

Glossary

A

Absolute veto. The inviolable power to cancel or nullify a legislative act.

Acquitted. To discharge completely.

Admissible. Capable of being allowed or accepted (as in a court of law); worthy of being admitted.

Admonition. Cautionary advice or criticism for a fault; a mild censure.

Adversary system. System of law, generally adopted in common law countries that relies on the skill of the different advocates representing their party's positions and not on some neutral party, usually the judge, trying to ascertain the truth of the case.

Affirmative action. A policy or a program that seeks to redress past discrimination through active measures to ensure equal opportunity, as in education and employment.

After Action Review (AAR). A review of decisions, orders, and actions implemented after the actions are carried out.

Age of Enlightenment. An intellectual movement of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that celebrated human reason and sought to realize its potential in all areas of human endeavor.

Agenda. A list of tasks or a schedule to be followed.

Aggression. An attack or threat of attack by another country.

Aggressive recruitment programs. To obtain replacements for or new supplies of something lost, wasted, or needed.

Agrarian. Characteristic of farmers or their way of life.

Alien and Sedition Acts. Gave the president the power to imprison or deport aliens suspected of activities posing a threat to the national government.

American constitutionalism. Government in which power is distributed and limited by a system of laws that must be obeyed by the rulers.

Anti-Federalist. The early political leaders who were against the ratification of the Constitution because they thought it gave too much power to the national government and did not protect the political rights of the people.

Appellate jurisdiction. The legal authority of a court to hear appeals from a lower court.

Apportioned. The allocation of legislative seats.

Article 15. The least severe and most commonly used punitive measure for minor military offenses. Though called on-judicial punishment, the accused's company or battalion commander (who usually imposes non-judicial punishment) acts in a quasi-judicial capacity.

B

Bail. Money or property in the hands of the government to ensure that the accused will appear in court rather than forfeit it.

Balance. The understanding that there is more than one side to every issue, and having the ability to come to an agreement and resolve differences by using either compromising or harmonizing solutions.

Balance of power. The division of governmental powers in such a way that no one individual or group can dominate or control the exercise of power by others.

Beneficiaries. Those who benefit.

Bills of Attainder. A legislative act pronouncing a person guilty of a crime, usually treason, without trial and subjecting that person to capital punishment and attainder. Such acts are prohibited by the U.S. Constitution.

Boston Massacre. On March 5, 1770, a mob of colonists harassed British soldiers guarding the tax collector's office in Boston. Soldiers killed five Bostonians.

Boston Tea Party. In an act of rebellion against British authority, and in particular to protest British taxes on tea imported to the colonies, a band of colonists boarded ships in Boston harbor and destroyed thousands of dollars' worth of tea by throwing it overboard.

Broad construction. The idea that judges should be given great leeway in application of the U.S. Constitution in order to adapt to a changing world.

Bureaucracy. Government characterized by specialization of functions, adherence to fixed rules, and a hierarchy of authority.

Burgesses. Wealthy merchants and craftsmen who represented the cities and towns of England.

C

Cantons. A small territorial district; esp. one of the twenty-two independent states which form the Swiss federal republic.

Capitalism. An economic system in which the means of producing and distributing goods are privately owned and operated for profit in a competitive market.

Capital punishment. The death penalty.

Censure. An opinion or judgment that criticizes or condemns sternly.

Charters. Written documents from a government or ruler which grants certain rights to an individual, a group, an organization, or the people in general.

Chief Justice. The highest honor at the end of the game is to become Chief Justice. The game will come to an end and then one law form has reached the level of Supreme Court. The cadets are then asked to confirm a Chief Justice by secret.

Christendom. The Christen world or Christians in general, considered as a single society.

Chronological. A list or arrangement of events in the order they took place.

Civic Virtue. The dedication of citizens to the common good, even at the cost of their individual interests.

Civil and political rights. Rights that protect the individual from wrongful acts by government and provide each citizen with ways to participate in public affairs.

