

# Unit 5 Study Guide – Political Participation

## **Directions**

This is your study resource to use as we progress through our unit. It lists objectives, concepts, terms, and an outline of items that may appear on the unit exam. The essential guiding questions will help you tie together the important information from the chapter.

As you familiarize yourself with these terms, it is important to not only DEFINE or IDENTIFY the term, but also to know the term's importance. Ask yourself: Why is it important? How does it relate to the material we are studying? What relationship does a term have to another term on the list? IF YOU MERELY IDENTIFY OR DEFINE THE TERM WITHOUT KNOWING ITS IMPORTANCE YOU WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SUCCEED ON TESTS AND QUIZZES.

## **Reading Assignments**

Government in America: chapters 7-10

## **By the end of Unit 5, students will be able to...**

- **Explain** factors associated with political ideology, efficacy, structural barriers, and demographics influence the nature and degree of political participation.
- **Explain** how political parties, interest groups, and social movements provide opportunities for participation and influence how people relate to government and policymakers.
- **Analyze** the impact of federal policies on campaigning and electoral rules and how they continue to be contested by both sides of the political spectrum.
- **Identify** the various forms of media that provide citizens with political information and influence the ways in which they participate politically.

## **Chapter 7 – The Mass Media and the Political Agenda**

### **Essential Guiding Questions**

1. Explain the media's role as a linkage institution.
2. Explain how increasingly diverse choices of media and communication outlets influence political institutions and behavior.

### **Key Vocabulary**

high tech politics  
Press conference  
Electronic media  
chains  
Sound Bites  
Mass media

Investigative journalism  
narrowcasting  
beats  
Plurality Vote  
Policy agenda  
policy entrepreneurs

Media Events  
Print media  
Selective exposure  
Trial balloons

## **Chapter 8 – Political Parties**

### **Essential Guiding Questions**

1. Describe linkage institutions
2. Explain the function and impact of political parties on the electorate and government.
3. Explain why and how political parties change and adapt.
4. Explain how structural barriers impact third-party and independent success.

### **Key Vocabulary**

Political party  
Party image  
Party machines  
Open primaries

Linkage institution  
Party identification  
patronage  
national convention

Rational choice theory  
Ticket splitting  
Closed primaries  
National committee

National chairperson  
Party realignment  
Third parties  
Coalition government

coalition  
New Deal coalition  
Winner take all  
Responsible party model

Party dealignment  
Proportional representation  
Blue Dog Democrats  
Closed Primaries

## Chapter 9 – Campaigns and Voting Behavior

### *Essential Guiding Questions*

1. Describe the voting rights protections in the Constitution and in legislation
2. Describe different models of voting behavior.
3. Explain the roles that individual choice and state laws play in voter turnout in elections.
4. Explain how different processes work in a US presidential election.
5. Explain how the Electoral College facilitates and/or impedes democracy.
6. Explain how the different processes work in U.S. congressional elections.
7. Explain how campaign organizations and strategies affect the election process.
8. Explain how the organization, finance, and strategies of national political campaigns affect the election process.

### *Key Vocabulary*

nomination  
McGovern Fraser Commission  
Campaign strategy  
Party Platform  
Superdelegates  
National party convention  
Caucus  
direct mail  
Mandate theory of elections

policy voting  
Campaign contributions  
Independent expenditures  
Federal Election Campaign Act  
frontloading  
527 groups  
501( c ) groups  
Federal Election Commission  
Presidential primaries

Invisible primary  
Soft Money  
Political Action Committees  
Super PACs  
Civic duty  
suffrage  
Political efficacy  
Motor Voter Act  
Electoral College

## Chapter 10 – Interest Groups

### *Essential Guiding Questions*

1. Explain the benefits and potential problems of interest group influence on elections and policy making
2. Explain how variation in types and resources of interest groups affects their ability to influence elections and policy making.
3. Explain how various political actors influence public policy outcomes.

### *Key Vocabulary*

Interest Group  
hyperpluralism  
Pluralism  
Iron triangles  
potential group  
Actual group

collective good  
Free-rider problem  
Selective benefits  
Single-issue groups  
Lobbying  
Electioneering

Political Action Committees  
Union shop  
Right-to-work laws  
Elitism  
Public interest lobbies

## Unit Review and Enduring Understandings

- The United States has a two-party system in which the Democratic Party and the Republican Party have different platforms and political bases, and promote different policies.
- Political parties organize to help people with broad common interests win elections and influence public policy.
- Voting in elections is one of the main ways that citizens can participate in government.
- Interest groups and public opinion can have a large role in shaping public policy.
- Mass media informs and shapes public opinion, plays an important role in election campaigns, and serves as a check on government power.