

S T U D E N T  
H A N D B O O K

A M E R I C A N  
G O V E R N M E N T

JAMES Q. WILSON    JOHN J. DI IULIO, JR.

EIGHTH EDITION

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# STUDENT HANDBOOK

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## American Government

EIGHTH EDITION

**James Q. Wilson**  
**and**  
**John J. DiIulio, Jr.**

PREPARED BY  
**J. Edwin Benton**  
*University of South Florida*

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Sponsoring Editor: Mary Dougherty  
Development Editor: Katherine Meisenheimer  
Editorial Assistant: Tonya Lobato  
Manufacturing Manager: Florence Cadran  
Marketing Manager: Jay Hu  
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# TO THE STUDENT

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This *Student Handbook* is a self-study accompaniment to *American Government*, Eighth Edition, by James Q. Wilson and John J. Dilulio, Jr. It serves two purposes. First, it supplements, but does not replace the text. By using the *Student Handbook* and the text together, you will reap maximum benefits from the course and enhance your general knowledge of the structure and operation of U.S. government. Second, this *Student Handbook* will assist you in practicing and preparing for your exams and will improve your test-taking skills. These two purposes are inseparable. Good studying habits—hard work, practice, and review—are critical to learning and understanding any subject matter, and a thorough understanding is the best preparation for exams.

This introduction begins with an overview of what you should expect to learn from a college-level course on U.S. American government. Following is detailed advice on how to get the most from this *Student Handbook* as well as suggestions for obtaining additional supplementary information from the Internet.

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## THE STUDY OF U.S. GOVERNMENT

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In colleges and universities, U.S. government is usually taught as part of an academic discipline known as *political science*. Political science differs from typical high school courses in two important respects. High school government courses customarily emphasize history. Furthermore, high school courses generally seek to promote citizenship by encouraging you to vote.

While this approach and goal is important, college-level political science develops a broader, more theoretical perspective on government. Political science is often about contemporary government rather than history. It compares the U.S. political system with other systems and does not necessarily assume that our system or Constitution is superior to others. It focuses mainly on how government really works. It provides, for instance, answers to and explanations for the following questions: Why do senior citizens have more political influence than college students? Why do members of Congress spend more time talking with constituents and lobbyists, attending committee meetings/hearings, and participating in fact-finding missions than they do debating legislation? How and why have presidential candidates and the media contributed to more candidate-centered campaigns that focus less on issues and party labels? Do the federal courts merely apply to law or do they make policy and are sensitive to public opinion? Why do interest groups sometimes seem to reflect the views of the top leadership of their organization rather than the views of the rank-in-file membership on policy issues?

Political science occasionally frustrates students seeking one correct or perfect solution to real-world problems. Political science theories often provide conflicting or even equally valid perspectives on issues. A case in point deals with the issue of *symbolic speech*:

according to one constitutional theory, flag and draft card burning and painting exhibits that some people find offensive and indecent are forms of free “expression” protected by the First Amendment. Yet, according to another constitutional theory, only “speech” and “press” are protected by the First Amendment, while the First Amendment does not extend to flag and draft card burning and painting exhibits. Another case involves search and seizures: according to one constitutional perspective, evidence obtained by police without a search warrant based on probable cause is a violation of the Fourth Amendment protection against illegal searches and seizures, and hence, inadmissible in court (“exclusionary rule”). Nonetheless, according to another constitutional perspective, evidence seized by police with the aid of a search warrant they believe to be valid is still admissible in court (“good-faith exception”) if it later turns out that the warrant was defective (e.g., the judge used the wrong form).

Political science sometimes forces students to grapple with uncertainties. Students wrestle with debatable assumptions about human nature and with competing explanations for why humans behave as they do. For instance, they discover inherent contradictions between cherished ideals such as liberty and democracy. Moreover, they investigate basic value conflicts between interest groups, each with a good argument to support the assertion that its cause is just.

This is not meant to suggest that political science is an abstract or subjective field of study. To the contrary, political science requires precise conceptualizations and rigorous, objective analysis. It at times even involves the utilization of mathematical logic and quantitative data. Some have dismissed the importance of what political scientists do as nothing more than “precision guesswork.” Yet, there is some truth to this claim because political science does attempt to explain government logically, and like any other science that tries to understand human beings, it is hardly exact. The complexities of humans create many challenges in political science. They also make it a fascinating subject, and one well worth your time and effort to study.