Civil disobedience. The refusal to obey a law, usually on the ground that it is morally unjust, or to protest a government policy. Civil disobedience is a form of non-violent resistance and is aimed at arousing public opinion against the law or policy.

Civil rights. Fundamental rights belonging to every member of a society; these rights protect us in our private lives from the arbitrary and unfair actions of government.

Civil Rights Act of 1964. An act of Congress designed to protect the rights of individuals to fair treatment by private persons, groups, organizations, businesses, and government.

Civility. Suggests the decency and integrity that are essential to a constitutional democracy.

Classical Republicanism. A theory that holds that the best kind of government is one that promotes the common welfare instead of the interests of one class of citizens.

Clear and present danger. The constitutional ability of the government to restrict First Amendment rights to prevent immediate and severe danger to government interests.

Coerced. The act, process, or power of forcing someone to act or think in a given manner, such as by using force or threats as a form of control.

Commission. An authority, or request, given to another to carry out some act or duty. In particular, a formal written authority given to one party to act in place of another.

Committees of correspondence. Formed to publicize colonial opposition and coordinate resistance throughout the colonies.

Common good. The obligation of each citizen to serve the good of the whole community.

Common law. The body of unwritten law developed in England from judicial decisions based on custom and earlier judicial decisions, which constitutes the basis of the English legal system and became part of American law.

Commonwealth. Similar to a republic, that is, self-governing communities of equals whose members were expected to help serve the good of all.

Confederation. A group of confederates, especially of states or nations, united for a common purpose; a league.

Consensus. A process by which everyone in a group accepts a decision. It is not necessary for everyone to agree to the decision to reach a consensus, but that everyone accepts the decision or the manner in which it was made, and will not oppose or undermine the result.

Consent. Agreement or acquiescence.

Constituents. The people represented by an elected official.

Constitutional government. A government in which the powers of government are limited in practice by a written or unwritten constitution which they must obey.

Contingency. A plan to cope with events whose occurrence, timing, and severity cannot be predicted

Contracts. Binding agreements between two or more persons.

Cooperation. The art of working together as a group toward a common goal. Cooperation is shown in an attitude of group awareness and willingness to help each other reach a common goal.

Cosmopolitan. Composed of elements from the entire world or from many different parts of the world.

Covenant. A binding agreement made by two or more persons or parties.

Cross examine. To question the witness or opposing side.

Cruel and unusual punishment. The power of judges and juries to decide punishments is limited by the laws passed.

D

Decision making. The process through which a decision is made.

Declaration of Independence. The declaration of the congress of the thirteen United States of America, on the 4th of July, 1776, by which they formally declared that these colonies were free and independent states, not subject to the government of Great Britain.

Delegates. A person chosen to act for or represent others, as at a convention.

Deliberations. A period of time given to a jury to discuss and determine a ruling in a case.

Democracy. A form of government in which political control is exercised by all the people, either directly or through their elected representatives.

Deterrence. Keeping a strong defense to discourage aggression by other nations.

Diplomacy. Relations and communications carried out between countries.

Diversity. Having various forms or qualities; differing from one another.

Double jeopardy. The act of putting a person through a second trial for an offense for which he or she has already been prosecuted or convicted.

Due process. The right to due process of law. Protection against arbitrary deprivation of life, liberty, or property.

E

Education Amendment of 1972. No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Electoral College. The group of presidential electors that casts the official votes for president after a presidential election.

Electors. A group of persons selected by each state party to vote for that party's candidates for president and vice president if the party's candidates win the popular vote in the general election in that state.

Electronic city-state. The futurist vision of increased citizen participation in public affairs through a telecommunications-based network, or teledemocracy.

Emanations. A specific listing of elements.

Emancipation. The act or an instance of emancipating.

Empowerment. Describes the ability to “make one’s voice heard” in public affairs.

Enlightened self-interest. Some people claim that the best way to achieve the common good is for each person to work for his or her self-interest.

Enumerated powers. Those rights and responsibilities of the U.S. government specifically provided for and listed in the constitution.

