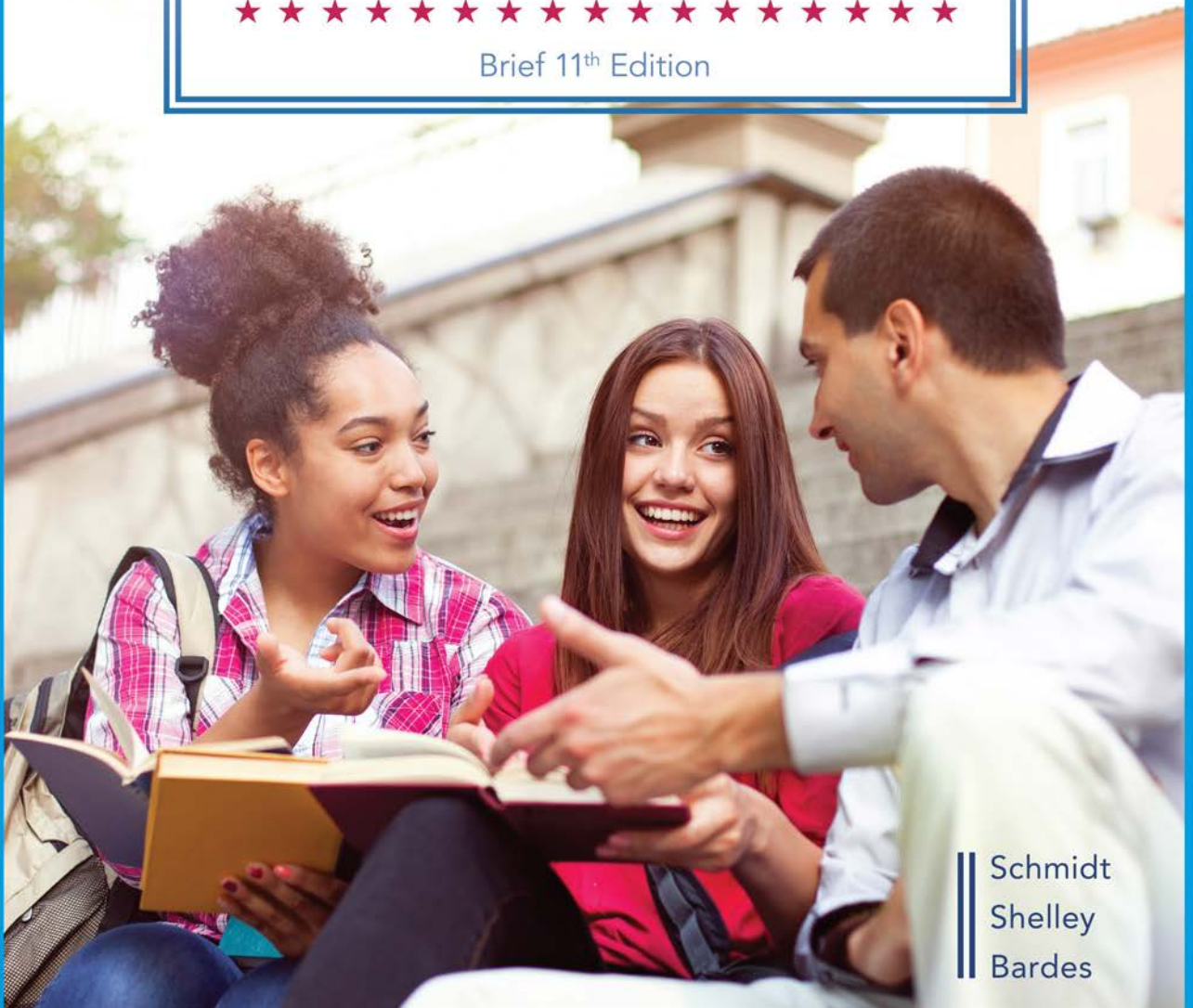




# American Government \*\*\* and \*\*\* Politics Today



Brief 11<sup>th</sup> Edition



Schmidt  
Shelley  
Bardes

# American Government and Politics Today

2021—2022 Brief Edition



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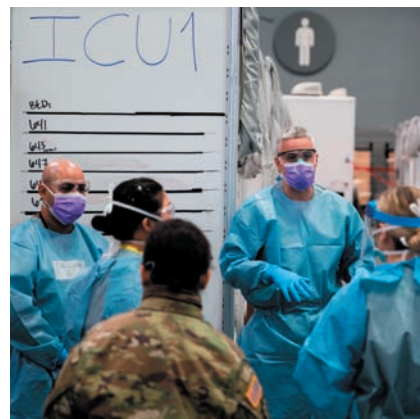
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# Preface

The 2020 elections were among the most consequential ever. In effect, American voters passed judgment on Donald Trump, who they elected as president in 2016. Those elections featured Trump, the Republican, and Democrat Hillary Clinton. Clinton carried the popular vote—but our presidential elections are decided by the *electoral college*. There, Trump won.

Trump backed the Republicans' attempts to repeal Obamacare and their successful effort to pass pro-business tax reforms. In 2018, however, Trump turned to his own issues, imposing tariffs (taxes) on imports from friend and foe alike. Throughout, he championed his “base”—culturally conservative whites—against minority groups, feminists, and liberals alike.

In November 2018, the public made an initial assessment of this record by handing the U.S. House of Representatives to the Democrats—a net 41 seats switched from Republican to Democratic. The dramatic contest between Trump and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden in 2020 completed this popular reassessment, even as America faced multiple crises including the coronavirus pandemic, the resulting economic collapse, and massive demonstrations against perceived police violence.

One thing was and continues to be certain: American politics today will never be without tension, drama, and conflict. Throughout this Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today*, you will read about how our government has responded to past issues and how it is responding to current conflicts.