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDENT HANDBOOK

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You should use this *Student Handbook* to do exactly what the title says—to guide you through the text material. This guide will highlight what is important in each chapter (the study objectives located under the rubric “Chapter Focus”). In addition, the guide will assist you in reviewing each chapter to make sure that you have covered and understood the pertinent facts, principles, and processes presented (Study Outline, Key Terms Match, Did You Know That...?, and Data Check). This guide also includes a Practice for Exams section that consists of true/false, multiple choice, and essay questions. You should not treat these questions merely as a practice exam. Use each set of questions as a way of furthering your understanding of what Professors Wilson and Dilulio have written and your instructor has presented in class. As you answer each question, review the text material, as well as your own notes (from both the text and your class). Understanding the subject will help you to do well on exams. Preparing for exams will, in turn, help you to understand the subject.

### **Chapter Focus**

Before beginning each chapter of *American Government*, read through the study objectives in the Chapter Focus section. You can utilize these objectives to organize your thoughts and understand the textbook material. Keep the framework of each objective in mind as you read through the chapter, using each component of each objective as a heading for summarizing,

statement or answers each question and why the other choices do not. Refer to the text to review the appropriate material addressed in each multiple-choice item. Check your answers with the ones provided in the Answer Key.

## *Essay Questions*

Each chapter is accompanied by a series of essay questions. Most of these questions refer to specific details or an analysis provided in a particular section of a chapter. Others require you to tie together information from throughout a chapter, or, on occasion, ask you to connect themes and information from different chapters.

It is not unusual for college students (particularly, first-year students) to have great difficulty in answering essay questions. You may encounter questions that can be answered correctly in different ways from different perspectives. The best answers, however, are usually the most complete. Others may not be correct at all, either because they contain factual errors or, more commonly, because they do not address the question asked. To assist you with crafting successful answers to essay questions, the following simple guidelines are provided:

1. Read each question carefully. Focus. Reread. Figure out what the question really asks and answer accordingly. Do not simply read the question superficially and then start to write the first thing that comes to mind. Never write an answer based on “what you think the professor wants.” If you approach the question in this manner, there is a high probability that you don’t understand the question.
2. Organize. Outline each essay before you start to write. Use the outline to divide your essay into paragraphs, with each paragraph addressing a different part of the question. Begin each paragraph with a topic sentence or thesis statement, and use subsequent sentences in the paragraph to present supporting factual evidence, examples, finer points of logic, and conclusions. Organization saves time. Moreover, it improves both the strength of your reasoning and recollection of information.
3. Attack questions directly, and stay focused. Do not waste time restating questions. Use the first sentence of each essay either to introduce your major arguments(s) or to explain a term that reasonably requires explanation at the beginning of the essay. Then, develop your logic more fully, and discuss specific facts and examples. You should remember that summary is simply not enough. You should evaluate material and organize ideas into coherent, cogent arguments. If relevant, acknowledge opposing points of view without diluting strength of argument. Try not to repeat yourself. Stick to what the question asks. Do not get sidetracked onto peripheral arguments and constantly review essay for contradictions.
4. Make sure to devote enough space and time to each part of the question. In short, be sure that your essay is balanced, while covering all aspects of the question.
5. Define key concepts clearly and accurately. Essay questions usually demand logical application of concepts to relevant facts, and good essays almost inevitably result from clear and accurate concept definitions. Conversely, vague, inaccurate, or even erroneous concept definitions almost always lead to confused and incomplete essays.
6. Always be as specific as possible. Try to find words that express exactly what you mean.
7. Explain fully. Never assume that certain points are obvious or that the grader of your essay can read your mind. If you want the grader to know what you mean, then say it!

in your own words, the important facts, concepts, ideas, and explanations presented. By the time you have completed each chapter, you should be able to write out a clear and accurate statement fulfilling each objective. You should always remember to think about how current U.S. government and politics conform, or do not conform, to the expectations of the Framers of the U.S. Constitution.

## ***Chapter Outline***

The Chapter Outline presents a section-by-section overview of the chapter. You should check the outline both before and after reading each text chapter. It should serve to reinforce in your mind the major chapter topics and clarify the relationships among them. But, you should not use the outline as a replacement for reading the text. You need to understand the material on its own terms. This can be done only by reading each chapter and not by simply relying on the chapter outline.