Enumeration. An act of enumerating.

E pluribus unum. Out of many, one.

Equal Employment Opportunities. Prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Equal Pay Act of 1963. To prohibit discrimination on account of sex in the payment of wages by employers engaged in commerce or in the production of goods for commerce.

Equal protection. A requirement of the fourteenth amendment to the U.S. Constitution that state laws may not arbitrarily discriminate against persons.

Equal representation. Equal voting power for each state.

Equal [state] representation. Each state has the same number of representatives in Congress.

Established church. A church that is recognized by law, and sometimes financially supported, as the official church of a nation.

Established religion. An official, state-sponsored religion.

Establishment clause. Clause in the Fourteenth Amendment understood to prevent state establishment of religion.

Ethical dilemma. A situation where you must weigh the consequences of your actions before making a decision or taking action.

European Convention of Human Rights. Established a European court to which the citizens of these countries could appeal when they believed their rights had been violated.

Ex Post Facto laws. A criminal law that makes an act a crime that was not a crime when committed, that increases the penalty for a crime after it was committed, or that changes the rules of evidence to make conviction easier.

Exclusionary rule. A rule that forbids the introduction of illegally obtained evidence in a criminal trial.

Executive. Made up of several persons appointed by congress; this branch has the power to administer national laws, appoint other executive officials, and direct all military operations.

Executive departments. Cabinet-level agencies in the federal government.

Executive power. The powers of the executive branch of the federal government.

Existence. The state or fact of having being especially independent of human consciousness and as contrasted with nonexistence.

F

Faction. A party, in political society, combined or acting in union, in opposition to the government, or state;—usually applied to a minority, but it may be applied to a majority; a combination or clique of partisans of any kind, acting for their own interests; a group that seeks to promote its own special interests at the expense of the common good.

Fairness. The act of tempering individual desires with the needs of society as a whole.

Federal district court. A district trial court of law and equity that hears cases under federal jurisdiction.

Federal system. Of, relating to, or being a form of government in which a union of states recognizes the sovereignty of a central authority while retaining certain residual powers of government.

Federalism. The distribution of power in an organization (as a government) between a central authority and the constituent units.

Federalist. A person who supported the ratification of the Constitution, advocated a strong central government, believed in or supported a federal system of government, and belonged to or supported the Federalist party; an advocate of federalism.

Federalist Party. The party, who supported the ratification of the Constitution, advocated a strong central government, believed in or supported a federal system of government.

Felony. A crime for which the punishment in federal law may be death or imprisonment for more than one year.

Fifteenth Amendment. Amendment that reads, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

First Continental Congress. The body of delegates representing the colonies that first met to protest British rule and that eventually became the government of the United States.

Foreign policy. Of or involving the relations of one country with another.

Forum. A place or opportunity for open discussion and participation.

Four Freedoms. The four basic rights that Franklin D. Roosevelt declared worthy of fighting a war to preserve: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of worship, freedom from fear, and freedom from want.

Framers. The fifty-five delegates who attended the Philadelphia convention.

Franchise. A privilege or right officially granted a person or a group by a government.

Free exercise clause. A clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution that protects the rights of the people to practice (worship), or to abstain from, a religion of their choice.

Freedom. Political independence or immunity from arbitrary exercise of authority; the condition of being without restraints; the capacity to exercise one’s choice; exception from unpleasant or onerous conditions.

Fugitive slave clause. Provided that slaves who escaped to other states must be returned to their owners.

Fundamental Orders of Connecticut. Adopted in 1639, this series of laws is the first written constitution in North America.

Futurists. The theorist who considers possibilities for the future based on current information and trends.

G

Gag rule. Court order preventing discussion or debate on a specific subject.

General warrants. A precept issued by a magistrate authorizing an officer to make an arrest, a seizure, or a search, or do other acts incident to the administration of justice.

General welfare clause. Congress’ constitutional authorization to tax and spend is found in Article I, Section 8.1 of the Constitution, which states, “Congress shall have Power to lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defense.”

