

SAMPLE EXAMINATION ONE

ANSWERS TO MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. **(C)**—It is important to note that Congress has gradually become less male and less white. Between 1950 and 2014 the number of women senators rose from 2 to 20, and female representatives have increased from 10 to 88. In 2014 a record number of 108 women were elected to the 114th Congress (88 in the House and 20 in the Senate). There were 48 black representatives in the 114th Congress (2015–17), as compared to 2 in the 82nd (1951–53). The number of Hispanics in the 114th Congress had a record 38 members. Hispanics with 34 in the House and 4 in the Senate. The age and education of the members of Congress has remained the same as in the past with the average age of Senators 61 years and the House 57 years. While a considerable number of members in Congress have higher education degrees there are 20 members that have nothing beyond a high school education. The 114th Congress also has 13 foreign born members ranging from Cuba, Japan, Peru and Thailand.
2. **(E)**—The quote comes from Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution known as the Elastic Clause or Necessary and Proper Clause as it expands the power of Congress to areas not specifically expressed in the Constitution.
3. **(D)**—The “elastic” clause (also called the “necessary and proper” clause) allowed the government to “make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers, and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government of the United States”. This clause has allowed Congress to “stretch” its authority to areas not specifically mentioned in the Constitution thereby expanding federal power.
4. **(C)**—The chart indicates that in each of the presidential election years voter turnout was consistently higher. The lowest turnout percentage for a presidential election year was 55.3% in 2000 while the lowest turnout for mid-term was 35.9% in 2014. The highest turnout for a presidential election was in 2008 at 62.2% while the highest turnout percentage for a mid-term election was in 2010 at 41.8%. One reason for the discrepancy is the large amount of publicity given to presidential elections. Another reason may be the belief among voters that presidential elections are more important than Congressional elections. This pattern reflects a broader trend among American voters; percentages of voters in local elections are the lowest of all.
5. **(E)**—The House of Representatives may, by majority vote, impeach the president for “Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.” Once the House impeaches the president, the case goes to the Senate, which tries the president, with the chief justice of the Supreme Court presiding. By a two-third vote, the Senate may convict and remove the president from office. Only two presidents have been impeached, Andrew Johnson and William Clinton. Neither were removed from office since the Senate did not vote to convict either president.
6. **(A)**—The Constitution states that federal judges serve “during good behavior” essentially meaning a life term. The framers of the Constitution believed that life terms provided judicial independence since it



permits judicial decisions to be based on the Constitution and/or the law rather than the wishes of the public or Congress. Federal judges may be impeached, but it has only happened seven times in U. S. history, and no Supreme Court justice has been impeached. The only attempt to do so was with Justice Samuel Chase in 1805, which was unsuccessful.

7. **(A)**—The Joint Chiefs of Staff head major military organizations within the Defense Department, including the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is a military leader and the group collectively represents the military in the federal government. The Secretary of Defense by tradition is a civilian, as are the deputy and under secretaries, resulting in a Department that is split between civilians and the military.
8. **(C)**—Logrolling occurs when a member of Congress supports another member’s pet project in return for support for his or her own project. The term comes from pioneer days when neighbors would get together to roll logs from recently cleared property to make way for building houses. This “cooperation” occurs in Congress in the form of “you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.”
9. **(B)**—In the Citizen’s United case the Court overturned the part of the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act that prohibited corporate and labor union funding of campaign ads. In doing so, the Court recognized corporations as having the same right to free speech as individuals and could promote their opinions through their ads. However, it kept in place limits on direct contributions to individual candidates from corporations and other organizations such as labor unions.
10. **(C)**—The rights of minorities were protected by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 since it banned discrimination in public facilities and in employment opportunities. It permitted the government to withhold federal funds from states and local areas not complying with the law.
11. **(B)**—The chart shows that Americans overall approve of government agencies more than do Republicans. In only two categories was the Republican response higher—NASA and the FDA and even in those two instances the numbers were still close. The widest difference was with approval of the IRS with 44% of Americans overall favorably approving of the agency while only 23% of Republicans having a favorable view of the agency.
12. **(C)**—The trend indicates that Democrats have a more favorable view of federal agencies than do the Republicans and Americans overall. None of the agencies have less than a 65% favorable view by Democrats which would indicate they would support the agencies with increased budgets and authority over their respective areas.
13. **(B)**—In most American elections, the candidate with the most votes wins. The winner does not have to have a majority (more than 50%), but may only have a plurality, more votes than any other candidates. Most American elections are single-member districts, which means that in any district the election determines one representative or official. For example, when the U.S. Census allots to each state a number of representatives for the U.S. House of Representatives, virtually all state legislatures divide the state into several separate districts, each electing its own single representative. This system ensures a two-party system in the U.S., since parties try to assemble a large coalition of voters that leads to at least a plurality, spreading their “umbrellas” as far as they can to capture the most votes. The winner-takes-all system contrasts to proportional representation, a system in which legislative seats are given to parties in proportion



to the number of votes they receive in the election. Such systems encourage multi-party systems because parties stand a good chance of getting some representatives elected to the legislature.