## ***Key Terms Match***

This section reviews the terms considered central to an understanding of the chapter's material. Test yourself on each of these terms, court cases, and political figures. If a term, make sure that you can give more than just a simple definition. When pertinent, give an example, cite an appropriate court case, and place the term in a broader theoretical context (answer the question: "so what?"). If a court case, be able to discuss the specifics of the case, the reasons why the decision was made, and its political significance or implications (again, "so what?"). If a political figure, discuss who that person is and how he/she has contributed to U.S. government and politics.

## ***Did You Know That...?***

This section presents several statements that, on closer examination, prove mythical. Your task is to explain *why* each statement is incorrect. Completing this section will help you focus on important distinctions made in the chapter

## ***Data Check***

The *Data Check* exercises emphasize points made in the various graphs, maps, and tables appearing in the text chapter. Too often, students neglect these helpful aids to comprehension. Completing this section will help you get the most out of the text's valuable visual resources.

## ***True/False Questions***

Mark the response you think is correct (true or false). Make sure that you understand, for each statement that you think is false, why it is false (space is provided after each true/false item to explain your choice). You can also use the space to indicate why you think a statement is true. Check your responses with the ones provided in the Answer Key.

## ***Multiple-Choice Questions***

A multiple-choice question will generally not have just one obvious answer. Each choice listed may have some term or idea that is related to the question, but *only one will correctly complete the statement introduced or answer the question asked*. Only one choice is correct.

Use the multiple-choice items to help you to review and understand the textbook material. Make sure that you understand why your choice correctly completes each

Develop *cause-and-effect* relationships as explicitly as possible. Support conclusions with well-reasoned arguments and evidence. If you claim that something is true, explain why you believe it to be true. Also, try to explain why possible alternatives to the correct answer can be logically refuted. Use examples to illustrate and clarify key points.

## ***Answer Key***

*Answers* to all chapter exercises (except for essay questions) appear at the end of the *Student Handbook*.

## ***Classic Statements***

In addition to these chapter components, the *Student Handbook* includes five “*Classic Statements*” derived from the literature of American government and corresponding to one or more chapters of the text. These selections shaped political thought at the time they appeared and remain influential today. As you read each essay, consider (1) what the author is saying, (2) in what ways the author’s central themes are relevant to American government and politics today, and (3) how the reading is related to the textbook coverage. Questions following each reading will help you focus on these three issues.

Following the last *Handbook* chapter you will find two practice exams. The first covers Chapters 1 to 14. The second one covers Chapters 15 to 23 and includes some review questions from the first part of the text. Avail yourself of this opportunity to see how well you have integrated a large amount of material. And at the same time get some practice for your class exams.

In conclusion, it should be remembered that a student handbook is useful only if it supplements your diligent study of the text itself. As mentioned earlier, it cannot replace the text, nor can it guarantee success on examinations. Used with the text, however, this *Student Handbook* should noticeably boost your course performance and, hopefully, heighten your appreciation of American government.



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## PART ONE

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# *The American System*

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## 1

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### The Study of American Government

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#### I. Reviewing the Chapter

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##### A. Chapter Focus

The purpose of this chapter is to give you a preview of the major questions to be asked throughout the textbook, as well as to introduce some key terms in the basic vocabulary of American politics. After reading and reviewing the material in this chapter, you should be able to do each of the following:

1. List the two basic questions to be asked about American (or any other) government, and show that they are distinct questions.
2. Explain what is meant by *power* in general human terms and by *political power* in particular, relating the latter to authority, legitimacy, and democracy in the context of American government.
3. Distinguish among the three concepts of democracy mentioned in the chapter, explaining in which of these senses the textbook refers to American government as *democratic*.
4. Differentiate between majoritarian politics and elitist politics, explaining the four major theories of the latter.
5. Explain how political change makes political scientists cautious in stating how politics works or what values dominate it.