General, special, and summary court-martials. The lowest level of trial courts in the military justice system, which provides for the disposition of minor offenses under a simple procedure when no punitive measures and punishment are inappropriate or ineffective. It may try only enlisted personnel.

Global village. Term used to define achievements of modern technology that indicate shared worldwide cultural, economic, and environmental concerns.

Goals. What one strives to achieve and attain.

Governor. The manager or administrative head of an organization, business, or institution.

Great Awakening. Religious revival in the mid-1700’s that drew worshippers from established religions into new religious groups.

Greatest happiness of the greatest number. The goal that human conduct, laws, and institutions should have, according to utilitarianism.

Ground rules. Rules to ensure that everyone has an equal chance to participate fully and the group works together.

H

Habeas corpus. A judicial mandate to a prison official ordering that an inmate be brought to the court so it can be determined whether or not that person is imprisoned lawfully and whether or not he should be released from custody.

Hierarchical. Organized or classified according to rank, capacity, or authority.

Higher (fundamental) law. As used in describing a legal system, refers to the superiority of one set of laws over another.

House of Representatives. Elected directly by the people of each state.

Human nature. Personality and character traits that all human beings have in common.

Human rights. Basic rights and freedoms assumed to belong to all people everywhere.

I

Immunity. A special exemption, as from laws, taxes, military service, and so on.

Impeach. Charging a public official with a crime in office for which they can be removed from power.

Impeachment. The constitutional process whereby the House of Representatives may “impeach” (accuse of misconduct) high officers of the federal government for trial in the Senate.

Implied. To involve or indicate by inference, association, or necessary consequence rather than by direct statement.

Incorporation. To admit as a member to a corporation or similar organization.

Indentured servant. Voluntary servants who sold their labor for a period of four to seven years in exchange for passage to America.

Independent judiciary. An inviolate judicial branch that serves to protect the U.S. Constitution and prevents the executive and legislative branches from disregarding.

Indicted. To charge with a crime by the finding or presentment of a grand jury in due form of law.

Inquisitorial system. A legal system where the court or a part of the court is actively involved in determining the facts of the case.

Intelligence. Information, not always available in the public domain, relating to the strength, resources, capabilities and intentions of a foreign country or domestic groups that can affect the lives and the safety of citizens.

International. Relating to, or constituting a group or association having members in two or more nations.

Intolerable acts. Parliament replied to the “Boston tea party” with the five coercive acts of 1774. The colonists dubbed them the “intolerable acts.” They were an important factor contributing to the American revolution.

J

Judeo-Christian. Beliefs and practices which have their historical roots in Judaism and Christianity.

Judge. A high-ranking court officer who supervises and gives a decision on an action or court case.

Judicial. Branch with the power to decide cases involving treaties, trade among the states or with other nations, and the collection of taxes.

Judicial activism. Others have argued for judicial activism by pointing out that the nation’s courts, as watchdogs of the constitution, have always had a special role to play in the identification, definition, and protection of individual rights.

Judicial restraint. The belief that the Supreme Court should neither overrule the decisions of elected officials nor make public policy.

Judicial review. The power of the courts to declare laws and actions of the local, state, or national government invalid if the courts decide they are unconstitutional.

Judiciary Act of 1789. An act to establish the Judicial Courts of the United States.

Jury. A select group of individuals chosen to listen and render a verdict in a court case.

Jury foreman. A person who conducts the jury deliberation and speaks for the jury.

L

Law firm. A group of lawyers.

Law of nature. In natural rights philosophy, the law of nature would prevail in the absence of man-made law, and contains universally obligatory standards of justice.

Legal remedy. Correcting a dispute or problem by a legal means.

Legislative. Branch given the powers of taxes, trade, and control over the states.

Legislative power. The power to write and enact laws.

Legislative supremacy. A system of government in which the legislative branch has the most power.

Legislatures. An officially elected or otherwise selected body of people vested with the responsibility and power to make laws for a political unit, such as a state or nation.

