

Pol2000 american government wk 1 assignment

[History](#)



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American Government CHAPTER 1. Identify essential democratic values and explain what importance they have to our representative democracy.

A set of various values strength a constitutional democracy, which makes it successful for the public to trust its ability in solving political problems.

Values related to personal and economic liberty, sovereignty, equal opportunities, and individualism are fundamental values that build public confidence.

Personal liberty identifies the importance of people to have the requisite opportunities to realize their individual goals. Liberty focuses on the freedom and capacity of people to reach their objectives rather than focus on the nonexistence of process to hold down an individual. Fundamentally, personal liberty enhances progress in a society. Hence, people discover better ways of life in an environment full of greater freedom.

Individualism is the belief system for an individual's potential to have common sense, be rational and act fair, which underlines the democratic view of popular rule. The collective rights of individuals give governments the authority and the power with these concepts diffusing through democratic ideals. Nonetheless, some democracies prioritize other elements ahead of the individual. For example, China, Cuba, and Vietnam promote a form of governance known as statism, which centralizes power and authority over the economy instead of an individual. In contrast, modern democracies consider citizens as more important than a community or the nation.

Equality of Opportunity: According to Jefferson's first draft of the Declaration of Independence, " All men are created equal and from that equal creation they derive rights inherent and unalienable, among which are the preservation of liberty and the pursuit of happiness" (as cited in Magleby, <https://assignbuster.com/pol2000-american-government-wk-1-assignment/>

Light, & Nemacheck, 2011, p. 22). In effect, these values augment the significance of an individual in a democratic process. However, American politics create controversy in the definition of equality and other mechanics to achieve equality in the society.

Popular sovereignty is the principle that ultimate political power and authority lies with people, which is the principle that defined the American Revolution, the Declaration of Independence, and the new nation. The implication is that a government derives its power through popular consent from the people it governed. Hence, a commitment to democracy is the willingness of citizens to participate in the decision-making process in government. While these principles may be agreeable, the implication is that the minority should prepare to lose when the majority votes in a particular way.

Democratic Values in Conflict: These democratic values do not coexist in harmony. For example, the value of individualism may clash with the combined interests of public good. Conversely, equal opportunity may conflict with the democratic value of self-determination. The freedom of a media house to publish classified documents may conflict with the requirement of the government entrenched in the constitution to “ provide for the common defense.” Therefore, the country’s political debate centers on striking a compromise between these democratic values. Case in point, debate has focused on the approaches to protect the inalienable rights to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness as protected and proposed by the Declaration of Independence despite the fact that the Constitution announces the importance of promoting the general welfare (Magleby, Light, & Nemacheck, 2011, p. 22).

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2. The arrangement whereby slaves would be counted for purposes of representation was called what?

The three-fifths is the arrangement that arose as a negotiation during a Constitution Convention by states in the north and the south that identified the need to count slaves and determine their representation in Congress and the amount of direct tax they would pay (Magleby, Light, & Nemacheck, 2011, p. 35).

3. Identify how the Constitutional Convention decided that the President would be chosen.

The majority of delegates in the Constitutional Convention preferred the Congress as the ideal body to select the country's president while others raised their concern about the ability of Congress to control the Presidency, which can also be the other way round. The distrust of state legislatures by delegates contributed to a rejection of the president's election by these bodies. Eventually, the Electoral College emerged as the ultimate choice for electing president, which constitutes a number of people that are equivalent to the number of U. S. Senators and Representatives. The delegates' original idea was to have the electors in the college make a choice of their preferred presidential candidate, although the college is reflective of partisanship in that electors currently elect the candidate who emerges as the winner in the elector's state (Magleby, Light, & Nemacheck, 2011, p. 35).

4. Why did Jefferson warn, " Every government degenerates when it is left solely in the hands of the rulers?"

Touted as a hero in constitutional democracy, the author of the Declaration of Independence was a strong believer in the limits of a human being's spirits and the concept of common sense. His statement was an attempt to

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enlighten the people about their responsibility of being repositories to the government. In this case, he outlined the importance of the people in popular control of the government, participating in the representation process, and ensuring accountability in the country's leadership.

Nonetheless, he also believed in restricting people's power at other times and did not believe in revolutionary France's involvement of all its citizens in decision-making or ancient Greece's straightforward democratic process of ensuring citizen's participation (Magleby, Light, & Nemacheck, 2011, p. 19).

Reference

Magleby, D. B., Light, P. C., & Nemacheck, C. L. (2011). *Government by the People*, 2011 National Edition, 24th ed. Upper Saddle River: NJ, Pearson Higher Education.