

Essay Question #8: Every 4 years we elect a new president.

I. Examine the stages of the campaign.

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1. First, the president must win delegates.
 - a. Campaigning begins long before someone declares himself as a presidential candidate. They try to line up supporters to win caucuses or primaries in key states and raise money beforehand.
 - b. A president tries to win delegates for presidential primaries. 80% of Democrats and 83% of Republicans are chosen this way. There are four types:
 - Proportional Representation - Delegates to conventions proportional on the basis of votes.
 - winner takes all - the winner gets all delegates to the convention (in California)
 - Delegate Selection - the voters choose the delegates to the convention.
 - Delegate selection and presidential polls.- a combination of the two (in New Hampshire)
 - c. A presidential candidate can win delegates from Caucuses and Conventions.
 - This is far simpler than the primary method, but only 8 states use a caucus and / or a convention to select delegates. (done in Iowa)
 - d. Presidents use a variety of strategies to gain delegates, such as heavy campaigning in Iowa and New Hampshire to receive good early showings in these states.
2. Second, the president must capture the Convention.
 - a. A National Nominating Convention is the national meeting of delegates selected who assemble to nominate the president and Vice presidential candidates.
 - This lasts four nights and can be central to the president's victory in the fall.
 - b. At the nominating conventions, delegates debate the party platforms.
 - most presidents attempt to implement this party platform.
 - c. In addition, the presidential nominee must choose a vice - presidential candidate. This candidate tends to "balance the ticket" such as Walter Mondale and Ferraro in 1984.
3. Finally, the president must Campaign in the fall.
 - a. The candidates must have a good image - the media is central to defining this image.
 - There are questions the candidates ask:
 - Should the opposition be attacked or ignored?
 - Should the campaign be aggressive?
 - How should the image of the candidate be tailored?
 - The Presidential campaign is very strenuous.
 - b. The presidential debate can be central in a president's campaigns. Today, over 80 million people watched the 1992 debates.
 - The 1960 debate boosted Kennedy's campaign.

II. What are the Factors that appear to be important in winning the presidency?

(same as above)

1. All of the above mentioned factors are important in winning the presidency. In addition, there are three factors which explain individual voting behavior.

III. What are the three major factors that explain individual voting behavior? Give examples of each of these to show why they are important.

pp. 333 - 339

1. First, a candidate's party identification has often had the greatest impact on individual voting behavior.
 - There is a large block of voters in the southern states who have traditionally voted democrat.

-All but a few people identify themselves as any other than a Republican, Democrat, or an independent.

-However, in recent elections, such as Reagan in 1980 and '84, many states have voted for republicans because of their political appeal.

2. A second factor that explains individual voting behavior is a person's candidate appeal.

-Ronald Reagan generated positive candidate appeal in part by asserting values the public found lacking in Carter - leadership and strength.

-Positive appeal includes a candidate's experience, leadership, good judgement, competence, and strength.

3. A final factor which explains individual voting behavior is a candidate's stand on issues.

-This idea of voting based on issues can be based on what a candidate pledges to do in his administration or what he has already done in his administration.

-An example of voting on issues was when Nixon asserted in 1968 that he had a plan to end the Vietnam War, and was voted in as president. Since he didn't reveal his plan, he was able to obtain more votes from both people who wanted to escalate the war and those who wanted a cease-fire.

IV. What role does the electoral college play in the election of the president?

pp. 345 - 346

1. Each state has as many electors as it has representatives and senators.

2. Candidates who win a plurality of the votes in a state secure all the state's electoral votes.

3. The electors then go to the state capitol on a Monday in December to cast their ballots. In January, Congress counts these ballots and declares the winning Pres. & V.P.

V. Would you favor an abolition of the electoral college? Why or Why not?

pp. 345 - 346, pp. 362 - 363

1. Yes

-small states and large "swing" states are overrepresented.

-the winner-takes-all aspect of the College distorts the idea of equal representation of the voters.

-electors can vote for a person other than the candidate for whom they are

-if no candidate wins the majority, the issue is thrown into the House of Representatives, where each state delegation has only one vote.

2. No

-Defenders of the Electoral college say that its opponents exaggerate the possible dangers.

-They say the electoral college has been fairly effective so far, so why fix it?

-They say the electoral college avoids uncertainty when the popular vote is fairly close.

VI. If you do favor abolition of the electoral college, what would you propose as an alternative?

pp. 362 - 363

1. The most frequently proposed reform of the electoral college system is to create a direct popular election of the president. If no candidate receives at least 40 percent of the total popular vote, a runoff election will be held between the two contenders with the most votes.

2. Another proposal for Electoral college reform would be a "national bonus plan" where the electoral college would be retained, but would be heavily weighted toward the candidate with the greatest amount of popular votes. The winner of the popular vote would automatically obtain 102 extra electoral votes - one for each state and D.C. If no majority is obtained in the electoral college, there would be a runoff election between the candidates who won the most popular votes.

VII. What problems might arise under your reform proposal?

p. 363

1. Those people for popular election of the president contend that

-this plan would give every voter the same weight in the presidential balloting. We would have a one person-one vote system.

2. Those against the popular election of the president contend that
-this plan would undermine federalism because a national election system would be created.
-It might make presidential campaigns more remote from the voters, and candidates might stress television and the mass media instead of personal visits.
-this plan would encourage unrestrained majority rule. The smaller states would lose some of their present influence.