This edition is basically a condensed and updated version of the larger editions of *American Government and Politics Today*. It has been created specifically for those of you who want a text that presents the fundamental components of the American political system while retaining the quality and readability of the larger editions. You will find that this edition is up to date in every respect. The text, figures, tables, and all pedagogical features reflect the latest available data. We have also included coverage of all recently issued laws, regulations, and court decisions that have—or will have—a significant impact on American society and our political system.

Like the larger editions, this volume places a major emphasis on political participation and involvement. This brief, fourteen-chapter text has been heralded by reviewers as the best essentials text for its affordability, conciseness, clarity, and readability.

## New to This Edition

Of course, every chapter has been thoroughly revised and updated. But there is more.

### Now in Full Color Throughout

A major objective of the Brief Edition has always been to provide students with an affordable textbook. To that end, most previous editions have been limited to using a single color for contrast in most of the text. Now, however, we are able to produce a text in full color and still keep it affordable. The use of color not only makes the chapters more attractive, but it also adds to the impact of the various charts and graphs that appear throughout.

## Major Topical Updates

One of the most important changes in American politics and government since the last Brief Edition has been the rise of Donald Trump. We give ample space to Trump’s populist campaign and his use of the media, including Twitter. In *Chapter 1 The Democratic Republic* and *Chapter 6 Public Opinion, Political Socialization, and the Media*, we describe Trump’s supporters and the problems facing the white working class. We describe the alleged scandals that Trump faced, for example questions about Russian involvement in the 2016 elections. Naturally, we discuss Trump’s impeachment, the coronavirus pandemic, the resultant economic crisis, and the demonstrations against alleged police brutality following the death of George Floyd. Other major new topics include:

