Role of Political and Legal Systems

Unit 5
Political Labels

• Liberal – call for peaceful and gradual change of the nations political system, would like to see the government involved in the promotion of the social welfare of the nation’s citizens

• Conservative – favor keeping things the way they are, they are cautious. About making change especially if it involves a lot of government involvement, they feel that less government is best

• Centrist or moderate – share many viewpoints with both liberals and conservatives, they do not hold extreme views of their own and advocate a slower approach to political change

• Reactionary - on the far right of the political spectrum, want things to go back the way they were, are willing to use extreme methods to achieve their goals including repressive government power

• Radical – on the far left of the political spectrum, call for widespread and rapid change in the political, social, and economic system, may be willing to resort to extreme methods to bring about change including violence
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

- The two-party system
  - Political Party
    - Group of persons who seek to control government through winning elections and holding offices
    - Educate public & have a diversity of opinions
      - Advantages: stable, predictable
      - Disadvantages: difficult to change (Republicans & Democrats have been the two major party’s for many years)
  - Roots
    - Constitution says nothing and George Washington warned us but rival political parties had already formed
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

- Democratic Party
  - Thomas Jefferson began party: Democratic Republican Party
    - Later split into Democrats and Whigs
      - Democratic party took the name to stress their ties to the people and supported Andrew Jackson
      - Whigs (National Republicans) rose to compete with the Democrats
      - Both parties remained the 2 major parties until the 1850's
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

● Republican Party
  ○ Break away group of Whigs and Democrats who opposed slavery formed the Republican Party
    ■ Did not necessarily agree on slavery issue but did feel it should stay out of the northern territories
    ■ Abraham Lincoln was elected as the 1st Republican president
      ■ Democrats and Republicans have have been the two major parties in our system since
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

- Third Parties
  - They have always competed for power in our 2 party system
    - Support unpopular or debated issues
      - Populist party: 8 hr workday and direct election of senators
    - Single Issue Party
      - Prohibition Party: opposed alcohol and wanted to see it banned
    - Ideological Party
      - Libertarian Party: opposes government interference in private enterprise
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

- Problems Facing Third Parties
  - Hard to get on the ballot
  - Difficult to raise money
  - Often supporters vote for someone else because they do not want to waste their vote voting for someone they believe will not win.
3rd Party Creation

3rd Party examples
- Bull Moose Party
- Libertarian Party
- Green Party
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Development of American Political Parties

- Other Parties
  - Multiparty Systems (Canada, Germany, and Israel)
    - Must form a coalition (an alliance with another party or parties so that together they command a majority of votes)
  - One Party System
    - Communist Party: Peoples Republic of China
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

- Local Level
  - Organize volunteers to get people to vote & work to elect people to local government offices
    - i.e. sheriff, county commissioners, and mayors

- State level
  - Help organize campaigns to get people elected at the state
    - i.e. state legislators, governor, attorney general, lieutenant governor, and U.S. Congressperson
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

- National Level
  - Organize campaigns to get candidates elected to national office
  - Organize National Convention
    - Held once every 4 years
    - Each party holds their own convention in separate locations
    - Delegates from each state vote for the candidate of their state’s choice becoming the party’s presidential candidate
  - Primary Elections or Caucuses
  - Help write party platforms
    - Platforms are made of planks (a statement about a party’s position on an individual political issue)
    - The party’s official position on the issues is finalized at the convention
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

- Political Machines
  - Sometimes a local party becomes so powerful that year after year their candidate wins
    - This strong party organization is called a political machine
      - Most famous was Tammany Hall
      - Boss Tweed
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

● Role of political parties today
  ○ Nominating candidates
    ■ Name candidates to run for public office
    ■ Select and support candidates
    ■ Try to choose candidates who have the ability and experience to lead well and who can gain enough public support
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

- Role of Political Parties Today
  - Nominating Candidates
  - Ways a candidate could win in a primary
    - Plurality
      - Winner take all
    - Majority
      - Winning more than half the votes cast or seats available
      - Can lead to run off election
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

- Other Roles of Political Parties Today
  - Inform the public
    - Tell the public about the party, candidates, and issues
  - Send out mailings
  - Give information to media
    - Arrange meetings with candidates
  - Encourage people to vote
Objective 5.01: Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Organization of American Political Parties

● Other Roles of Political Parties Today
  o Act as watchdogs
    ■ Keep “watch” on the party in power
    ■ Keep tabs on other parties members
    ■ Make sure legislation passed by other party is effective
  o Give citizens a voice
    ■ Get citizens involved
    ■ Pass out campaign information
    ■ Help raise money
    ■ Make phone calls to prospective voters
    ■ Provide leadership
Voting and Elections

YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU!

LEADERSHIP for the 60's
KENNEDY ★ JOHNSON

To REGISTER, VOTE and Get EVERYONE
You Know To Do So Also!

