

### Key Terms:

#### Foundations of American Democracy

(Underlined terms have appeared on the multiple choice sections of past released AP exams)

**Bicameral legislature:** two-house legislature

**Block grant:** money granted by the federal government to the states for a broad purpose (e.g., transportation) rather than for a narrow purpose (e.g., school lunch program).

**Categorical Grant:** money granted by the federal government to the states for a narrow purpose (e.g., school lunch program) rather than for a broad purpose (e.g. transportation).

**Centralists:** those who favor greater national authority rather than state authority.

**Checks and Balances:** system in which each branch of the government can limit the power of the other two branches (e.g., presidential veto of a congressional law).

**Commerce Clause:** gives Congress the power to regulate commerce among the states, with foreign nations, and among Indian tribes; granted through Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution.

**Concurrent powers:** those held by both Congress and the states, e.g. establishing law enforcement agencies.

**Confederation:** system in which sovereign states are only loosely tied to a central government (e.g. the US under the Articles of Confederation).

**Decentralists:** those who favor greater state authority rather than national authority.

**Direct democracy:** system in which people rule themselves.

**Elastic clause:** states that Congress can exercise those powers that are "necessary and proper" for carrying out the enumerated powers (e.g., establishment of the first Bank of the United States).

**Enumerated powers:** those that are specifically guaranteed to Congress in Article 1, section 8 of the Constitution (e.g. the power to tax; also known as expressed powers).

**Federalism:** constitutional sharing of power between a central government and state governments. Different varieties:

**Dual federalism:** system in which the national government and state governments are coequal, with each being dominant within its respective sphere.

**Cooperative federalism:** system in which both federal government and state governments cooperate in solving problems.

**New Federalism:** system in which the national government restores greater authority back to the states.

**Federalist Papers:** group of 85 essays written by Madison, Hamilton, and Jay for the purpose of persuading the people of New York to adopt the Constitution.

**Formal amendment:** a change in the actual wording of the Constitution, proposed by Congress or national convention, and ratified by the states.

**Implied powers:** those that are “necessary and proper” to carry out Congress’ enumerated powers, and are granted to Congress through the elastic clause.

**Inherent powers:** foreign policy powers (e.g., acquiring territory) held by the national government by virtue of its being a national government.

**Informal amendment:** a change in the meaning, but not wording, of the Constitution (e.g., through a court decision such as Brown v. Board).

**Judicial review:** power of the courts to rule on the constitutionality of laws and government actions; established by Marbury v. Madison, 1803.

**Mandates:** requirements imposed by the national government upon the states, some are **unfunded mandates**, i.e., they are imposed by the national government, but lack funding.

**Marbury v. Madison, 1803:** established the power of judicial review.

**McCulloch v. Maryland, 1819:** established principle of national supremacy and validity of implied powers.

**Police powers:** powers of the states to protect the public health, safety, morals, and welfare of the public.

**Popular sovereignty:** principle in which ultimate political authority rests with the people.

**Reserved powers:** powers held by the states through the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment; any power not granted to the US government is “reserved” for the states.

**Separation of powers:** principle in which the powers of the government are separated among three branches: legislative, executive, judicial.

**Shay’s Rebellion:** 1786 revolt by Massachusetts farmers seeking relief from debt and foreclosure that was a factor in the calling of the Constitutional Convention.

**Supermajority:** a majority greater than a simple majority of one over half, e.g., 3/5, 2/3.

**Unicameral legislature:** one-house legislature.