- In *Chapter 1 The Democratic Republic*, the progressive reaction against Trump and an updated description of conservatism.
- In *Chapter 3 Federalism*, recent Supreme Court decisions affecting the powers of the states.
- In *Chapter 5 Civil Rights*, Trump’s immigration policies and the growth of the #MeToo movement.
- In *Chapter 6 Public Opinion, Socialization, and the Media*, the growing gap between urban and rural voters.
- In *Chapter 7 Interest Groups and Political Parties*, the impact of Trump’s tariff policies and the changing bases of the major parties.
- In *Chapter 8 Campaigns and Elections*, Joe Biden’s victory in the Democratic primaries and details on the voter suppression controversy.
- In *Chapter 9 Congress*, the decline of the “regular order” based on committees and the growing power of the congressional leadership.
- In *Chapter 10 The President*, the Mueller investigation, Trump’s tax returns, and more.
- In *Chapter 11 The Executive Branch*, what is required to revoke federal regulations and the Trump administration’s attempts to do so.
- In *Chapter 12 The Courts*, recent Supreme Court appointment controversies and crucial court rulings.
- In *Chapter 13 Domestic and Economic Policy*, the CARES Act and the rapid increase in U.S. oil production.
- Finally, *Chapter 14 Foreign Policy* provides the latest details on Syria, North Korea, and Iran. The section on the rise of China is completely rewritten.

## Key to High Student Interest—Topical Debate-Style Features

Every *At Issue* feature focuses on a controversial topic and concludes with a *For Critical Analysis* question to invite critical thinking. Many of these features are new:

- Chapter 1: **Does the Coronavirus Change Everything?**
- Chapter 2: **Is America a Christian Nation?**
- Chapter 3: **Should Recreational Marijuana Be Legal?**
- Chapter 4: **Do Police Use Excessive Force Against Black Men?**

- Chapter 5: **Should We Deport Unauthorized Immigrants?**
- Chapter 6: **Was Impeaching President Trump the Right Thing to Do?**
- Chapter 7: **Should States Raise the Minimum Wage?**
- Chapter 8: **Can Money Buy Elections?**
- Chapter 9: **Is It Time to Get Rid of the Filibuster?**
- Chapter 10: **Should We Elect the President by Popular Vote?**
- Chapter 11: **Can the Coronavirus Bankrupt the Government?**
- Chapter 12: **Should State Judges Be Elected?**
- Chapter 13: **Does Entitlement Spending Corrupt Us?**
- Chapter 14: **How Dangerous Is Putin’s Russia?**

## *Making a Difference* Features

At the end of every chapter, a feature entitled *Making a Difference* enhances our emphasis on student participation. These features provide newly updated, useful information for active citizenship. We offer tips on how to find information on issues, how to learn about your elected representatives, how to join and participate in advocacy organizations, how to protect your civil rights and liberties, and more.

## Other Special Pedagogical Aids

The 2021–2022 Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today* retains many of the pedagogical aids and features of the larger editions, including the following:

- **Learning Outcomes**—A section-by-section focus on crucial questions that students should learn to address.
- **Key Terms**—Important terms that are boldfaced and defined in the text when they are first used. These terms are defined in the text margins, listed at the end of the chapter with the page numbers on which they appear, and included in the Glossary at the back of the book.
- **InterAct**—A mini-feature that directs students to selected websites and encourages them to take one or more actions when they get there.
- **Chapter Summary**—A point-by-point summary of the chapter text.
- **Test Yourself**—A quiz and an essay question at the very end of each chapter.

## Appendices

The Brief Edition of *American Government and Politics Today* includes, as appendices, both the Declaration of Independence (Appendix A) and the U.S. Constitution (Appendix B). The text of the Constitution has been annotated to help you understand the meaning and significance of the various provisions in this important document. Appendix C presents *Federalist Papers* No. 10 and No. 51. These selections are also annotated to help you grasp their importance in understanding the American philosophy of government. Appendix D contains pie charts that explain the expenditures and revenues of the federal government.

## MindTap

MindTap for *American Government and Politics Today: Brief Edition* is an immersive, outcomes-driven online learning experience built upon Cengage content and correlated to a core set of learning outcomes. MindTap is the platform that gives you complete control of your course to craft unique learning experiences that challenge students, build confidence, and elevate performance.

