2.1 The Constitution

#### 2.1.1 The Articles of Confederation

The revolutionaries proclaimed the creation of a republic

- A government without a monarch.
- Government based on the consent of the governed, whose power is exercised by elected representatives.
- Need not be a democracy.

Adopted by the Continental Congress on Nov. 15, 1777. Jealously guarded state sovereignty. Shaped in part by the Revolutionary experience.

#### Reasons the Articles of Confederation

- Didn't give taxing power to the national government.
- Didn't provide for a strong executive.
- Didn't allow national government to regulate commerce.
- Amendments required unanimity.
- Ill-equipped to deal with domestic disorder.
  - Example: Shay's Rebellion (1786-1787)

#### 2.1.2 The Philadelphia Convention (1787)

Took place after Shay's Rebellion because it showed that the government isn't fulfilling one of the basic goals of government, to provide order.

Intended to amend the Articles of Confederation.

## **The Debate Over State Representation**

**The Virginia Plan** Sought to replace the weak confederation with a powerful national government.

**The New Jersey Plan** Sought to preserve the Articles of Confederation.

The New Jersey Plan was favored by the small states. Feared that representation based solely on population would minimize their influence. Defeated 7-3.

## **The Great Compromise**

The Legislature would be bicameral.

The House of Representatives – Representation based on population

The Senate – Representation is the same regardless of population (always two).

## **The Debate Over Executive Selection**

Areas of Agreement:

- One-person executive
- President should not be popularly elected.

## **Electoral College (originally)**

Each state legislature would choose a number of electors equal to the number of its representatives in Congress.

Each elector would vote for two people.

The candidate winning a majority would become president. The person with the next greatest number of votes would become VP.

If no candidate won a majority, the House of Representatives would choose a President, with each state casting one vote.

## **Electoral College(today)**

Filters the popular vote in a manner that gives disproportionate weight to less populous states.

Each party selects a slate of candidates. Theoretical possibility of “faithless electors”.

538: number of electors for state = # of representatives + # of senators (always 2).

The Presidential candidate and Vice-Presidential candidate run on the same ticket.

Winner-take-all system in *most* states.

### 2.1.3 Basic Principles of the Constitution

**Republicanism** establishes a republic.

**Federalism** division of power between a central and regional governments.

**Seperation of Powers** assigning legislative, judicial, and executive functions to separate government branches.

**Checks and Balances** giving each government branch some scrutiny of control over other branches.

### 2.1.4 Notable Articles

I. **Legislative Article:** 18 enumerated powers; Necessary and Proper (Elastic) clause

II. **Executive Article:** Presidential duties/powers, qualifications, term, etc.

III. **Judicial Article:** Intentionally vague, establishes Supreme Court; no mention of Judicial Review

#### Others

### 2.1.5 Constitutional Change

#### Interpretation by the Courts

**Marbury v. Madison (1803)** provided the basis for the exercise of **judicial review** in the United States.

**Enduring Issue** *How* should judges interpret the Constitution?

- Searching for the original intent of the framers.
- Interpreting them in light of the demands of the modern society.

### 2.1.6 Trying It All Again

Framers laid out a broad framework of government and were vague or even silent on many issues, allowing for interpretation that can adjust to modern circumstances.

Articles of Confederation leaned too much toward **freedom** at the expense of **order**

The current U.S. Constitution strikes a “judicious balance” between **order** and **freedom**

- It paid virtually no attention to **equality**.

# Chapter 3

## Georgia's Constitution and Government

### 3.1 Georgia's Constitution

Longer than federal constitution because:

1. Lack of implied powers. All powers must be explicitly stated.
2. Political reasons. Political parties or interest groups will try to amend the constitution to lock in their view on a topic. Example, Same-sex Marriage (Constitutional Amendment 1 (2004): Made it unconstitutional for the state to recognize same-sex marriages or civil unions).
3. As a response to state court decisions. Almost the only way to undo a court's action is to amend the constitution. Example, Nude Dancing.
4. National government requirements. Example, Medicaid. The Georgia Constitution was amended to create and trust fund to provide medical services for the poor.

#### 3.1.1 Georgia Constitution vs. US Constitution

**Both:**

1. Have bill of rights.
2. Adopt a separation of powers.
3. Executives have the power to appoint officials and veto bills.
4. Legislatures are bicameral.

**Differences:**

1. Georgia voters must approve all amendments.
2. Georgia Constitution requires the state to have a balanced budget.
3. The Georgia governor is granted the line-item veto (They have the ability to veto a specific portion of a bill rather than veto the bill in its entirety).
4. All legislators serve 2-year terms.
5. Representation is based on population (in both houses).
6. Georgia has a “plural executive” (Georgia voters get to elect 6 main officials rather than being appointed).
7. Almost all judges in Georgia are elected.

Georgia’s current constitution (1983) is 10<sup>th</sup> in Georgia’s history. Notable changes from previous constitution:

- Local government proposals not required on state ballot
- Unified court system. Streamlined hierarchy of court levels.
- Nonpartisan election of state court judges
- Enhanced General Assembly powers, removed some powers from the governor and gave it to the General Assembly.
- Equal protection clause.

### **3.1.2 Constitutional Amendments**

Georgia’s constitution can be amended two ways:

- The General Assembly can ask voters to create a convention to amend/replace this Constitution.
- The general Assembly can submit proposed amendments to voters by a 2/3 vote in each house. Voters have approved 76% of proposed amendments since 1984.

## 3.2 Georgia's Government

### 3.2.1 General Assembly

- Has 236 members ( $3^{rd}$  largest).
- No limit on number of terms that one can serve.
- Can override regular and line-item vetos by 2/3 majority in each house.
- Has unlimited power to change the budget, which the governor must submit each year.

### 3.2.2 The Governor

- Can server 2 consecutive, 4 year terms.
- Along with other state officials, they can be recalled.
- Has weak appointment powers.
  - Voters select many top administrators.
  - But governors can fill vacancies.
- Has veto and line-item veto powers.
  - Doesn't have pocket veto. If it is ignored the bill *will* become law.

### 3.2.3 Elections

#### Runoffs

- Used in Georgia when no single candidate is able to capture 50% of the vote.
- Seen as biased against minority candidates, who might finish first in election but not get a majority.
  - In the runoff, whites might vote in a bloc for the remaining white candidate.

Challenged at the supreme court level but ruled as legal

# Chapter 4

## Federalism

### 4.1 Brief Recap

**Federal** Based on dual sovereignty.

**Unitary** The central government can unilaterally take power away or even abolish, regional governments.

**Confederal** A loose association of sovereign states.

### 4.2 What a Federal System Means For Citizens

Most live under the jurisdiction of 5 governments

- National
- State
- County
- Municipal/township
- School district

Which government is responsible for what? Supreme Court Decides

- Interpretations over the years have enhanced national government's power significantly

### 4.3 Constitutional Distribution of Authority

#### 4.3.1 Concurrent Sovereign Authority

**Concurrent Powers** Powers recognized as inherent to all governments (e.g., taxing; eminent domain)

- Federal and state governments share authority.