

Principles of Government

Characteristics of a State/Nation

- Population
- Territory
- Sovereignty
- Government

How a government comes into power

- ◉ Force
- ◉ Evolution
- ◉ Divine Right
- ◉ Social Contract Theory

John Locke

- Political philosopher that believed all human beings by virtue of being human, have “inalienable natural rights”
- A legitimate government cannot exist until the people have given their consent to be governed
- Social Contract Theory- individuals agree with others to create and live under a government and give it the power to make and enforce laws.

Declaration of Independence

John Locke

- Natural rights: “life, liberty, property”
- Consent of the governed: government derives its authority by sanction of the people
- Men being by nature, all free, equal & independent
- Limited government: people have certain rights the government cannot take away
- Right to revolt

Thomas Jefferson

- Natural rights: “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”
- Governments are instituted among men deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed
- All men are created equal
- The history of the King is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations
- Right to revolt: “it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government

Why is government necessary?

What is the purpose of government?

Once a government is established, it must make 3 decisions regarding the distribution of power

Participation by the people

- ⦿ Dictatorship- power is concentrated with the government; no public participation allowed
- ⦿ Democracy- power is withdrawn from the government occasionally; public participation is required

Once a government is established, it must make 3 decisions regarding the distribution of power

Distribution of power amongst different layers of government

- Unitary- power is concentrated at the national layer
- Federal- power is shared between national and state/local governments
- Confederate- power is concentrated at the state/local layer while the national layer has limited power

Layers of Government: United States

Federal System

- ◉ National- D.C
- ◉ State- Texas
- ◉ Local- Pflugerville

Branches of the U.S Government

Separation of Powers principle

- ◉ Legislative- Congress
 - make the law
- ◉ Executive- President
 - enforce the law
- ◉ Judicial- Courts
 - interpret the law

Once a government is established, it must make 3 decisions regarding the distribution of power

Distribution of power within the national layer

- Presidential- The executive and legislative branches of government are separate and equal
- Parliamentary- led by a prime minister; the executive, and their cabinet, are members of the legislative branch, and preside over its functions

U.S Government

- ◉ Dictatorship vs. Democracy
- ◉ Unitary, Confederate, Federal
- ◉ Parliamentary vs. Presidential

Majority Rule (Democracy) vs.
Individual Rights (Constitutional Protections)?

Evolution of Individual Rights

- Ancient World- citizens work to promote the common good
- Middle Ages-society was hierarchical; caste society
- Renaissance-people believe they could improve their positions in society; increase in commercial trade over long distances; invention of modern printing to increase communication and knowledge
- Reformation-emphasized the direct relationship with God; made the church less of a focal point for communities
- Age of Enlightenment- (Age of the Founding Fathers)
Intellectual movement that celebrated human reason; spirit of scientific discovery

Principles of the Constitution

- **Federalism**
 - division of power between federal, state, & local governments
- **Separation of Powers**
 - each branch has separate but co-equal power
- **Checks and Balances**
 - ability of branches to monitor actions of the other branches
- **Limited Government**- people have certain rights the government cannot take away
- **Popular Sovereignty**
 - power to the people
- **Judicial Review**
 - Marbury vs. Madison*- power to declare acts unconstitutional