...several West Palm Beach Democrats claim they were turned away and not allowed to vote...
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Who Can Vote

- Voting
  - Requirement to Vote in NC
    - Must be 18 by the next November election
    - You are registered at least 21 days before the election
    - You are a resident of the county where you will be voting
    - You are a U.S. citizen
  - Who is not allowed to vote
    - People convicted of felonies
    - Individuals in mental hospitals
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Who Can Vote

- Why People Vote
  - Sense of duty
  - Support a particular party
  - Support a particular candidate
  - Voice an opinion on a particular issue

- Why People Do Not Vote
  - Apathy
  - No Time
  - Not Registered
  - Do not feel their vote matters
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Election Campaigns

- Types of Elections
  - General
    - Take place every 2 years on the 1st Tuesday after the 1st Monday in November
    - All the House and about 1/3 of the Senate
  - Presidential Elections
    - Take place every 4 years
    - Also may include governors, mayors, and local offices
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Election Campaigns

- Registering to vote
  - Fill out a form and send it in to the voter registration office in the county where you live

- Vote at the polling place in your Precinct
  - Absentee voting
    - A request to vote through the mail if you will be unable to vote on the day of the election
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

How to get nominated by your party

- Caucus
  - A meeting of political party members to conduct party business

- Nominating convention
  - Party members elect delegates to attend a convention to choose party candidates
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Election Campaigns

- Direct Primary election
  - An election held to choose party candidates
    - Get signatures to get on nominating petition
  - Open primary
    - Voters do not have to register with one of the parties to be eligible to vote in primary
- Closed primary
  - Voters must be registered with a party to be eligible to vote in that party’s primary
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Election Campaigns

- How to get chosen by the people
  - Advertise
    - Use techniques like card stacking, name calling, glittering generalities, bandwagon
    - Propaganda – an attempt to try and persuade voters to support a particular person or idea
  - Public appearances
    - Going to public functions or making speeches in public
  - Debates
    - Meetings between the candidates to discuss political issues
  - Canvass
    - Going to cities and towns and asking people to support a candidate
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest
groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

- Bandwagon
  - Polls show our candidate is pulling ahead

- Stacked Cards
  - “Candidate B has the best record on the environment.”

- Name Calling

- Glittering Generality
  - “Candidate C is the one who will bring us peace and prosperity.”

- Just Plain Folks
  - “My Parents were ordinary hardworking people, and they taught me those values.”

- Transfer
  - Associating a patriotic symbol with a candidate.
Paying for Election Campaigns

- How to pay for your campaign
  - Private funding
    - Individuals
    - Fund-raising events
    - Political action committees
  - Donations given to political parties and not designated for a particular candidate’s campaign are called soft money - No Limit!

Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.
Objective 5.02: Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

- Paying for Election Campaigns
- Public funding
  - Presidential Election Campaign Fund
    - Money from taxes that is available to candidates to help them pay for campaign activities
  - Federal Elections Campaign Act
    - Limits individual and PAC contributions to individual candidates to $1000 and $5000 respectively
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.
The cost of running for office

- State:
  - Minnesota Senate
    - AL Franken (D) raised 22.5 million
    - Norm Coleman (R) raised $23.6 million

- Presidential:
  - Obama raised 745 million spent 730 million
  - McCain raised 368 million spent 363 million
  - Total Raised was 1.8 Billion spent 1.76 Billion
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Ways of getting message out / raising money

- Canvassing
- Advertising
  - Local
    - Newspapers, other print sources
  - State and National
    - TV Ads
- Endorsements
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

- Propaganda: *The use of techniques to influence individuals not through the use of rational means such as reasons and evidence*
  - Six TV Advertising tricks of the trade
    - The Bandwagon
      - “Polls show our candidate is pulling ahead, and we expect to win in a landslide.”
    - Name Calling
      - “Candidate A is a dangerous extremist”
Influencing Government
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Public Opinion

- Public Opinion
  - The attitudes that most people hold about elected officials, candidates, government, and political issues
  - It also helps shape the decisions of presidents and congress
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Public Opinion

- Where does public opinion come from?
  - Personal Background
  - The Mass Media
  - Public officials
  - Interest Groups
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Public Opinion

- Public Opinion Polls
  - Measure attitudes and opinions of large groups of people
  - Let candidates know if their campaigns are working
  - Affected by
    - Age, economy, gender, income, religion
    - Media – newspapers, magazines, TV, radio
    - Public officials – speeches, press conferences, interviews
    - Special interest groups
  - Making polls accurate
    - Ask a large number of people
    - Ask many different kinds of people
    - Word questions so they do not reflect bias
The Mass Media

- The Mass media includes
  - Print (newspapers, magazines, etc…)
  - Electronic (TV, internet, etc….)
    - TV has become the most important medium for American Politics at every level

- Medias impact on Politics and Govt.
  - Setting public agenda
    - The mass media has the power to define an issue important or not
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest
groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

The Mass Media

- Candidates and Elections
  - Can put a candidate in the lime light who previously had no experience

- Elected officials
  - The relationship is complicated but most of all the media needs elected officials and elected officials need the media
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Interest Groups

- Interest groups
  - form to promote a shared viewpoint. By pooling their resources, members can increase their chances of influencing decision makers.

- Purpose
  - Bring issues and concerns to the attention of the public, lawmakers, and policy makers
  - Represent the concerns and interests of specific groups
  - Support political candidates who favor their interests
Objective 5.05: Analyze roles of individual citizens, political parties, the media, and other interest groups in public policy decisions, dispute resolution and government action.

Interest Groups

- Reasons Interest Groups Form
  - Support a particular economic interest
  - Labor unions (AFL-CIO, Teamsters)
  - Business organizations (National Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers)
  - Professional associations (American Medical Association, American Bar Association)
  - Support a particular ethnic, age, or gender group (examples – NAACP, AARP, NOW)
  - Support specific causes (examples – Sierra Club, NRA)
  - Public Interest Groups (examples – American Civil Liberties Union) support causes that affect the lives of Americans in general, rather than just the special interests of their own members.
Interest Groups

- **Political Action Committees**
  - formed by interest groups to collect money for candidates' campaigns

- Lobbyists are representatives of interest groups who contact government officials directly to influence their policy making.
  - Lobbyists understand how government functions. They know where to go and whom to see.
  - The revolving door
    - when individuals move from government positions and political office to lobbying industries.