## B. Study Outline

- I. What is political power?
  - A. Two great questions about politics
    1. Who governs: which people govern affects us
    2. To which ends: in which ways government affects our lives
    3. And then how the government makes decisions on a variety of issues
  - B. Power
    1. Definition: the ability of one person to cause another person to act in accordance with the first person's intentions
    2. Text's concern: power as it is used to affect who will hold government office and how government will behave
    3. Authority: the right to use power; not all who exercise political power have it
    4. Legitimacy: what makes a law or constitution a source of right
    5. Struggles over what makes authority legitimate
    6. Necessity to be in some sense democratic in the United States today
- II. What is democracy?
  - A. Where the "true interests" of the people are served, whether those people affect the decision making (democratic centralism) or not
    1. China
    2. Cuba
    3. European, Asian, Latin American dictatorships
  - B. Aristotelian "rule of the many" (participatory democracy)
    1. Fifth-century B.C. Greek city-state
    2. New England town meeting
    3. Community control in self-governing neighborhood
    4. Citizen participation in formulating programs
  - C. Acquisition of power by leaders via competitive elections (representative democracy)
    1. Sometimes disapprovingly referred to as the *elitist theory*
    2. Justifications of representative democracy
      - a. Direct democracy is impractical.
      - b. The people make unwise decisions based on fleeting emotions.
- III. Direct versus representative democracy
  - A. Text uses the term *democracy* to refer to *representative democracy*.
    1. The Constitution does not contain the word *democracy* but the phrase "republican form of government."
    2. Representative democracy requires leadership competition if the system is to work.
      - a. Individuals and parties must be able to run for office.
      - b. Communication must be free.
      - c. Voters perceive that a meaningful choice exists.
    3. Many elective national offices
    4. Most money for elections comes from special interests
  - B. Virtues of direct democracy should be reclaimed through
    1. Community control
    2. Citizen participation
  - C. Framers: "will of people" not synonymous with the "common interest" or the

- “public good”
1. They strongly favored representative over direct democracy.
  2. Direct democracy minimized chances of abuse of power by tyrannical popular majority or self-serving office holders.
- IV. How is power distributed in a democracy?
- A. Majoritarian politics
    1. Leaders constrained to follow wishes of the people very closely
    2. Applies when issues are simple, clear, and feasible
  - B. Elitism
    1. Rule by identifiable group of persons who possess a disproportionate share of political power
    2. Theories on political elites
      - a. Marxism: government merely a reflection of underlying economic forces
      - b. C. Wright Mills: power elite composed of corporate leaders, generals, and politicians
      - c. Max Weber: bureaucracies based on expertise, specialized competence
      - d. Pluralist view: no single elite has a monopoly on power; hence must bargain and compromise
  - C. Cynical view that politics is self-seeking
    1. Good policies may result from bad motives
    2. Self-interest is an incomplete guide to actions
      - a. AFL-CIO and civil rights
    3. Alexis de Tocqueville on America
- V. Political change
- A. Necessary to refer frequently to history because no single theory is adequate
    1. Government today influenced by yesterday
    2. Government today still evolving and responds to changing beliefs
  - B. Politics about the public interest, not just who gets what
- VI. Finding out who governs
- A. Often we give partial or contingent answers.
  - B. Preferences vary, and so does politics.
  - C. Politics cannot be equated with laws on the books.
  - D. Sweeping claims are to be avoided.
  - E. Judgments about institutions and interests should be tempered by how they behave on different issues.

### C. Key Terms Match

Match the following terms and descriptions:

- |                          |          |   |
|--------------------------|----------|---|
| a. Aristotle             | 1. _____ | The ability of one person to cause another person to act in accordance with the first person's intentions |
| b. authority             | 2. _____ | Power when used to determine who will hold government office and how government will behave               |
| c. bureaucracy           | 3. _____ | The right to exercise political power   |
| d. bureaucratic theory   | 4. _____ | The widely shared perception that something or someone should be obeyed                                   |
| e. citizen participation | 5. _____ | Discovering and then acting on the genuine needs of the people, within a party cadre                      |

- |                                      |           |  |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|
| f. city-state                        | 6. _____  | Conferring political power on those selected by the voters in competitive elections  |
| g. community control                 | 7. _____  | An identifiable group of people with a disproportionate share of political power   |
| h. democracy                         | 8. _____  | A relatively small political unit within which classical democracy was practiced   |
| i. democratic centralism             | 9. _____  | A political system in which the choices of the political leaders are closely constrained by the preferences of the people          |
| j. direct or participatory democracy | 10. _____ | A philosopher who defined <i>democracy</i> as the “rule of the many”   |
| k. elite (political)                 | 11. _____ | A theory that government is merely a reflection of underlying economic forces  |
| l. elitist theory                    | 12. _____ | A sociologist who presented the idea of a mostly nongovernmental power elite   |
| m. legitimacy                        | 13. _____ | A sociologist who emphasized the phenomenon of bureaucracy in explaining political developments                                    |
| n. majoritarian politics             | 14. _____ | A political system in which local citizens are empowered to govern themselves directly   |
| o. Marxist theory                    | 15. _____ | A political system in which those affected by a governmental program must be permitted to participate in the program’s formulation |
| p. Mills                             | 16. _____ | A theory that no one interest group consistently holds political power   |
| q. pluralist theory                  | 17. _____ | Structures of authority organized around expertise and specialization  |
| r. political power                   | 18. _____ | An economist who defined <i>democracy</i> as the competitive struggle by political leaders for the people’s vote                   |
| s. power                             | 19. _____ | A theory that appointed civil servants make the key governing decisions  |
| t. representative democracy          | 20. _____ | A term used to describe three different political systems in which the people are said to rule, directly or indirectly             |
| u. Schumpeter                        | 21. _____ | A political system in which all or most citizens participate directly by either holding office or making policy                    |
| v. Weber                             | 22. _____ | A theory that a few top leaders make the key decisions without reference to popular desires  |