MindTap introduces students to core concepts from the beginning of your course using a simplified learning path that progresses from understanding to application. Built upon proven learning research and theory, auto-graded assessments and content are paired in a visually captivating side-by-side format.

A variety of activity types enable students to flex their critical thinking muscles while soaking in key concepts. Learners are encouraged to read with close attention, write persuasively with logic, interpret data, consider and articulate their own positions on key topics, and much more. You can further engage students with polling questions that spark discussion and activate learning.

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## Instructor Supplements

This Instructor Companion Website is an all-in-one resource for class preparation, presentation, and testing. Accessible through [Cengage.com/login](http://Cengage.com/login) with your faculty account, you will find available for download: book-specific Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations, a Test Bank compatible with multiple learning management systems (LMSs), an Instructor Manual, and more.

The Test Bank, offered in Blackboard, Moodle, Desire2Learn, and Canvas formats, contains learning objective-specific multiple-choice and essay questions for each chapter. Import the test bank into your LMS to edit and manage questions, and to create tests.

The Instructor's Manual includes information about all of the activities and assessments available for each chapter and their correlation to specific learning objectives, an outline, key terms with definitions, a chapter summary, and several ideas for engaging with students with discussion questions, ice breakers, case studies, and social learning activities that may be conducted in an on-ground, hybrid, or online modality.



The Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations are closely tied to the Instructor Manual, providing ample opportunities for generating classroom discussion and interaction. They offer ready-to-use, visual outlines of each chapter, which may be easily customized for your lectures. A guide to teaching online presents technological and pedagogical considerations and suggestions for teaching the Introduction to American Government course when you can't be in the same room with students. Access the Instructor Companion Website for these resources and more at [www.cengage.com/login](http://www.cengage.com/login).

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# 1

# The Democratic Republic



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A crowd at the National Mall in Washington D.C. on July 4, 2019. ► **What do people mean when they wave the American flag?**

The five **Learning Outcomes (LOs)** below are designed to help improve your understanding of this chapter. After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

» **LO 1-1** Define the terms *politics, government, order, liberty, authority, and legitimacy*.

» **LO 1-2** Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy.

» **LO 1-3** Describe majoritarianism, elite theory, and pluralism as theories of how democratic systems work.

» **LO 1-4** Summarize the conflicts that can occur between the values of liberty and order, and between those of liberty and equality.

» **LO 1-5** Discuss conservatism, liberalism, and other popular American ideological positions.

Check your understanding of the material with the Test Yourself section at the end of the chapter.

**P**olitics, for many people, is the “great game,” and it is played for high stakes. After all, the game involves vast sums and the very security of the nation. In the last few years, the stakes have grown higher still.

In 2020, American voters picked former vice president Joseph Biden to be the next president of the United States. Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA), daughter of immigrants from India and Jamaica, was the new vice president. The elections were hard fought. Allegations of election fraud by the outgoing Donald Trump administration were not successful. Biden’s popular vote margin was large. As we explain in this text, however, Americans choose their president through the *electoral college*, not the popular vote. There, the margin



between the candidates was closer. Pending runoff elections, the Republicans appeared to have kept control of the U.S. Senate. Democrats continued to hold the House, though they lost seats. The Biden administration was poised to reverse many of the changes that Trump had made to the executive branch of government, but new legislation seemed unlikely.

## Politics and Government

» **LO 1-1:** Define the terms *politics, government, order, liberty, authority, and legitimacy.*

### Politics

The struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant or withhold benefits or privileges.

What is politics? **Politics** can be understood as the process of resolving conflicts and deciding “who gets what, when, and how.”<sup>1</sup> More specifically, politics is the struggle over power or influence within organizations or informal groups that can grant or withhold benefits or privileges.

We can identify many such groups and organizations. In every community that makes decisions through formal or informal rules, politics exists. For example, when a church decides to construct a new building or hire a new minister, the decision is made politically. Politics can be found in schools, social groups, and any other organized collection of individuals. Of all the organizations that are controlled by political activity, however, the most important is the government.

