GOVERNMENT IN AMERICA

People, Politics, and Policy


AP® Edition
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In the 2016 presidential election, Donald Trump advocated major changes in public policy, ranging from health care and environmental protection to immigration and relations with U.S. allies around the world. In November, Americans elected Trump and a Republican Congress, and he set out to carry out his promises. If Hillary Clinton had been elected instead of Trump, America would be pursuing quite a different set of policies. Politics matters. It affects policies that directly touch our lives.

Of course, Trump is not going to find it easy to change policies. Democrats are adamantly opposed to most of his major initiatives, and they will use all the tools at their disposal, including the Senate filibuster, to stop him. Moreover, many Republicans opposed his stances as well. We are not going to promise you that American government is easy to understand. However, we do intend to provide you with a clear roadmap to understanding our complex political system.

The Framers of our Constitution could have designed a much simpler system, but they purposely built in complexities as insurance against the concentration of power. Despite these complexities, many of the Founders, such as Thomas Jefferson, were confident that the American people would be able to navigate their constitutional system and effectively govern themselves within it. In writing this book, we are similarly confident that students in the twenty-first century can participate effectively in our democracy.

The major message that we convey in this book is that politics and government matter to everyone. Government in America explains how policy choices make a difference and shape the kind of country in which we live. We will show you how these choices affect the taxes we pay, the wars we fight, the quality of our environment, and many other critical aspects of our lives.

Students often ask us whether we are trying to convey a liberal or conservative message in this book. The answer is that our goal is to explain the major viewpoints, how they differ, and how such differences matter. We wish to give you the tools to understand American politics and government. Once you have these tools, you can make your own judgment about policy choices and become a well-informed participant in our democratic process. In the twenty-first century, it is often said that “knowledge is power.” We sincerely hope that the knowledge conveyed in this book will help you exercise your fair share of political power in the years to come.
In 2016, a survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago revealed an extraordinary crisis of confidence in America’s governing institutions. Just 4 percent of those interviewed expressed a great deal of confidence in the Congress, our representative branch. The situation was scarcely much better for the executive branch. Only 15 percent reported a great deal of confidence in the executive branch of government. At 24 percent, the U.S. Supreme Court was the most highly regarded. When asked about the overall political system of the United States, a stunning 38 percent said that they had hardly any confidence in the system at all, as opposed to a mere 10 percent who said that they had a great deal of confidence. These negative evaluations of America’s political institutions were also reflected in how people expressed their feelings about the 2016 presidential election. Seventy percent said they were “frustrated” by the campaign. In a nutshell, the results of the survey would seem to confirm that throughout America dissatisfaction with our unresponsive political system is widespread. The wide gap between the parties, leading to the continual inability of the government to resolve differences over public policy issues, is similarly disconcerting to a sizeable number of Americans.

This edition of Government in America explains the reasons we have such a difficult time resolving differences over public policy and the stakes we all have in finding solutions to the challenges facing our nation. We frame its content with a public policy approach to government in the United States and continually ask—and answer—the question, “What difference does politics make to the policies that governments produce?” It is one thing to describe the Madisonian system of checks and balances and separation of powers or the elaborate and unusual federal system of government in the United States; it is something else to ask how these features of our constitutional structure affect the policies that governments generate.

The essence of our approach to American government and politics is that politics matters. The national government provides important services, ranging from retirement security and health care to recreation facilities and weather forecasts. The government may also send us to war or negotiate peace with our adversaries, expand or restrict our freedom, raise or lower our taxes, and increase or decrease aid for education. In the twenty-first century, decision makers of both political parties are facing difficult questions regarding American democracy and the scope of our government. Students need a framework for understanding these questions.

We do not discuss policy at the expense of politics, however. We provide extensive coverage of four core subject areas: constitutional foundations, patterns of political behavior, political institutions, and public policy outputs, but we try to do so in a more analytically significant—and interesting—manner. We take special pride in introducing students to relevant work from current political scientists: for example, on the role of PACs and SuperPACs or the impact of divided party government—something we have found instructors appreciate.