3. Those for the "national bonus plan" contend that
-the popular vote winner would almost certainly be the electoral vote winner.
-this plan would encourage increased voter turnout.

4. Those against the national bonus plan contend that
-minor parties and independent candidates would be discouraged to run for the presidency under this system.

Essay #2: Given the history of the period before the Constitutional Convention,

I. Why was Federalism a necessary part of the founder's plan?

pp. 55 - 56

1. A Confederation had already been attempted. This proved ineffective for uniting the nation.
2. The people did not want a strong, unitary national government.
3. Federalism was the only system which provided unity without uniformity.
4. Federalism had many advantages:
 - a. First, it checks the growth of tyranny
-Madison said if "factious leaders kindle a flame within their particular states, national leaders can check the spread of the 'conflagration' through the other states."
-A political party which loses power in the national government may still hold office in a number of states.
 - b. Second, it allows unity without uniformity
-many controversial issues can be left up to the state and local governments to decide and experiment on.
 - c. Federalism encourages experimentation.
-States can serve as proving grounds for different policies, such as allowing younger drinking ages or younger ages for driver's licenses in different states.
 - d. Federalism keeps the government closer to the people.
-Many people have the opportunity to serve on city councils, school boards, and local neighborhood associations.

II. In what ways is federalism consistent or inconsistent with checks and balances?

pp. 29 - 30, pp. 34 - 37, notes

1. Federalism is consistent with checks and balances. Through Checks and Balances, the several branches of the state and national governments check themselves, while through Federalism, the National government can check the State and Local governments.
2. I'm not sure about the answers to this and the next questions. I will probably ask Dr. Magleby about it.

III. In what ways is federalism consistent or inconsistent with separation of powers?

pp. 28 - 30, notes

1. Federalism is consistent with separation of powers. Separation of powers divides the power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches while Federalism divides power among the state and national governments.

IV. What are examples of federalism in the U.S. Constitution?

pp. 56 - 61

1. Powers of the national government:

-the national government has express, inherent, and implied powers.
-there are four constitutional pillars-the national supremacy clause, the war power, the power over interstate commerce, and the power to tax and spend for the general welfare-which have permitted a tremendous expansion of federal functions.

2. The powers of the states:

-To create a republican form of government.
-To charter local governments.
-To conduct elections.
-To exercise all powers not delegated to the national government or denied to the states by the constitution.

3. The constitution provides for concurrent powers between the States and the national government. Among these concurrent powers are the following:

-Taxing citizens and businesses.
-Borrowing and spending money.
-Establishing courts.
-Passing and enforcing laws.
-Protecting civil rights.

4. Finally, the constitution provides for interstate relations. Among these are:

-The full faith and credit clause requires that the courts accept and enforce the civil judgements of the courts of other states.
-The constitution provides for interstate privileges and immunities-states must extend to citizens of other states the same privileges and immunities granted to their own citizens.
-The constitution provides for criminals in one state to be delivered to the executive authorities in the state they committed the crime in, called extradition.

V. What are examples of federalism in national politics?

pp. 69 - 74, p. 62, chapter 3 summary

1. Over the past 200 years, there has been a drift of power from institutions such as families and churches to government, especially the national government.

2. The Federal government uses many techniques to control the state governments. Among these are the following:

-Direct orders, such as the Equal Opportunity act of 1982, was a direct order that must be complied with under threat of criminal or civil sanction.

-Cross over and cross cutting sanctions are used by the federal government to limit funds if a state does not comply with certain requirements. An example of a cross over sanction is the Emergency Highway Conservation Act of 1974.

-The national government uses total and partial preemption to create laws that "override" state laws simply because national law is higher than state laws according to the national supremacy clause of the constitution. An example of mandatory partial preemption is the Clean Air Act of 1990.

-The state and local governments still can interpret the laws created by the federal government to represent their interests, however.

VI. What are examples of federalism in our political culture?

pp. 62 - 65, 74 - 77, chapter 3 summary

1. The growth of big government has created controversy. Those who favor national action are called centralists. Those who do not are called decentralists. It is no longer clear what stand conservatives and liberals will take on each of this debate. Shifting political issues continue to lead to shifting allegiances among the various levels of government.

2. Recently, with Reagan and Bush in office, the government has held more of a conservative, decentralist, and state's right's position.

VII. How has the relationship between the national and state governments changed over time?

pp. 74 - 77, 62 - 64

-over time, the national government has become more powerful. However, this is beginning to change and the states have recently contributed far more funds to projects that were previously funded by the federal government.

VIII. What role does the national government play in orienting state policy?

pp. 65 - 74

1. First, the courts play a role in orienting state policy.
 - in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), the Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall set forth the doctrine of national supremacy. This made it possible for the federal government to extend its powers dramatically over the period since then.
 - The authority of federal judges to review the activities of state and local governments has expanded dramatically in recent decades because of modern judicial interpretations of the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments.
2. Second, the courts use federal grants to orient state policy.
 - they use Categorical-formula grants.
 - they use Project Grants.
 - they use block grants.
 - they use Revenue Sharing.
3. Finally, they implement federal mandates often by limiting these grants.
 - this has been discussed in section V.