### Institution

An ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society.

What is the government? Certainly, it is an **institution**—that is, an ongoing organization that performs certain functions for society. An institution has a life separate from the lives of the individuals who are part of it at any given moment in time. The **government** is an institution within which decisions are made that resolve conflicts and allocate benefits and privileges. The government is also the preeminent institution within society because it has the ultimate authority for making these decisions.

### Government

The institution that has the ultimate authority for making decisions that resolve conflicts and allocate benefits and privileges within a society.

### Why Is Government Necessary?

Perhaps the best way to assess the need for government is to examine circumstances in which government, as we normally understand it, does not exist. What happens when multiple groups compete violently with one another for power within a society? There are places around the world where such circumstances exist. A current example is the Middle Eastern nation of Syria, run by the dictator Bashar al-Assad. In 2011, the government killed peaceful protesters, which led to an armed rebellion. The government lost control of much of the country, and its forces repeatedly massacred civilians in contested areas. Some rebels, such as the so-called Islamic State (ISIS), were extreme Islamists. Others were more moderate. By 2013, rebels were fighting each other as well as the government. In much of Syria, law and order had broken down completely. By 2020, when the government forces had regained control of most of the country, almost 500,000 people had been killed, and more than half of the country’s people had been driven from their homes.

As the example of Syria shows, one of the foundational purposes of government is the maintenance of security, or **order**. By keeping the peace, a government protects its people from violence at the hands of private or foreign armies and criminals. If order is not present, it is not possible for the government to provide any of the other benefits that people expect from it. Order is a political value to which we will return later in this chapter.

### Order

A state of peace and security. Maintaining order by protecting members of society from violence and criminal activity is one of the oldest purposes of government.

1. Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith Publisher, 1990). Originally published in 1936.

## Limiting Government Power

A complete collapse of order and security, as seen in Syria, actually is an uncommon event. Much more common is the reverse—too much government control. In January 2020, the human rights organization Freedom House judged that 51 of the world’s countries were “not free.” These nations contain 37 percent of the world’s population. Such countries may be controlled by individual kings or dictators. Saudi Arabia’s king, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, and North Korea’s dictator Kim Jong-un are obvious examples. Alternatively, a political party, such as the Communist Party of China, may monopolize all the levels of power. The military may rule, as in Thailand since 2014.

In all of these examples, the individual or group running the country cannot be removed by legal means. Freedom of speech and the right to a fair trial are typically absent. Dictatorial governments often torture or execute their opponents. Such regimes may also suppress freedom of religion. Revolution, whether violent or nonviolent, is often the only way to change the government.

In short, protection from the violence of domestic criminals or foreign armies is not enough. Citizens also need protection from abuses of power by their own government. To protect the liberties of the people, it is necessary to limit the powers of the government.

**Liberty**—the greatest freedom of the individual consistent with the freedom of other individuals—is a second major political value, along with order. We discuss this value in more detail later in this chapter.

## Authority and Legitimacy

Every government must have **authority**—that is, the right and power to enforce its decisions. Ultimately, the government’s authority rests on its control of the armed forces and the police. In normal times, few people in the United States, however, base their day-to-day activities on fear of the government’s enforcement powers. Most people, most of the time, obey the law because this is what they have always done. Also, if they did not obey the law, they would face the disapproval of friends and family. Consider an example: Do you avoid injuring your friends or stealing their possessions because you are afraid of the police—or because if you undertook these actions, you no longer would have friends?

Under normal circumstances, the government’s authority has broad popular support. People accept the government’s right to establish rules and laws. When authority is broadly accepted, we say that it has **legitimacy**. Authority without legitimacy is a recipe for trouble.

