

A P U N I T E D S T A T E S G O V E R N M E N T & P O L I T I C S

Summer Assignment Part One: The Constitution

Available at: [HTTP://CONSTITUTIONCENTER.ORG/NCC_EDU_STUDENTS.ASPX](http://constitutioncenter.org/ncc_edu_students.aspx)

Directions: Read the US Constitution and complete the following questions directly on this handout. We will discuss this the first day of class and you will be responsible for this information on the first test.

PART ONE: THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. Read each article of the Constitution. Summarize the general purpose or subject of each article in one sentence in the chart below.

Article I	
Article II	
Article III	
Article IV	
Article V	
Article VI	
Article VII	

2. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the House?

3. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for members of the Senate?

4. What eligibility requirements does the Constitution establish for the President?

5. The powers of the Constitution that are specifically granted to the branches of government or to office holders are called express powers.
 - a. Identify two express powers of the president.

 - b. What are the express powers of the vice president?

 - c. Identify two express powers of Congress.

6. According to the principle of checks and balances, each branch of the government must have control over the other branches. Look at the first three articles of the Constitution and identify one of each type of checks and balances. Indicate where each power is listed in the Constitution.
 - a. A power that the executive branch has over the legislative branch:
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

 - b. A power that the executive branch holds over the judicial branch:
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

 - c. A power that the legislative branch holds over the executive branch.
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

 - d. A power that the legislative branch holds over the judicial branch.
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

- e. A power that the judicial branch holds over the executive branch.
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

- f. A power that the judicial branch holds over the legislative branch.
This can be found in what Article and Section of the Constitution?

7. According to Article I of the Constitution, who has the power to declare war?

8. What power does the Constitution give the President in the area of war?

PART TWO: MAJORITY AND SUPERMAJORITY

The Constitution requires a simple majority for some actions and a supermajority for others. A simple majority means more than half, while supermajority requirements can involve a 2/3 majority or a 3/4 majority. Most elections in the United States require a plurality, or the most votes, but not necessarily a majority.

9. Veto Power

- a. What bodies have the power to override a presidential veto?
- b. What margin is required to override a presidential veto?
- c. Where in the Constitution is the veto power described?

10. Ratification

- a. What body has the power to ratify treaties?
- b. What margin is required to ratify treaties?
- c. Where in the Constitution is the ratification power described?

11. Impeachment Power

- a. What body has the power to impeach the president?
- b. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?

12. Conviction

- a. What body has the power to convict the president of charges brought against him in the impeachment process and thereby remove him from the presidency?
- b. What margin is required to convict and remove a president?
- c. Where in the Constitution is the impeachment power described?

13. Nomination Process

- a. What body has the power to accept or reject a president's nominations to the Supreme Court?
- b. What margins is required to elevate a president's nominee to a seat on the Court?
- c. Where in the Constitution are judicial nominations described?

14. Elections

- a. If no candidate for the presidency wins a simple majority of the total number of electoral votes, what body has the power to choose the president?

b. What margin is required to choose the president?

c. Where in the Constitution is the Electoral College described? (Hint: there are two parts)

15. The Constitution specifies a three-fourths majority for just one process. What is that process?

16. See Article VI. Explain the supremacy clause in your own words.

17. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be proposed?

18. What are two ways that amendments to the Constitution can be ratified?

PART THREE: THE AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Some parts of the Constitution require a simple majority, others a supermajority, while still others protect citizens from the will of the majority. The first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights protect citizens from the will of the majority. In other words, no majority could vote to take these rights away. Read each amendment to the Constitution and answer the questions below.

19. Outline the general purpose of the Bill of Rights

1 st Amendment	
2 nd Amendment	
3 rd Amendment	
4 th Amendment	
5 th Amendment	
6 th Amendment	
7 th Amendment	
8 th Amendment	
9 th Amendment	
10 th Amendment	

20. Which amendment(s) of the Constitution protect the rights of women?

21. Summarize what this amendment(s) of the Constitution says:

22. Which amendments (s) of the Constitution protect the rights of African Americans?
23. How were US Senators chosen before the Seventeenth Amendment?
24. The Twenty-Fifth Amendment describes the sequence of events that would install the vice president as acting president against the will of the president. Outline that sequence of events.
25. How many times is the word *privacy* mentioned in the Constitution? (Articles and Amendments)

John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government*

Available at: <http://www.constitution.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm>

Directions: Read the following sections of John Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* and answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper.

Chapter II – On the State of Nature

1. Summarize Locke's description of the state of nature.

Chapter IX

2. Summarize the first question Locke poses in paragraph one of this section.
3. The great chief end, therefore, of men uniting into commonwealth, and putting themselves under government is
4. List two of the three wants Locke lists next.
5. What "inconveniences" are discussed in the next paragraph?
6. What two powers does Locke say man has?
7. What does man give up as result?

Chapter XI

8. The great end of man's entering into society is what?
9. What are some the "bounds of trust" that are discussed in Section 142?

Chapter XIX

10. What is the importance of the Constitution?

Summary

11. What documents in American politics have been influenced by John Locke's philosophies?
12. What parts of government and ways of thinking can be traced to Locke?