#### D. Did You Think That . . . ?

Below are listed a number of misconceptions. You should be able to refute each statement in the space provided, referring to information or argumentation contained in this chapter. Sample answers appear at the end of the *Handbook*.

1. “The legitimacy of the American system rests solely on democratic values and practices.”

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2. “The meaning of the word *democracy* is generally agreed on in the world today.”

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3. “Only government officials influence policy making.”

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4. “The Framers viewed the ‘will of the people’ as being synonymous with the ‘common interest’ or the ‘public good.’”

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## II. Practicing for Exams

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**A. True/False.** Read each statement carefully. Mark true statements *T*. If any part of the statement is false, mark it *F*, and write in the space provided a concise explanation of why the statement is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The two most important questions about politics concern who governs and for what purposes.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Federal income taxes were higher in 1935 than they are today.

---

- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Most people holding political power in the United States today are middle-class, middle-aged, white Protestant males.

---

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. It is easy to discern political power at work.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Everyone in the ancient Greek city-state was eligible to participate in government.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Some writers of the Constitution opposed democracy on the grounds that the people would be unable to make wise decisions.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *Democracy* as used in this book refers to the rule of the many.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Majoritarian politics influences relatively few issues in this country.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Marxist theory sees society as divided into two classes: capitalists and workers.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. C. Wright Mills included corporate, governmental, and labor officials in his power elite.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Weber included appointed officials—the bureaucracy—in his group of power elites.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Pluralists deny the existence of elites.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. AFL-CIO leaders in the 1960s opposed the civil rights movement for fear of racial confrontations in the unions.
- 
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. In the 1920s it was widely assumed that the federal government would play a small role in citizens' lives.
-



- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Who wields power—that is, who made a difference in the outcome and for what reason—is harder to discover than who did what.
- 

**B. Multiple Choice.** Circle the letter of the response that best answers the question or completes the statement.

1. Most national political officeholders are middle-class, middle-aged, white Protestant males. Knowing this, we
  - a. still cannot explain many important policies.
  - b. have identified the power elite.
  - c. can answer the question, “To what ends?”
  - d. can predict little of importance to politics.
2. Which of the following statements about authority is correct?
  - a. It is defined as the right to use power.
  - b. It resides in government, not in the private sector.
  - c. It typically results from the naked use of force.
  - d. It is the opposite of legitimacy.
3. An authoritarian regime such as the now-defunct Soviet Union would tend to define *democracy* as government that would
  - a. result in the rule of the many.
  - b. serve the “true interests” of the people, whether those people directly affected the making of decisions or not.
  - c. be nearly impossible to achieve.
  - d. create a bourgeois revolt against the ruling class.
4. In Aristotle’s view, democracy would consist of
  - a. the effective representation of the interests of the whole population.
  - b. political representation by all individuals in a society, regardless of race, age, or gender.
  - c. participation by all or most citizens in either holding office or making policy.
  - d. an elite group of policy makers elected by the will of the people.
5. The theory of representative democracy holds that
  - a. individuals acquire power through competition for the people’s vote.
  - b. it is unreasonable to expect people to choose among competing leadership groups.
  - c. government officials should represent the true interests of their clients.
  - d. the middle class has gained greater representation at the expense of the poor and minorities.
6. If you fear that people often decide big issues on the basis of fleeting passions and in response to demagogues, you are likely to agree with
  - a. many of the Framers of the Constitution.
  - b. the New England town meeting.
  - c. the referendum.
  - d. participatory democracy.