

AP U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Unit 2- American Political Ideologies and Beliefs

American political beliefs are shaped by founding ideals, core values, linkage institutions (e.g., elections, political parties, interest groups, and the media in all its forms), and the changing demographics of citizens. These beliefs about government, politics, and the individual's role in the political system influence the creation of public policies.

American political culture is comprised of citizens' beliefs about government, including their perceptions, relationships, and interactions relative to one another and to their government. Core beliefs about government center around different interpretations and applications of political values, such as individualism (the focus on individual rights and responsibilities), the rule of law (the notion that the law is supreme over all persons), limited government (the idea that the government's power is enumerated and constrained by constitutional rules), and equality of opportunity.

Citizens learn of and develop attitudes about government through political socialization. Several factors contribute to political socialization including family, schools, peers, and social environments. How much influence these factors have on a person's political beliefs relates in turn to lifecycle effects, dispositions that change with age or membership in a group experiencing the same events at the same time, and generational effects, which involve exposure across ages and groups to the same political information. Both lifecycle and generational effects are fueled by past and present political events.

American political culture, through expressed citizen opinions, influences governmental institutions in the formation, implementation, and evaluation of public policy. For example, how people view the principles of freedom and individualism shape opinions about domestic and economic policy, including the appropriate range and types of such policies. The tension behind citizen beliefs about the appropriate role of government is revealed through policy debates and legislation. Some argue that government should take an active role in promoting social equality and ensuring economic opportunity, while others warn that excessive regulation violates individual freedoms.

Major public policy programs are rooted in ideological trends that span decades. For example, ideology impacts the nature and extent to which the federal government shares powers with state governments and how it regulates the marketplace over time, as evidenced by debates about monetary and fiscal policies. Globalization has had an impact on U.S. political beliefs and public policy. How the government determines the nature and direction of social policy, such as that involving immigration or health-care reform, is also impacted by ideological pressure from the right and left, and foreign policy is influenced by citizens' beliefs about the U.S. government's role on the world stage.

AP CB Unit 1 Big Ideas

Big Idea 4 Competing Policy Making Interests	How do our core beliefs about the role of government affect our behavior?
Big Idea 4 Competing Policy-Making Interests	How does our view of what freedom is shape our opinions?
Big Idea 5 Methods of Political Analysis	Why are some opinion polls better than others?
Big Idea 5 Methods of Political Analysis	How can policy-makers use information from political science to make decisions?



Reading Activity	You are expected to read the textbook chapters, required AP documents, required AP Supreme Court cases, and supplemental readings as assigned. <i>Stories of a Nation</i> (SOAN) Textbook Chapters: Chapters 10-12
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College Board resources for our Unit 2 are labeled as Unit 4.

Vocabulary

Demographics	Opinion polls	Public Opinion	Generational effects
Political culture	Benchmark polls	Political ideologies	Libertarian ideology
Political socialization	Tracking polls	Political spectrum	Keynesian economic theory
Core values	Polling methodology	Liberal ideology	Supply-side economic theory
Individualism	Exit polls	Conservative ideology	Monetary policy
Equality of opportunity	Push polls	Moderate	Fiscal policy
Free enterprise	Random sample	Political polarization	Federal Reserve Board
Rule of law	Representative sample	Democratic Party	
Globalization	Focus group	Republican Party	
Scientific polling	Sampling error		
Public opinion polls			

Citizen beliefs about government are shaped by the intersection of demographics, political culture, and dynamic social change.

LO MPA- 1.A Explain the relationship between core beliefs of U.S. citizens and attitudes about the role of Government. (SOAN 10.1)

LO MPA Explain how cultural factors influence political attitudes and socialization.

Political Socialization and Political Attitudes (SOAN 10.2)

Define Political Socialization	List the factors that contribute to Political Socialization	Explain the role that Political Socialization plays in forming Political Attitudes.

Notes:

- As a result of globalization, U.S. political culture has both influenced and been influenced by the values of other countries.
- Generational and lifecycle effects also contribute to the political socialization that influences an individual's political attitudes.
- The relative importance of major political events to the development of individual political attitudes is an example of political socialization

Public opinion is measured through scientific polling, and the results of public opinion polls influence public policies and institutions.

LO MPA- 2.A Describe the elements of a scientific poll.



Elements of a Scientific Poll (SOAN 11.2)

	Define	Examples
Sampling Techniques		
Identification of respondents		
Mass Survey		
Focus Group		
Sampling Error		
Type/Format of Questions		

Methods of Polling (SOAN 11.2)

	Define	Examples
Opinion Polls		
Benchmark/Tracking Polls		
Entrance and Exit Polls		

LO MPA- 2.B Explain the quality and credibility of claims based on public opinion data.

Impact of Polling (SOAN 11.3)

Answer the following prompts using terminology and examples from the elements of a scientific poll and methods of polling.

Explain how public opinion data can impact elections.	
Explain how public opinion data can impact policy debates	

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Note: The relationship between scientific polling and elections and policy debates is affected by the importance of public opinion as a source of political influence in a given election or policy debate and the reliability of public opinion data.

Widely held political ideologies shape policy debates and choices in American policies.

LO PMI- 4.A Explain how ideologies of the two major parties shape policy debates.

Policy Debates (SOAN 12.1)

Explain the policy debates of each party/ideology	Democrats (Liberal)	Republicans(Conservative)
Immigration		
Death Penalty		
Gay Marriage		
Legalization of Marijuana		
Military/Defense Spending		
Social Security		
Affirmative Action		
Government Spending		
Taxes		
Abortion		



International Relations		
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LO PMI- 4.B Explain how US political culture (eg., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influence the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.

Political Culture (SOAN 12.1)

Explain how U.S. political culture (e.g., values, attitudes, and beliefs) influences the formation, goals, and implementation of public policy over time.	
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Notes:

- Because the U.S. is a democracy with a diverse society, public policies generated at any given time reflect the attitudes and beliefs of citizens who choose to participate in politics at that time.
- The balancing dynamic of individual liberty and government efforts to promote stability and order has been reflected in policy debates and their outcomes over time.

LO PMI- 4.C Describe different political ideologies on the role of government in regulating the marketplace.

LO PMI- 4.D Explain how political ideologies vary on the government's role in regulating the marketplace.

Economic Terms (SOAN 12.2)

	<i>Keynesian Economics</i>	<i>Monetary Policy</i>	<i>Fiscal Policy</i>
Define			
Explain			

Economics and Political Ideology (SOAN 12.2)

Describe and Explain different political ideologies regarding:	Liberal	Conservative	Libertarian
Describe and Explain the role of Government in regulating the marketplace			
Briefly describe each stance on the policy.	Taxation: Welfare:	Taxation: Welfare:	Taxation: Welfare:



	Minimum Wage:	Minimum Wage:	Minimum Wage:
	Government Spending:	Government Spending:	Government Spending:

Note: Policy trends concerning the level of government involvement in social issues reflect the success of conservative or liberal perspectives in political parties.

LO PMI- 4.E Explain how political ideologies vary on the role of government in addressing social issues.

LO PMI- 4.F Explain how ideologies impact policy on social issues.

Social Issues and Political Ideology (SOAN 12.4 & Application)

Describe and Explain different political ideologies regarding:	Liberal	Conservative	Libertarian
Describe and Explain the role of the government in addressing social issues.			
Briefly describe each stance on the policy.	Abortion: Gay Rights: Death Penalty: Gun Control:	Abortion: Gay Rights: Death Penalty: Gun Control:	Abortion: Gay Rights: Death Penalty: Gun Control:

Remixed from T. McKibben

