

AP US Government: American Presidency Test Study Guide

- When the framers created the president, they looked for someone who could
 - Claim national leadership
 - Statesmanship in foreign affairs (negotiate and represent the US well)
 - Keep the peace at home
 - Command and lead in times of crisis
 - Effectively enforce the nations' laws
- Requirements – 35 at inauguration, naturally born American citizen, and resident for 14 years.
- **Constitutional powers** - In Article 2(The President), there are just general phrases, so the president has “wide latitude”, meaning they can craft the office how they want
 - Commander in Chief of the Armed forces – in charge of military, but Congress takes US to war
 - Federalist #69 – Hamilton – the only time the president should be authorized to use the military is in the event of a surprise attack (1814, 12/7, and 9/11)
 - Since WWII, the president has used the military more than 200 times
 - Make treaties with the advice and consent of the Senate (2/3)
 - Executive orders/agreements
 - *US vs. Belmont* (1937) – Supreme court rules executive agreements hold same legal status as treaties without senatorial approval
 - Since WWII, 1000 treaties have been drafted while 10,000 executive orders have also been drafted in this time.
 - Constitution gives president executive authority
 1. President's ability to faithfully execute laws of US the way he sees fit based on his political efficacy(beliefs) – ex. Reagan allowing family

- planning clinics to receive federal funds as long as they did not offer abortion counseling.
 - 2. Power to fill most government positions with appointments
 - Federalist #76 – Hamilton – most power comes from appointments since it is his people
- Also gives President a level of legislative authority
 1. Power of the veto
 2. Recommendation of legislation
- Presidents today are much more powerful and active than the framers envisioned.
 - 2 facets of the modern presidency that allow it to have a tremendous amount of power are
 1. National election
 2. Singular authority
 - President claims some sort of hold on the government (strong/weak) regardless of the time in history
- Jackson – 1st president to claim national leadership as he used his popularity to challenge Congress and the Supreme Court
- **Presidency Belief Structure/Theories**
 - **Whig Theory** – president is limited by what Constitution allows him to do
 - Prevailing belief structure in 1800's
 - **Stewardship theory** – president's responsibility is to do anything as long as it is not expressly stated in the constitution.
 - All presidents post Teddy Roosevelt were stewards (except Hoover and Carter)
- **Foreign Policy**
 - Prez. has always been foreign policy leader
 - 1700's and 1800's – less emphasis on foreign policy
 - 1895-present – bigger emphasis on it beginning with TR(Panama)

- **Domestic Policy**
 - Up to late 1800's, Congress was the domestic policy leader.
 - In 1800's, Congress guarded its power
 - The Gilded Age created the need for stronger presidential leadership
 - By the 1920's, Congress and the president shared domestic power. Is shared today.
 - Examples of the president being beyond the scope of Congress include the New Deal and the Great Society. During these times, all legislation came from the White House.
- **Electing the President** – has adapted over time
 - **4 Methods of Presidential Selection**
 - 1. Original (1788-1828) – president most distant from people
 - Party nominees are chosen in congressional caucuses
 - Caucus- a small group of a party that selects the party's goal and in some cases its candidate
 - Electoral college members act somewhat independently in their voting
 - 2. Party Convention (1832-1900)
 - Party nominees are chosen in national party conventions by delegates selected by state and local party organizations
 - Electoral college members cast their ballots for the popular vote winner in their state(votes are married)
 - 3. Party Convention, Primary (1904-1968)
 - Indirect primary allows public to votes for delegate who will chose candidate at convention
 - As in system 2, except that a **minority** of national convention delegates are chosen through primary election (**majority still chosen by party**)
 - 4. Party primary, open caucus (1972-present)