NEW TO THIS UPDATE

Government in America has been revised and updated to reflect recent changes—often of a historic magnitude—in politics, policy, and participation. The revisions focus on updates in the following areas:

- The 2016 presidential and congressional elections
- The rise of Donald Trump as the Republican nominee for president in 2016
Recent Supreme Court decisions, ranging from same-gender marriage and affirmative action to warrantless searches, religious freedom, and symbolic speech regarding the Confederate flag
• The legacy of the Obama administration
• Current policies, including health care, budgeting, immigration, environmental protection, and the war on terrorism
• Recent events with significant political implications
• A reorganized chapter on Congress to increase the emphasis on policymaking
• Data-enhanced You Are the Policymaker features

Throughout Government in America, we have broad coverage of current policies and politics, ranging from budgetary policy and relations with Congress in this era of polarization to foreign policy challenges such as the upheaval in the Middle East. The entire chapter on the core issue of the budget has been thoroughly updated to reflect the central importance of taxing and spending in American government and the core issues of the fiscal and debt crises. We have the latest on all the policies we cover, from health care reform and Medicare to the war in Afghanistan and relations with Iran.

All of the figures and tables reflect the latest available data, and throughout the book we incorporate the latest scholarly studies. We take pride in continuously improving our graphical presentations of data.

THEMES AND FEATURES

Government in America follows two central themes. The first great question central to governing, a question every nation must answer, is, How should we govern? In the United States, our answer is “by democracy.” Yet democracy is an evolving and somewhat ambiguous concept. The first theme, then, is the nature of our democracy. In Chapter 1, we define democracy as a means of selecting policymakers and of organizing government so that policy represents and responds to citizens’ preferences. As with previous editions, we incorporate theoretical issues in our discussions of different models of American democracy. We try to encourage students to think analytically about the theories and to develop independent assessments of how well the American system lives up to citizens’ expectations of democratic government. To help them do this, in every chapter we raise questions about democracy. For example, does Congress give the American people the policies they want? Is a strong presidency good for democracy? Does our mass media make us more democratic? Are powerful courts that make policy decisions compatible with democracy?

The second theme, the scope of government, focuses on another great question of governing: What should government do? Here we discuss alternative views concerning the proper role and size for American government and how the workings of institutions and politics influence this scope. The government’s scope is the core question around which politics revolves in contemporary America, pervading many crucial issues: To what degree should Washington impose national standards for health care or speed limits on state policies? How high should taxes be? Do elections encourage politicians to promise more governmental services? Questions about the scope of government are policy questions and thus obviously directly related to our policy approach. Since the scope of government is the pervasive question in American politics today, students will have little problem finding it relevant to their lives and interests.

Each chapter begins with a preview of the relevancy of our two themes to the chapter’s subject matter, refers to the themes at points within the chapter, and ends with an “Understanding” section that discusses how the themes illuminate that subject matter.
CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS

Our coverage of American government and politics is comprehensive. First, we present an introductory chapter that lays out the dimensions of our policymaking system and introduces our themes of democracy and the scope of government. Next, we provide four chapters on the constitutional foundations of American government, including the Constitution, federalism, civil liberties, and civil rights. We then offer five chapters focusing on influences on government, including public opinion, the media, interest groups, political parties, and elections and voting behavior.

Our next five chapters focus on the workings of the national government. These chapters include Congress, the president, budgeting (at the core of many issues before policymakers), the federal courts, and the federal bureaucracy. Finally, we present three chapters on the decisions policymakers make and the issues they face. First are economic and social welfare policies, then come health care, environmental protection, and energy policies, and finally, we focus on national security policy.

Our features support our fundamental idea that politics matters and engage students in important political and policy issues.

- Chapter-opening vignettes make the subject matter of each chapter as relevant as possible to current concerns and pique student interest. From the first chapter, we emphasize the significance of government to young people and the importance of their participation.

- The classic You Are the Policymaker asks students to read arguments on both sides of a current issue—such as whether we should prohibit PACs—and then to make a policy decision. In Chapters 4 and 5 (Civil Liberties and Civil Rights), this feature is titled You Are the Judge and presents the student with an actual court case.
Several times in each chapter, *Why It Matters Today* insets encourage students to think critically about an aspect of government, politics, or policy and to consider the repercussions—including for themselves—if things worked differently. Each *Why It Matters Today* feature extends the book’s policy emphasis to situate it directly within the context of students’ daily lives.

• Every chapter includes **key terms** to support students’ understanding of new and important concepts at first encounter. For easy reference, key terms from the marginal glossary are repeated at the end of each chapter and in the end-of-book glossary. Unique to *Government in America*, we also include a key term glossary in Spanish.