Legitimate. Being in compliance with the law.

Libel. A malicious defamation expressed either in printing or writing or by signs or pictures, tending to blacken the memory of one who is dead, with intent to provoke the living; or the reputation of one who is alive and to expose him to public hatred, contempt.

Liberty. The state of a free person; exemption from subjection to the will of another claiming ownership of the person or services; freedom—opposed to slavery, serfdom, bondage, or subjection.

Life. The period from birth to death

Limited government. In natural rights philosophy, a system restricted to protecting natural rights and that does not interfere with other aspects of life.

Lobby. Communicating with political decision makers to try to influence them on a political matter.

Loyalists. Colonists who remained loyal to Great Britain during the American revolution.

M

Magistrate. A lower-level judicial officer, usually elected in urban areas, who handles traffic violations, minor criminal offenses, and civil suits involving small amounts of money.

Magna Carta. The great charter of freedom granted in 1215 by King John of England by demand of his barons.

Majority rule. A principle of democracy which asserts that the greater number of citizens in any political unit should select officials and determine policies.

Manorialism. The form of economic life of the middle ages, when most people were involved in agriculture and land was divided up into self-contained farms or manors.

Massachusetts Body of Liberties. A document that described the rights of citizens and the authority of public officials.

Mayflower Compact. An agreement signed in 1620 by all adult males aboard the ship Mayflower, before landing in Plymouth, to form a body politic governed by majority rule.

Melting pot. A term used to describe a society made up of diverse cultures or races which have merged or “melted” into each other.

Middle Ages. A period, lasting from the fifth century to the fourteenth century, during which the political, economic, and military structure was characterized by feudalism.

Minutemen. Civilian armies of the American revolution, so called because of their readiness for battle.

Miranda Rights. A written and oral statement advising a suspect at the time of arrest of that person’s rights against self-incrimination and to consult an attorney.

Misdemeanor. A minor offense (crime) for which punishment may be a fine and/or imprisonment in a local rather than a state institution (and generally for terms less than a year).

Mixed government. A government composed of some of the powers of a monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical government.

Monarch. A king or queen.

N

NAACP. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Nation of nations. America is peopled by millions of immigrants of different races, religions, languages, and ethnic backgrounds.

National government. Manages relationships among the states and unites the states in their relations with the rest of the world.

Nationalism. A sense of national consciousness that exalts one nation above all others.

Nation-state. The modern nation as the representative unit of political organization.

Natural rights. The doctrine of natural rights assumes that human beings had rights in a “state of nature” and create government in order to protect those rights.

Naturalized citizen. An individual who gains full citizenship in a country other than that of their birth.

Necessary and proper clause. The clause is limited to those powers enunciated in Article I, Sec. 8, it grants the government extremely broad powers as to carrying out the enumerated powers of the Article.

Negative rights. These rights are seen as restraints on the power of government.

Neutrality. The state or quality of being neutral; the condition of being unengaged in contests between others; state of taking no part on either side; indifference.

Nineteenth Amendment. Amendment that reads, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex”.

Nonviolent direct action. Peaceful tactics used as a means of gaining one’s civil or political ends.

O

Opening statements. Statements that state the opinion of one side in the beginning of a court case.

Original jurisdiction. That which is given to courts to take cognizance of cases which may be instituted in those courts in the first instance. The Constitution of the United States gives the Supreme Court of the United States original jurisdiction in cases which affect ambassadors, other public ministers and consuls, and to those in which a state is a party.

Orthodoxy. A belief or orientation agreeing with conventional standards.

P

Papacy. The office or authority of the pope, the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic church.

Parliamentary government. A system that gives governmental authority to a legislature or parliament which in turn selects the executive from among its own members.

Patience. The skill of knowing the proper timing for acting on an idea or decision.

Penumbras. A body of rights held to be guaranteed by implication in a civil constitution.

Perpetual union. Lasting for eternity.

Philadelphia Convention. The meeting held in Philadelphia from May 25 through September 18, 1787, at which the Constitution of the United States was drafted.