Events in several Arab nations since 2011 can serve as an example. The dictators who ruled Egypt, Libya, and Tunisia had been in power for decades. None of these nations had a tradition of democracy, and so it was possible for undemocratic rulers to enjoy a degree of legitimacy. After years of oppressive behavior, these regimes slowly lost that legitimacy. The rulers survived only because they were willing to employ violence against any opposition. In Egypt and Tunisia, the end came when soldiers refused to use force against massive demonstrations. Having lost all legitimacy, the rulers of these two countries then lost their



Rouzbeh Fouladi/ZUMA Press/Newscom

**Image 1.1** Hard-line Iranian women protest against the U.S. killing of Iranian general Qasem Soleimani. He was believed to be preparing an attack against U.S. forces in Iraq. The photos show Soleimani with Iran’s supreme leader Ali Khamenei (left). ▶ **Does the government of Iran have legitimacy? Why or why not?**

### Liberty

The greatest freedom of the individual that is consistent with the freedom of other individuals in the society.

### Authority

The right and power of a government or other entity to enforce its decisions.

### Legitimacy

Popular acceptance of the right and power of a government or other entity to exercise authority.



authority as well. In Libya, the downfall and death of the dictator Muammar Gaddafi came only after a seven-month civil war. (Egypt’s shaky new democracy collapsed in 2013, however, when the army seized power.)

## Democracy and Other Forms of Government

» **LO 1-2:** Distinguish the major features of direct democracy and representative democracy.

The different types of government can be classified according to which person or group of people controls society through the government.

### Types of Government

#### Totalitarian Regime

A form of government that controls all aspects of the political, social, and economic life of a nation.

At one extreme is a society governed by a **totalitarian regime**. In such a political system, a small group of leaders or a single individual—a dictator—has ultimate control over all decisions for the society. Every aspect of political, social, and economic life is controlled by the government. The power of the ruler is total (thus, the term *totalitarianism*). Examples of such regimes include Germany under Adolf Hitler and the former Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin.

#### Authoritarianism

A type of regime in which only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions exist that are not under the government’s control.

A second type of system is authoritarian government. **Authoritarianism** differs from totalitarianism in that only the government itself is fully controlled by the ruler. Social and economic institutions, such as churches, businesses, and labor unions, exist that are not under the government’s control.

Many of our terms for describing the distribution of political power are derived from the ancient Greeks, who were the first Western people to study politics systematically. One form of rule was known as *aristocracy*, literally meaning “rule by the best.” In practice, this meant rule by wealthy members of ancient families. Another term from the Greeks is *theocracy*, which literally means “rule by God” (or the gods). In practice, theocracy means rule by self-appointed religious leaders. Iran is a rare example of a country in which supreme power is in the hands of a religious leader, the Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. One of the most straightforward Greek terms is *oligarchy*, which simply means “rule by a few.”

#### Democracy

A system of government in which political authority is vested in the people.

The Greek term for rule by the people was **democracy**. Within the limits of their culture, some of the Greek city-states operated as democracies. Today, in much of the world, the people will not grant legitimacy to a government unless it is based on democracy.

#### Direct Democracy

A system of government in which political decisions are made by the people directly, rather than by their elected representatives.

### Direct Democracy as a Model

The Athenian system of government in ancient Greece is usually considered the purest model for **direct democracy** because the citizens of that community debated and voted directly on all laws, even those put forward by the ruling council of the city. (Women, resident foreigners, and slaves, however, were excluded because they were not citizens.) This form of government required a high level of participation from every citizen. The Athenians believed that although a high level of participation might lead to instability in government, citizens, if informed about the issues, could be trusted to make wise decisions.

#### Initiative

A procedure by which voters can petition to vote on a law or a constitutional amendment.

Direct democracy also has been practiced at the local level in Switzerland and, in the United States, in New England town meetings. At these town meetings, important decisions—such as levying taxes, hiring city officials, and deciding local ordinances—are made by majority vote. Some states provide a modern adaptation of direct democracy for their citizens. In these states, representative democracy is supplemented by the **initiative** or the **referendum**. Both processes enable the people to vote directly on laws or constitutional amendments.

#### Referendum

An electoral device whereby legislative or constitutional measures are referred by the legislature to the voters for approval or disapproval.