

PLSC 471: American Constitutional Law

Reading the Constitution

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Approaches to Constitutional Interpretation

Modes of Interpretation

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Basis</i>	<i>Perspective</i>	<i>Typical Valence</i>
Literalism	Text	Atemporal	Neutral?
Originalism	Text + Intent	Retrospective	Right / Conservative
Precedent	Past Decisions	Retrospective	Mixed
Pragmatism	Intent	Prospective	Left / Liberal

Article I, Section 3

"The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote."

"This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding."

Article II, Section 3

“He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.”

Amendment I

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”