14. **(B)**—A closed rule (sometimes called a “gag rule”) sets strict time limits on debates and forbids amendments from the floor, except those from the presenting committee. Under closed rule, members not on the committee have little choice but to vote for or against the bill as it is. Closed rules exist only in the House of Representatives.
15. **(C)**—All of the choices, other than the bureaucracy, are elected to office. Although the vice president is chosen by the president to be on the party ticket, he/she is still accountable to the public as an elected official. Members of the bureaucracy are appointed officials or hired under the civil service system. It is difficult to fire those protected under civil service, so bureaucrats are less directly accountable to the people than elected officials are.
16. **(E)**—A federal system by its very definition divides political power geographically between a central government and its sub-units. In the United States, this division of power is between federal and state governments. Representative governments may be federalist systems, but they may also be unitary systems that centralize control in one place, or confederal systems that have little centralized power.
17. **(C)**—The Great Compromise (also called the Connecticut Compromise) called for one house in which each state would have an equal vote (the Senate) and a second house (the House of Representatives) in which representation would be based on population. Unlike the Virginia Plan, the Senate would not be chosen by the House of Representatives, but would be chosen by the state legislatures. The House of Representatives would be directly elected by all voters, whose eligibility to vote would be determined by the states. Small states saw this as a way to control the power of large states by basing the Senate on equal representation giving all states equal power.
18. **(C)**—Once Supreme Court decisions have been made in a conference of all the justices, an opinion, or statement of the legal reasoning behind the decision, must be formally stated. The most senior justice in the majority assigns the task of writing the majority opinion—the official opinion of the court. Unless the decision is unanimous, the most senior justice on the losing side decides who will write the dissenting opinion—one that does not agree with the Court’s majority decision. A justice may write a concurring opinion if he or she agrees with the majority decision but does so for different reasons than stated in the majority opinion.
19. **(E)**—Gridlock is a deadlock of wills over policymaking between the legislative and executive branches that results in nothing getting done. By its very nature, gridlock can exist only in a political system that has separation of powers, such as the United States. Many other democracies—such as Great Britain—do not have gridlock because their executive leaders are also members of the legislature. Two other reasons for gridlock are polarization and divided government. Polarization occurs when political leaders find it hard to compromise on issues since they are far apart in their view of the issue. Divided government occurs when branches of government are controlled by different political parties also making it difficult to compromise on issues due to their political differences.
20. **(D)**—The fiscally conservative Democrat Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 in the 104th Congress. It is dedicated to a set of beliefs that go beyond partisan politics with a commitment to financial stability. They support a more conservative approach to government spending, and they sometimes separate from the party



if necessary to achieve their goals. Members of the Blue Dog Democrats come from all parts of the country so they are united by their fiscal philosophy rather than a regional attachment.