Plebiscite. An expression of the people’s will by direct vote.

Political action. Any organized attempt to influence the political process, from lobbying legislators to seeking the election (or defeat) or particular candidates.

Political guarantees. Guarantee of varied rights.

Political parties. An organization that runs candidates for public office under its label and for directing the policies of government.

Political rights. All of the implicit (constitutionally guaranteed) and implied (by natural laws) rights of a citizen in a free society.

Popular sovereignty. The natural rights concept that ultimate political authority rests with the people.

Positive rights. Instead of preventing the government from acting, they require it to act, to ensure such things as economic security, health care, and a clean environment for its citizens.

Preamble. The basic mission statement for the United States Constitution.

Precedents. Legal principle, created by a court decision, which provides an example or authority for judges deciding similar issues later.

Preferential treatment programs. Programs designed to give a particular group of people who share the same characteristics such as, age, race, class, etc., an advantage in entering or perusing an endeavor that will better their standing.

President’s Cabinet. The President’s hand picked advisors. Each in charge of different government offices or departments.

Prime minister. The highest ranking member of the executive branch of a parliamentary government as in Great Britain and Japan.

Primogeniture. The condition of being the first-born child. In law, it refers to the right of the eldest son to inherit all of his parents' estates.

Principle. A fundamental, primary, or general law or truth from which others are derived.

Private domain. Areas of human affairs placed off limits to unreasonable government interference.

Probable cause. Reasonable grounds for belief that an accused person is guilty as charged or that a crime has been committed.

Procedural due process. A course of formal proceedings (as judicial proceedings) carried out regularly, fairly, and in accordance with established rules and principles.

Procedural guarantees of due process. Refers to those clauses in the U.S. Constitution that protect individuals from unreasonable and unfair governmental procedures.

Proportional representation. The electoral system in which the number of representatives of a state in the house of representatives is based on the number of people who live in that state.

Providence. The care, guardianship, and control exercised by a deity.

Provision. That which is stipulated in advance; a condition; a previous agreement; a proviso; as, the provisions of a contract; the statute has many provisions.

Public and private morality. The principles of civic virtue as expressed in Judeo-Christian teachings, as well as fundamental ideas about right and wrong that come from religion, ethics, and individual conscience.

Public forum. An open place for free speech.

Q

Quartering act. Also known as the mutiny act, the law passed by parliament that authorized colonial governors to requisition certain buildings for the use, or "quartering," of British troops.

Quotas and group entitlements. The state of being entitled.

R

Ratification. Formal approval of the U.S. Constitution by the states.

Ratify. To approve and sanction formally.

Realm. A community or territory over which a sovereign rules; a kingdom.

Reasonable doubt. The level of certainty a juror must have to find a defendant guilty of a crime. A real doubt, based upon reason and common sense after careful and impartial consideration of all the evidence, or lack of evidence, in a case.

Redress of grievances. A setting right, as of wrong, injury, or oppression; as, the redress of grievances; hence, relief; remedy; reparation; indemnification.

Referenda. The submission of a proposed public measure or actual statute to a direct popular vote.

Reformation. Sixteenth-century religious movement aimed at reforming the Roman Catholic church and resulting in the establishment of Protestant churches.

Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978). Race or ethnic background may be deemed a "plus" in a particular applicant's file, yet it does not insulate the individual from comparison with all other candidates for the available seats.

Remedial programs. Programs designed to assist people with specific educational and economic needs.

Renaissance. The great revival of art, literature, and learning in Europe during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, based on classical sources.

Representation. The state or condition of serving as an official delegate, agent, or spokesperson.

Representative democracy. The system of government in which power is held by the people and exercised indirectly through elected representatives.

Representative group session. One of two types of citizen action groups in which small groups elect representatives to discuss and decide on issues in front of a class or other gathering.

Representative group session agenda. A list of tasks or a schedule to be followed during a representative group session.