We hope that students—long after reading *Government in America*—will employ these perennial questions about the nature of our democracy and the scope of our government when they examine political events. The specifics of policy issues will change, but questions about whether the government is responsive to the people or whether it should expand or contract its scope will always be with us.
MypoliSciLab™

MyPoliSciLab with Pearson eText is an online homework, tutorial, and assessment system that improves results by helping students better master concepts and by providing educators with a dynamic set of tools for gauging individual and class performance. Its immersive experiences truly engage students in learning, helping them to understand course material, and improve their performance.

- **Videos**—Dozens of videos offer a mix of historical and contemporary content, doses of humor, useful explanations, and instructive examples of key concepts. Videos include many author-filmed segments that will help students extract insights about how to approach chapter content and become smarter decision makers. Icons appear within the eText where links to these videos are located.

- **Data Visualizations**—Data visualizations featuring Social Explorer technology—new to this edition—connect users of Government in America, AP Edition, with the data that underlies policy decisions. With side-by-side mapping, custom annotations, clickable layers, and storytelling progressions that collect and render data, the figures in each chapter of the eText become dynamic presentations that make complex issues interesting and understandable. Icons appear within the eText where links to these data visualizations are located.

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### CORRELATION GUIDE FOR AP GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: UNITED STATES

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<th>AP Topics</th>
<th><strong>Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy, 17/e, AP Edition</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Big Idea 1: Constitutional Democracy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 1.A:</strong> A balance between governmental power and individual rights has been a hallmark of American political development.</td>
<td>pp. 26–30, 45–49, 52–54</td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 1.B:</strong> The writing and ratification of the Constitution emerged from the debate about weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation and was the product of important compromises.</td>
<td>Chapter 2; pp. 28, 30–31, 33–40, 39, 60, 69</td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 1.D:</strong> Federalism reflects the dynamic distribution of power between national and state governments.</td>
<td>Chapter 3; pp. 59–76, 78–82</td>
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<td><strong>Big Idea 2: Civil Liberties, Civil Rights</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 2.A:</strong> Provisions of the Bill of Rights are continually being interpreted to balance the power of government and the civil liberties of individuals.</td>
<td>Chapters 4, 5 &amp; 15; pp. 87, 124–125</td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 2.B:</strong> The due process clause of the 14th Amendment has been interpreted to prevent the states from infringing upon basic liberties.</td>
<td>Chapters 4, 5 &amp; 15; pp. 88</td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 2.C:</strong> The 14th Amendment’s “equal protection clause” has often been used to support the advancement of equality.</td>
<td>Chapters 4, 5 &amp; 15; pp. 64, 87–88, 120, 131, 143, 147, 158, 474</td>
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<td><strong>Big Idea 3: American Political Culture and Beliefs</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Enduring Understanding 3.A:</strong> Citizens’ beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.</td>
<td>pp. 16, 163–169, 170–172, 223–224, 492</td>
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### Big Idea 4: Political Participation

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<th>Enduring Understanding 4.A:</th>
<th>Public opinion is measured through scientific polling and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.</th>
<th>Chapter 6; pp. 163, 171–180, 188–189</th>
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<tr>
<td>Enduring Understanding 4.B:</td>
<td>The various forms of media provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.</td>
<td>Chapter 7; pp. 182–188, 210–212</td>
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<td>Enduring Understanding 4.D:</td>
<td>Although laws and amendments have expanded voting rights in the U.S., voting participation varies widely from election to election.</td>
<td>pp. 4, 5, 8–9, 172, 263–274, 277–279</td>
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<td>Enduring Understanding 4.E:</td>
<td>The impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules continues to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.</td>
<td>Chapter 9; pp. 49, 50, 53, 244, 253–260, 273–276</td>
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### Big Idea 5: Interaction Among Branches

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<td>Enduring Understanding 5.B:</td>
<td>The presidency has been enhanced beyond its expressed constitutional powers.</td>
<td>Chapters 12, 16, 17 &amp; 18; pp. 11, 40–44, 331, 400, 415–416, 433</td>
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<td>Enduring Understanding 5.C:</td>
<td>The design of the judicial branch protects the court’s independence as a branch of government, and the emergence and use of judicial review remains a powerful judicial practice.</td>
<td>Chapters 4, 5 &amp; 15; pp. 40–44, 50</td>
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<td>Enduring Understanding 5.D:</td>
<td>The federal bureaucracy is a powerful institution implementing federal policies with sometimes questionable accountability.</td>
<td>Chapter 14; pp. 327</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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