21. **(B)**—Before the 22nd Amendment the president could be elected to an unlimited number of terms. President George Washington informally set the two-term precedent after he stepped down at the end of his second term. Until President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) no president ever successfully challenged the two-term precedent. Teddy Roosevelt unsuccessfully attempted a third term when he ran in 1912 on the Bull Moose ticket after being out of office for four years. FDR was elected an unprecedented four times because many Americans wanted consistent leadership during the Great Depression and World War II. However, many believed it best to formally limit the president to two terms to prevent excessive power. The 22nd Amendment instituted the 2-term limit for the presidency that first applied to President Eisenhower, elected in 1952. An exception may be made in the case of the death or resignation of the president. The amendment may permit the vice president completing the term a longer time in office. If 2 years or less is left in the term the incoming president may be elected to two full terms resulting in a total of 10 years as president. However, if the situation requires the new president to serve more than 2 years of his predecessor’s term the new president may only be elected to one more term.
22. **(C)**—Both state and federal governments take responsibility for roads and bridges, tax income, administer parks and recreation, and enforce laws and provided security. However, administration of elections is primarily their responsibility of states and local ties.
23. **(E)**—Only about half as many eligible voters participate in primary elections as in general elections, and quite understandably, they tend to be political activists. As activists, they also strongly prefer one political party and/or candidate to the other, so their views are more partisan than the mainstream voters who only participate in the general elections. In other words, Republican activists tend to be more conservative than less active Republicans, and Democratic activists tend to be more liberal than less active Democrats. As a result, candidates have very different audiences to persuade in the two types of elections, and a message that works with one may not work with the other.
24. **(C)**—In *forma pauperis* in Latin means in the form of a pauper. Indigency or lack of ability to pay, is a reason for waiving legal fees or legal costs such as the costs of an attorney. The Sixth Amendment states, “In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right...to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.” In *forma pauperis* means defendants that cannot pay for a lawyer may have one appointed for them as was the case in *Gideon v Wainwright*. The state of Florida did not provide an attorney for Gideon’s first trial but after the Supreme Court reviewed the case (accepted as an *in forma pauperis* case) a new trial was ordered with a state-appointed attorney.
25. **(D)**—Far fewer than 1/3 of members of Congress are non-Christian. The majority of the members are Protestant Christians, followed by Catholics. In the 114th Congress 2 Buddhists, 2 Muslims and one Hindu serve along with 30 Jewish members. Approximately 82% are male, although 108 females, the largest number ever, serve in the 114th Congress. Members are also a generally prosperous and well-educated group, with the most common occupation of lawyer. Their average age is creeping upward, with senators about 61 and representatives about 57 at the start of the 114th Congress.
26. **(D)**—Interest groups are often criticized for a type of interaction with government known as the “revolving door.” Through this practice, government officials—both in Congress and executive agencies—quit their jobs to take positions as lobbyists or consultants to businesses. Many people fear that the “revolving door” may give private interests unfair influence over government decisions. For example, if a government official



does a favor for a corporation because he or she is promised a job after leaving government, then the official is not acting for the good of the public.

27. **(C)**—Political Action Committees (PACs) began to increase in numbers after limits were placed on campaign contributions by individuals, corporations and interest groups in the 1970s. The campaign finance laws allowed groups to form political committees for the purpose of raising campaign contributions for candidates they supported. However the amount they can receive from each donor and the money spent on federal elections were first limited in 1974 and again in 2002, although groups have managed to find loopholes in both sets of legislation.
28. **(A)**—Conference committees consist of members from both the House and Senate, but they are formed exclusively to hammer out differences between House and Senate versions of similar bills. A bill goes to a conference committee after it has been approved in separate processes in the two houses, and a compromise bill is sent back to each house for final approval. Conference committees are not necessary for all legislation, but they often play a role in big, controversial bills that receive a great deal of popular attention.
29. **(C)**—The common practice of gerrymandering was originally meant to give one political party an advantage over the other. District boundaries are drawn in strange ways in order to make it easy for the candidate of one party to win election in that district. The term “gerrymandering” is derived from the original gerrymanderer, Elbridge Gerry, who had a Massachusetts district drawn in the shape of a salamander, to ensure the election of a Republican. Over the years both parties have been accused of manipulating districts in order to gain an advantage in membership in the House.
30. **(D)**—The “marble cake” analogy is often used to describe cooperative federalism, a type of policymaking that intertwines state and federal sovereignty without “layering” one on top of the other. Until the 1930s, the relationship between the national and state governments was usually described as dual federalism, a system in which each remains supreme within its own sphere. With the New Deal programs of the 1930s the separation proved to be virtually impossible, ushering in the era of cooperative federalism. During this era state and federal governments cooperated in solving the common complex problems brought on by the Great Depression. The New Deal programs often involved joint action between the national government and the states. Cooperative federalism remains in place today, with the national government involved to some extent in virtually all public policymaking.
31. **(D)**—A closed primary requires voters to pre-register a party affiliation before voting. It is the most common primary in the United States. Open primaries permit voters to declare party preference on election day. Blanket primaries permit voters to choose candidates from a ballot listing all candidates regardless of party affiliation. In a blanket primary voters may cross over from one party to another in a split-ticket vote for candidates regardless of party affiliation.
32. **(E)**—*Roe v. Wade* was the Court’s controversial decision to define abortion rights, and the Court based its majority opinion on the right of privacy, a right that had been developed in some previous cases, but became most associated with abortion rights with this 1973 opinion. All of the other choices are appropriately matched with a right. *Texas v. Johnson* dealt with issues of flag burning; *U.S. v. Schenck* arose from protests to U.S. involvement in World War I; *Miranda v. Arizona* led to the development of the famous “Miranda Warning” to be read to people as they are placed under arrest; and *Everson v. Board of Education* was an early case that dealt with public funds used to bus students to parochial schools.
33. **(B)**—Party affiliations of Southerners have been changing over the past fifty years or so. Since the 1950s, many southerners have broken their traditional ties with the Democratic Party. From the time of