Republic. A form of government in which the supreme political power resides in the electorate, and administration is exercised by representatives who are responsible to the people.

Republican Party. One of the two major political parties in the United States.

Resident alien. A foreign-born inhabitant.

Respect. Accepting the differences in others and honoring those differences.

Responsible parties. Those who take responsibility to ensure goals are met.

Reverse discrimination. Discrimination against members of a dominant or majority group, especially when resulting from policies established to correct discrimination against members of a minority or disadvantaged group.

Revolution of 1800. The election of 1800 where the Republicans took control of both houses and Thomas Jefferson became president and Aaron Burr became vice-president.

Right against self-incrimination. Granted by the Fifth Amendment; allows a person to refuse to answer questions or give other evidence that would subject him or her to criminal prosecution.

Right of association and right of petition. To associate with anyone you desire and to deliver a petition.

Right of revolution. It is the foundation of consent of the governed and guarantees that you can take matters into your own hands if you must.

Right to assembly. The right to meet together in groups.

Right to counsel. The government cannot prevent you from having a lawyer defend you from the time you are named as a suspect. If you are charged with a serious crime and cannot afford a lawyer, the government must provide one free of charge.

Right to privacy. To be secure in your own person and belongings.

Rights of Englishman. Basic rights, established over time, that all subjects of the English monarch were understood to have.

Rights of solidarity. Solidarity rights included in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Rights, and in many national guarantees of rights adopted since, are sometimes called positive rights.

Rule of law. Implies that government authority may only be exercised in accordance with written laws, which are adopted through an established procedure.

S

Sanctions. Measures to stop or limit trade with another nation in order to change its behavior.

Secession. The act of seceding.

Sectionalism. Excessive devotion to local interests and customs.

Secular governments. A system of political power not exercised by ecclesiastical bodies or the clergy.

Sedition Act of 1798. An act for the punishment of certain crimes against the United States.

Seditious libel. Of or pertaining to sedition; partaking of the nature of, or tending to excite, sedition; as, seditious behavior; seditious strife; seditious words.

Selective incorporation. A theory or doctrine of constitutional law that those rights guaranteed by the first eight amendments to the U.S. Constitution that are fundamental to and implicit in the concept of ordered liberty are incorporated into the Fourteenth Amendment's due procedure.

Self-improvement. A desire to continually learn new skills and improve on others so that citizens can better serve themselves and those around them.

Senate. The upper house of the U.S. Congress, to which two members are elected from each state by popular vote for a six-year term.

Separate but equal doctrine. "The argument, once upheld by the Supreme Court, that separate public facilities were constitutional if the facilities were of equal quality."

Separated powers. The division of powers among different branches of government.

Separation of church and state. Concept that church and government should always be separate, and no church should be supported by government.

Seven Years War. A series of dynastic and colonial wars between England and France; the American phase, fought between 1754 and 1763, is known as the French and Indian war.

Simple majority. Show of hands in the voting process.

Small group leader. Leads a small group meeting.

Small group meeting. One of two types of citizen action groups where a small group of five to nine persons meets periodically to discuss and decide on various issues and actions.

Small group representatives. A member of a small group who is elected to represent the group at the representative group session.

Social action. Organize other members of the community.

Social and economic rights. Examples of social and economic rights would be the right to choose a career, secure employment, health care, and education.

Social contract. The agreement among all the people in a society to give up part of their freedom to a government in return for the protection of their natural rights by that government.

Sons of Liberty. An organization of radicals created in 1765 in the American colonies to express colonial opposition to the stamp act.

Sovereignty. Self-governing; independent; a chief of state in a monarchy; freedom from external control, a government's power to exercise supreme authority to rule within a certain territory.

Spirit of association. The fondness American citizens had for banding together to address problems of common interest.

Stamp Act Congress. A meeting in New York in 1765 of twenty-seven delegates from nine colonies, the congress was the first example of united colonial action in the developing struggle against Great Britain.

Standard of living. Social conditions established by authority as a fixed rule, measure, or model.