- As in system 2, except that a **majority** of national convention delegates are chosen through primary election.
 - Need to win most primaries (or come in 2nd) to stay in race
- Every method of presidential selection has looked for **legitimacy** (representative of the will of the people).
 - As prez. became closer to people, people had more direct influence in electing him.
 - Anyone can become president, but need stamina, energy, and a backbone or else you will not be successful.
 - Candidates campaign in the largest states (unless they will definitely not win it) and swing states
 - They try to win the votes of those in the middle/moderates.
 - When you are voting, you are in essence voting for entire executive branch.
 - 2 M's of campaigning: **Money and Media**
 - Most campaign donations – personal contributions
 - Most money is spend on advertising
 - Media plays a major role in determining what message gets out to public.
 - Need media on your side and momentum (You gain **momentum** if win first few primaries)
 - TV plays a major role – ex. JFK-Nixon Debate, Gore's Great Sigh that lost him the election
 - Today there is “new media” such as social networks and websites
 - 2 types of money
 - **Hard Money** - \$ contributed directly to a political candidate. Used to be the sole domain of individual contributions, now corporations are people and can give as much \$ as they want directly to candidates

- **Soft Money** - \$ given to a political party as a whole. Historically used for party activities, not to support any candidate.
 - Does not fall under any regulations (Fed. Election Campaign Act of 1974) since not for a spec. candidate.
 - Unlimited contributions to organizations that aren't political parties or candidate campaigns. These organizations can receive and contribute as much \$ as they want (they are 527's)
 - Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act (BCRA - 2002) – bans political parties from engaging in soft money activities, but 527's still do.
 - 2007 – FEC vs. Wisconsin Right to Life.org – S.C. says that it is unconstitutional to ban issue ads.
- **Executive Office of President (EOP)** - group of advisors
 - Currently 11 offices
 - White House Office (WHO) – closest friends that got him the job, experts on all policy
 - Office of Management and Budget – helps prez. formulate and manage the annual federal budget.
 - National Security Council – advises on foreign and military affairs
 - Council of Economic Advisors – advises president on fed. monetary policy
 - **Command center of executive branch – has taken the place of the cabinet since FDR**
- **Cabinet**
 - 15 Departments – appointments approved by majority of Senate
- Chief of Staff – hardest job, runs White House, and is the closest to the president (besides his family)
- **Control and Success**

- There is a **control** problem with many executive appointments as most are not directly supervised by the president
- Chris Matthews – not about who you know, but who you get to know
- **Success** – amount of legislative agenda that the president is able to enact.
 - A lot of what determines success is not by the president himself
 - Prez. agenda needs approval of Congress, cooperation of federal bureaucracy, and the approval of the judiciary – not easy.
 - Need to be able to **control electorate**.
- Whether Initiatives succeed or fail – 5 factors
 1. Force of circumstance – what is going on when you are elected, which is out of your control except your reaction to times of crisis such as Pearl Harbor and 9/11
 2. Stage of your term
 - Honeymoon period – First 6-12 months of term that need to be capitalized on
 - 2nd stage of term/2nd term – lower success rate
 3. Nature of issue
 - Domestic policy – harder
 - Foreign policy – where he is successful as Congress is more willing to give president what he wants to give the US credibility.
 4. President support in Congress
 5. Level of public support for president and his ability to control the electorate
 - President either has support of Congress or does not
 - Veto – President can threaten veto and Congress will accommodate
 - Congress can threaten to overturn veto w/ two-thirds vote
 - Partisanship – president's strongest sense of unity and destruction

- President tries to control electorate to get the people to vote for the people you want and the legislative agenda will get passed
- **3 Ways Congress can curb zealously of president**
 1. Censure (slap on wrist)
 2. Impeachment – ultimate sanction -
 - House committee, House (power of impeachment) - Senate
 - If can impeach him, have control over policy agenda for rest of his term
 3. Respond through legislation
- **War Powers Act (1973)**– most famous attempt to curb power of prez.
 - Requires prez. to inform Congress that he has deployed troops in a combat capacity.
 - Every prez. since Nixon says that the War Powers Act violates their power as commander in chief
- ****Ultimate judge of an effective president – the people**
 - Vote for president
 - Public support based on how president responds to events such as times of crisis
 - To be effective you need to serve at a time the economy is strong