UNIT 1: FOUNDATIONS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT
CHAPTER 1: PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT
WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

• Government- the intuition through which a society makes and enforces its public policies
• Anarchy – state without government and laws
• Public Policies- all of the many goals that a government pursues in all of the many areas of human affairs in which it is involved
  • Ex: Providing leadership, maintaining order, providing national security, providing economic security and economic assistance
NATION, STATE, AND COUNTRY

• Nation - a group of people united by bonds of race, language, and sometimes religion
• State - a political community that occupies a definite territory and has an organized government
• Country – the same as a state, territory size dependent
CHARACTERISTICS OF A STATE

• Population- the people who make up a state may or may not be members of a group who share customs, a common language, and an ethnic background

• Territory- land in which the people can live that has known and recognized boundaries
CHARACTERISTICS OF A STATE (CONT.)

• Sovereignty- has supreme and absolute power within its own territory and can decide its own foreign and domestic policies. It's neither subordinate nor responsible to any other authority
  • Ex: The US can determine its form of government, frame its economic system and shape its own foreign policies
ORIGINS OF THE STATE

• The Evolutionary Theory- claims that the state developed naturally out of the early family

• The Force Theory- one person or a small group of people claimed control over an area and forced all within it to submit to that persons of groups rule
  • They believe that the state was born free
The Divine Right Theory- God created the state and that God had given a “divine right” to rule.

The Social Contract Theory- the state exists only to serve the will of the people and that they are the sole source of political power and that they are free to give or to withhold that power as they choose.
SYSTEMS OF GOVERNMENT

• Unitary System – all powers originate from the central government.
• Confederate System – union of independent and sovereign states
• Federal System – government that divides powers between national and state/provincial governments
UNITARY SYSTEM

• Unitary Government (centralized government)
  • All powers held by the government belong to a single, central agency
  • The central government creates local units of government for its own convenience
  • The local governments have only those powers that the central government chooses to give them
CONFEDERATE SYSTEM

• Confederation (An alliance of independent states)
  • The powers of the Confederate Government have been limited to the fields of defense and trade
  • A confederate structure makes it possible for several states to cooperate in matters of common concern, and at the same time, retain their separate identities
FEDERAL SYSTEM

- Federal System (divides powers between national and local governments)
  - Although sharing power with different levels of government, the central (national) government has more power than a confederate system
  - Results in specific laws with each level (bureaucracy)
CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENTS

• In addition, governments that have constitutions have specific characteristics.
• Constitution has the authority to place limits on the powers on those who govern.
  • Limitations
    • Not all constitutions will know all the laws, customs, and ideas that grow around the document.
    • Does not all always reflect the actual government practice.
MAJOR TYPES OF GOVERNMENT

• Governments are organized by the following
  • Who can participate in the governing process
  • The geographic distribution of governmental power within the state
  • The relationship between the legislative (lawmaking) and the executive (law-executing) branches of the government
  • Authoritarian, Monarchy, Democratic
AUTHORITARIAN-DICTATORSHIP

• Dictatorship exists where those who rule cannot be held responsible to the will of the people. The government is not accountable for its policies nor for how they are carried out.
  • Autocracy- a government in which a single person hold unlimited political power
  • Oligarchy- a government in which the power to rule is held by a small usually self appointed elite
DICTATORSHIP (CONT.)

• All dictatorships are authoritarian which means those in power hold absolute and unchallengeable authority over the people.

• Modern dictatorships are totalitarian and they exercise complete power over nearly every aspect of human affairs.
  • Ex: China has complete control over the internet.
MONARCHY

- Monarchy – a system of government in which a king, queen, or emperor exercises supreme powers of government
- There are few remaining systems in which monarchs continue to have vast centralized power (Brunei, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Swaziland, UAE, Vatican City.
- Most have transitioned into constitutional governments lead by a legislative branch
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS

• Supreme political authority rests with the people
• The people hold the sovereign power and government is conducted only by and with the consent of the people
• There are two types of democracy
  • A direct democracy or pure democracy exists where the will of the people is translated into public policy directly by the people themselves in mass meetings
  • A representative democracy is a small group or people chosen by the people to act as their representatives and express the popular will of the people. This is an example of a republic.
• Republic – sovereignty voted by citizens
# Defining Democracy

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<tr>
<th>Democracy</th>
<th>Direct Democracy</th>
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<td>Government by the people, either directly or indirectly, with free and frequent elections</td>
<td>Government in which citizens vote on laws and select officials more directly</td>
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<th>Representative Democracy</th>
<th>Constitutional Democracy</th>
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<td>Government that derives its powers indirectly from the people, who elect those who will govern</td>
<td>Government that enforces recognized limits on those who govern and allows the voice of the people to be heard through free, fair, and relatively frequent elections</td>
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TYPES OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS

• Presidential Government
  • The executive and legislative branches of government are separate, independent of one another and co-equal
  • The chief executive (president) is chosen independently of the legislature, and holds office for a fixed term and has broad powers not subject to the direct control of the legislative branch

• Parliamentary Government
  • The executive is made up of the prime minister or premier and that officials cabinet
  • The prime minister and cabinet themselves are members of the legislative branch, the parliament
  • The prime minister and the cabinet remain in office only as long as their policies and administration have the support of a majority in parliament
PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

• Citizen Participation
• Regular free and fair elections
• Accepting the results of elections
• The Rule of Law
• Majority rule with minority rights
• Accountability
• Transparency
PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY (CONT.)

• Limited government and a Bill of Rights
• Control of the abuse of power
• Economic Freedom
• Equality
• Individual or Human Rights
• Independent Judiciary
• Competing Political Parties