State declarations of rights. The citizens to be governed by these new constitutions possessed certain basic rights that existed prior to government and that no constitution or government could take away.

State of nature. The basis of natural right philosophy, state of nature is the hypothetical condition of people living together in a society.

Strength. The willingness of citizens to stand up for what they believe in, to denounce what's wrong, and to admit when they've made a mistake.

Strict construction. A narrow interpretation of the U.S. Constitution's provisions, in particular those granting power to government.

Substantive due process. Requirement that laws and regulations must be related to a legitimate government interest (as crime prevention) and may not contain provisions that result in the unfair or arbitrary treatment of an individual.

Suffrage. The right to vote. A vote cast in deciding a disputed question or in electing a person to office.

Summit meeting. A meeting between heads of state.

Supremacy clause. A clause in Article VI of the U.S. Constitution that declares the constitution, laws, and treaties of the federal government to be the supreme law of the land to which judges in every state are bound regardless of state law to the contrary.

T

Tea Act. The act by parliament that conferred upon the East India company a monopoly importation of tea into the mainland colonies, thus eliminating the profits of the colonial importer and shopkeeper.

Telecommunications. The science and technology of sending messages over long distances, especially by electronic means.

Teledemocracy. The futurist view of a direct democracy using telecommunications to provide greater opportunities for participation in government.

Tenets. An opinion, doctrine, or principle held as being true by a person or especially by an organization.

Terrorism. The use of threat of violence to spread fear, usually for the purpose of reaching political goals.

The Great Compromise. Adopted at the Philadelphia convention n, this plan provided for equal representation of the states in the Senate and House of Representatives according to population.

The Laws and Liberties. Code that abolished the laws of primogeniture and provided more humane treatment of criminals.

Timekeeper. An individual who keeps track of the time at a small group meeting.

Timeline. A linear representation of important events in the order in which they occurred; a schedule; timetable.

Time-place-and manner restrictions. A statute or government action that restricts the time, place, or manner of speech.

Token integration. A show of accommodation to the principle of racial integration by small, merely formal concessions.

Treason. In the U.S. Constitution, treason is “giving aid and comfort” to the enemy during wartime.

Trials. Examinations of facts and law in a court of law.

Twenty-fourth Amendment. Amendment that reads, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.”

Twenty-sixth Amendment. Amendment that reads, “The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.”

U

UCMJ. The basis for all military law in the U.S. armed forces; established by congress in 1951.

Unalienable (inalienable). Fundamental rights of the people that may not be taken away.

Unconstitutional. Not in keeping with the basic principles or laws set forth in the constitution of a state or country, especially the Constitution of the United States.

Unenumerated rights. Rights which are not specifically listed in the U.S. Constitution or Bill of Rights, but which have been recognized and protected by the courts.

Unitary government. Antigovernment.

United Nations. An organization created as a result of a multilateral treaty that serves as a constitution for the United Nations Organization.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The declaration and the charter proclaimed universal standards of basic rights, called human rights, because they were considered essential to the dignity of each human being.

Unlimited government. A government in which those who govern are free to use their power as they choose, unrestrained by laws or elections.

V

Vassal. In feudal times, a person granted the use of land by a feudal lord in return for military or other service.

Verdict. The decision rendered by a judge or jury in a court case.

Veto. The constitutional power of the president to refuse to sign a bill passed by Congress, thereby preventing it from becoming a law.

Virginia Declaration of Rights. The first state declaration of rights, which served as a model for other state declarations of rights and the Bill of Rights.

Virginia Plan. The plan traced the broad outlines of what would become the U.S. Constitution: a national government consisting of three branches with checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power.

W

Warrant. In law, written order by an official of a court directed to an officer.

Writ of Assistance. A document giving a governmental authority the power to search and seize property without restrictions.

Writ of Mandamus. It is a command issuing in the name of the sovereign authority from a superior court having jurisdiction, and is directed to some person, corporation, or inferior court, within the jurisdiction of such superior court, requiring them to do some particular.